

SPECIAL ISSUE ARTICLE

Perpetual ingroup victimhood as a distorted lens: Effects on attribution and categorization

Noa Schori-Eyal*,†, Yechiel Klar† & Yarden Ben-Amit

* Department of Psychology, The Interdisciplinary Center (IDC) Herzliya, Herzliya, Israel

† Tel-Aviv University, Tel Aviv, Israel

Correspondence

Noa Schori-Eyal, The School of Psychology,
Interdisciplinary Center, Herzliya, Israel.
E-mail: snoa@idc.ac.il

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Abstract

Although the effects of group-based victimhood on attitudes and emotions have been demonstrated in previous research, the ways it affects cognitive processes remain unclear. Four studies examined how a perpetual ingroup victimhood orientation (PIVO) affects cognitive biases. High levels of PIVO were associated with the categorization of more outgroups as hostile to the ingroup, and more rapid responses when using an enmity criterion (Study 1). PIVO was also associated with more attributions of malevolent intentions and fewer attributions of neutral intentions to outgroup members in ambiguous situations (Study 2a); when primed with reminders of historical group trauma, attribution of malevolent intentions increased among high- but not low- PIVO individuals (Study 2b). However, the effect extended to all participants when using a larger sample (Study 2c). The implications of these categorization and attributional biases are discussed in particular as regards the self-perpetuating nature of perceived group victimhood.

Group-based victimhood—the perception of the ingroup as having suffered severe, intentional, and unjust harm at the hands of another group or groups (Bar-Tal, Chernyak-Chai, Schori, & Gundar, 2009; Klar, in press; Vollhardt, 2012)—has been associated with multiple consequences for both intra- and inter-group processes. These include reduced willingness to acknowledge ingroup responsibility for moral violations committed during conflicts (Cehajic & Brown, 2009); less support for intergroup forgiveness and reconciliation (Noor, Brown, & Prentice, 2008; Noor, Shnabel, Halabi, & Nadler, 2012); consolidation of societal beliefs in the justness of the ingroup's goals in conflicts and delegitimization of the rival (Bar-Tal & Halperin, 2011); general outgroup mistrust and support for exclusion (Vollhardt & Bilali, 2014), decreased empathy toward outgroups—both the perpetrator responsible for the current victimhood (Cehajic, Brown, & Castano, 2008; Mack, 1990) and an unrelated adversary (Chaitin & Steinberg, 2008); ascribing blame to the other party involved in the conflict (Schori-Eyal, Halperin, & Bar-Tal, 2014); and diminished group-based guilt (Schori-Eyal, Klar, Roccas, & McNeill, 2015; Wohl & Branscombe, 2008).

One prevalent aspect of the legacy of historical group victimhood is the belief that the harm incurred by the ingroup has not been a single, transitory, or accidental experience but rather is an enduring reality caused intentionally by a determined enemy or even a succession of enemies. Many groups—national, ethnic, and

religious—harbor such “perpetual victimhood” representations of their history (e.g., Bar-Tal & Antebi, 1992; Cairns & Roe, 2003; Enns, 2012; Jacoby, 2015; Volkan, 1997). The succeeding examples illustrate the concept of perpetual victimhood in different contexts. For more than a thousand years, Jewish people have recited the chilling verse: “In every generation they rise against us to annihilate us” at the annual Passover service and cite the list of historical enemies starting from the ancient Pharaoh of Egypt (e.g., Klar, Schori-Eyal, & Klar, 2013; Ophir, 1994; Zrubavel, 2004). In Poland, dubbed the “Christ of nations” by the 19th century national poet Adam Mickiewicz, much of the national identity has been constructed around the recurrent victimization Poles have suffered at the hands of their successive enemies (Jasińska-Kania, 2007; Snyder, 2012; Vollhardt, Bilewicz, & Olechowski, 2015). The Shiite–Muslim collective identity has been shaped to a large extent around the memory of the Battle of Karbala (680 AD) in which Imam Hussein ibn Ali (grandson of the Prophet Muhammad), and his supporters were killed as part of a power struggle within Islam. Their deaths are commemorated in Shiite communities during the annual Day of Ashura (Remembrance), and the battle has been generalized to represent the Shiite destiny of perpetual victimhood as reflected by the maxim “Every day is Ashura and every place is Karbala” (Aghaie, 2004; Hyder, 2006; Schubel, 1996).

Historical group trauma and its impact on group members can be analyzed at different levels. On the

societal level, there is the objective historical occurrence (s) of the harm incurred by the ingroup (inasmuch as objective history exists), and the societal narratives and collective memories referring to the event, which are the means of transgenerationally transmitting the story of the group trauma (Volkan, 2001). At the next level are the situational conditions under which the historical group trauma triggers the activation of a victimhood mindset among most group members. At the individual level of analysis, there are individual differences in the degree to which people adhere to the dominant victimhood discourse, and which construal of the historical group trauma a given individual chooses to embrace. The present work focuses on the two latter levels (situational and individual differences) and examines their impact on cognitive processes using the concept of perpetual ingroup victimhood orientation (PIVO).

According to Schori-Eyal and colleagues (Schori-Eyal, Klar, et al., 2015; see also Klar et al., 2013), PIVO is defined as the belief that one's group is a constant victim persecuted continually throughout history by different enemies. While it entails an element of intergroup threat, PIVO is unique in linking past and present: The historical injustices incurred by the ingroup may have taken place many centuries in the past but still impact the attitudes, emotions, and behaviors of contemporary group members through the belief that past enemies are reincarnated in current adversaries. Moreover, as demonstrated in the various examples just cited, the succession of intentional harms against the group throughout its history turns the state of victimhood into a group disposition: The group is being disposed or even destined to be victimized by others. Historical group trauma spreads both vertically, like a stone dropped into a pond, creating an intertemporal construal of the group as an eternal victim; and horizontally, like the ripples spreading outward on the surface of the pond, leading to a perception of other groups as potentially untrustworthy and malevolent.

PIVO has certain features in common with other group victimhood concepts; for example, the notion of uniqueness is reminiscent of competitive victimhood that describes a struggle between two rival groups in intergroup conflict "to establish that their in-group was subjected to *more* injustice and suffering at the hands of the out-group than the other way around" (Noor et al., 2012, p. 352). The uniqueness element is also found in the concept of exclusive victimhood consciousness, an overarching umbrella term, which refers to all the ways in which a group's suffering and victimhood can be seen as setting it apart from others (Bilali & Vollhardt, 2013; Vollhardt, 2009, 2012; Vollhardt & Bilali, 2014).

However, PIVO places special emphasis on the reincarnation of past enemies in current ones. We suggest that this central element may account for how temporally distant traumas can resonate many generations later in the descendants of those group members who suffered directly (Barkan, 2000; Licata & Klein, 2010;

Wohl & Branscombe, 2005) and affect their responses to the point of "time collapse," in which historical context is disregarded and the past and present merge (Volkan, 1997). Whereas competitive victimhood describes a struggle over victim status between two groups locked in contemporary conflict, PIVO presents a sense of ultimate enduring victimhood; the ingroup's historical and current suffering, which bleeds into another, *in saecula saeculorum* (forever and ever). PIVO combines a historical perspective and a perception of the group's present victim status to create a sense of multilayered, enduring suffering. Thus, the different facets of PIVO, especially the relationship to historical traumas, make it a novel and unique construct (for further discussion, see Schori-Eyal, Klar, et al., 2015).

A PIVO scale was developed to measure the belief in the group's ongoing persecution by various enemies and has been translated into several languages (including Arabic, Polish, German, and English). PIVO has been associated with increased moral entitlement and support for aggression against enemy outgroups, reduced group-based guilt, and attribution of the blame for bilateral hostilities to the outgroup (Cohrs, McNeill, & Vollhardt, 2015; Dugas et al., 2017; Schori-Eyal, Klar, et al., 2015). PIVO was also demonstrated to be somewhat associated with, but statistically distinct from, competitive victimhood. For example, Cohrs et al. (2015) found a moderate to strong correlation ($r = .40$) between PIVO and competitive victimhood. Furthermore, Schori-Eyal, Klar, et al. (2015; Study 2) demonstrated that PIVO predicted support for forgiveness and reconciliation in the context of the Northern Ireland conflict above and beyond competitive victimhood.

Alongside its impact on attitudes and behavioral tendencies, here, it is argued that PIVO can serve as a cognitive lens through which the social world is viewed by members of groups that preserve a legacy of historical trauma (Klar et al., 2013; Schori-Eyal, Klar, et al., 2015). Because it is a worldview that stems from individual (e.g., basic values; Schori-Eyal, Klar, et al., 2015) and social antecedents, we suggest that PIVO operates as a cognitive schema, namely, a mental structure that organizes one's knowledge and assumptions about the world. Schemata, once formed, govern to a large extent the encoding, organization, and retrieval of information (e.g., Brewer & Treyens, 1981; Crocker, Fiske, & Taylor, 1984; Koppel & Berntsen, 2014; Neisser, 1976). If PIVO is a schema, it is expected to impact how group members deal with the social information pertaining to their group in relation to others and in particular the direction of influence is likely to be consistent with the core beliefs of perpetual victimhood. To date, this cognitive hypothesis has rarely been explored with regard to conceptualizations of collective victimhood.

The main goal of this work was to test whether this victimhood-related cognitive bias affects cognitive processes involved in conflict information processing. This series of studies focused on automatic categorizations of outgroups as either hostile or non-hostile (Brown,

1988; Gaertner *et al.*, 2000; Study 1) and on the *attribution of intentions* to individual adversarial outgroup members in ambiguous situations (Hewstone, 1988, 1990; Studies 2a, 2b, and 2c). The second goal was to test the *causal role* of perceived historical ingroup victimization on categorization and attribution biases. To do so, two studies were conducted in which PIVO was measured and its relationship with categorization (Study 1) and attribution of intentions (Study 2a) was examined. In Studies 2b and 2c, the baseline level of PIVO was measured, but then the salience of perpetual victimhood was heightened by asking participants to read and summarize a series of texts describing historical ingroup persecution. The examination of both categorization and attribution, and the use of measured and manipulated perpetual group victimhood, was thus aimed at shedding light on the impact of collective victimhood on social cognitive processes.

Study 1

One of the rudimentary cognitive processes involved in conflict situations is the automatic “us” versus “them” categorizations where the outgroup (i.e., “them”) are spontaneously defined as hostile and ill-meaning toward the ingroup (e.g., Brown, 2010; Perdue, Dovidio, Gurtman, & Tyler, 1990). An underlying assumption in this field of research is that when a given construct (e.g., attitudes, stereotypes, and in this case, perpetual victimhood) is either chronically or acutely activated, responses that are congruent with it should be easier, and therefore faster, than incongruent responses (e.g., Fazio, Jackson, Dunton, & Williams, 1995; Greenwald *et al.*, 2002; Greenwald, McGhee, & Schwartz, 1998). Based on this logic, it was hypothesized that if PIVO is associated with perceptions of outgroup hostility and hatred toward the ingroup, responses indicative of outgroup hostility (i.e., “they hate us”) should be PIVO-consistent, and therefore faster for participants who endorse this schema than for low-PIVO participants.

In addition, we wanted to test whether the expected relationships were above and beyond political orientation. Political ideology is associated with attitudes toward the outgroup (e.g., Berlet & Lyons, 2000; Betz, 1994; Diamond, 1995; Duckitt, 2005; Maoz & McCauley, 2005; Shamir & Sagiv-Schifter, 2006; Sprinzak, 1991) and with cognitive styles, which may affect downstream variables (Jost, Federico, & Napier, 2009). It was therefore measured and included in analyses in order to examine whether PIVO provided distinct contribution to predicting biases in categorization of beyond that of political orientation. To test this and the central hypothesis described previously, Study 1 was conducted.

Participants and Procedure

Eighty-three Jewish-Israeli students (54 women, 16 men; age range: 20 to 32, $M = 23.59$, $SD = 2.27$) participated in this lab experiment in exchange for course

credit ($N = 70$) or as volunteers. Participants first completed a computerized version of the PIVO scale and were then presented with two counterbalanced categorization tasks. Participants were presented with names of national groups and were instructed to indicate as quickly as possible whether each group hated Israel or not (enmity criterion task) or whether each group participated in the Eurovision Song Contest or not (neutral criterion task). Finally, they completed a demographic questionnaire. A post hoc power analysis for correlations (bivariate normal models) confirmed there was adequate power (power = .84) to detect the effects found.¹

Measures

Perpetual ingroup victimhood orientation was assessed using a computerized version of the 12-item PIVO measure (Schori-Eyal, Klar, *et al.*, 2015; sample item: “All our enemies throughout history share a common denominator – the will to annihilate us”; “The suffering we have been through cannot be compared to that of any other group”; “History teaches us that we must be suspicious of other groups’ intentions toward us”, see Appendix 1 for the full scale²; $\alpha = .87$). The items represent the different facets of PIVO (uniqueness of victimhood, intertemporality of enemies, and mistrust as a lesson of historical traumas).

The categorization tasks were conducted using Empirisoft’s DirectRT program, which made it possible to measure response times. The categorization task included a training phase in which participants were given instructions and asked to practice responding to the stimuli (eight trials), and a categorization task in which they were presented with the names of 15 national groups (e.g., Australians, Swedes, and Syrians) and had to respond as quickly as possible by pressing a key. The name of each national group appeared in the middle of the screen, with the response options (hate/does not hate Israel; participate/does not participate in the Eurovision Song Contest) at the bottom corners of the screen. Participants indicated their response by pressing the arrow keys, which corresponded to the location of the response on the screen (i.e., if “hate Israel” appeared on the lower left corner of the screen, participants pressed the left arrow key). The neutral criterion task was included to rule out the possibility that PIVO was associated with general rapidity in categorization, regardless of target stimulus.

A general enmity index, calculated as the sum of “hate Israel” responses on all trials, was derived from the responses as well as two response time indices, the general reaction time (RT) (calculated as the mean reaction time to all trials on the hostility criterion task, regardless of

¹G*power 3.1 (Faul, Erdfelder, Buchner, & Lang, 2009) was used for all power analyses conducted as part of the research. Sample sizes were judged adequate if they met the conventional threshold of $\alpha = .05$ for the Type I error and a power of .80.

²The complete set of materials used in Studies 1 and 2 is available upon request from the first author.

whether the response was “hate” or “does not hate”) and the enmity RT (calculated as the mean RT of all “hate” responses). For purposes of comparison, we also created a general Eurovision RT (calculated as the mean RT to all trials in the Eurovision criterion task); and the Eurovision participation RT (calculated as the mean RT for all “participate in the Eurovision song contest” responses) to reflect positive answers on the neutral criterion task.

Political orientation was measured using two items (identification with right wing, identification with left wing, ranging from 1 [*not at all*] to 6 [*extremely*]). Political orientation was calculated by deducting the score of the left-wing item from the right-wing item; higher scores indicated right-wing political tendencies. This combination was used as a more nuanced measure, reflecting the idea that one may simultaneously identify with elements of both right- and left-wing political ideology.

Results

As expected, PIVO ($M=4.30, SD=1.18$) was associated with categorizing more outgroups as hostile ($r=.41, p<.001$); it was not associated with general RT in the hostility categorizing task ($r=-.05, p=.67$). PIVO was negatively associated with enmity RT ($r=-.32, p<.001$). In other words, PIVO was moderately to strongly associated with more rapid responses when deciding a given outgroup was hostile toward the ingroup. Also as expected, PIVO was not associated with either general Eurovision RT ($r=-.03, p=.77$) or with Eurovision participation RT ($r=-.09, p=.45$). We next compared the correlated correlation coefficients of PIVO with enmity RT and Eurovision participation RT (Meng, Rosenthal, & Rubin, 1992). This difference was significant ($r_{\text{difference}}=-.53$, confidence interval [CI] 95% $[-.73, -.20]$), which provided additional support for our hypothesis that high levels of PIVO were associated with rapid response times only when employing a relevant criterion.

Two hierarchical linear regressions were then conducted to assess the distinctive contribution of PIVO to predicting categorization according to the hostility criterion. The first regression assessed the general enmity index (number of national groups determined to be hostile). In the first step, political orientation was entered, predicting general enmity. In the second step, PIVO was entered. The analysis was repeated with the

hostility RT (Table 1). PIVO was a significant predictor of both general enmity and enmity RT, above and beyond political orientation. These results lend support to the hypotheses: PIVO moderately predicted the number of national groups categorized as hostile and hateful toward the ingroup as well as more rapid responses when making the schema-congruent answer of “hate”.

To examine whether the effect was driven by the intertemporal aspect of PIVO, we repeated the analysis testing our main hypothesis with a version of PIVO consisting only of items explicitly referring to the enduring, ongoing nature of the historical group victimhood (Intertemporal PIVO, $M=3.86, SD=1.10, \alpha=.85$). Items that reflect elements of PIVO (such as mistrust), but do not refer to its historical nature, were excluded: “At the end of the day, we can only trust ourselves”; “we must not rely on other countries and peoples”; and “many peoples hate us.” In the context of the full scale, the last item implies that the hatred is of enduring nature—that is, “many people (past, present, and future) hate us”—but because this reference is subtle, the item is not included in the intertemporal PIVO. Intertemporal PIVO was found to have a very high correlation with the full PIVO scale ($r=.88$) and a high correlation with non-intertemporal PIVO ($r=.68$).

The results were very similar to those described regarding the full PIVO scale. Intertemporal PIVO was associated with categorizing more outgroups as hostile ($r=.39, p<.001$) but not with general RT in the hostility categorizing task ($r=.05, p=.68$). PIVO was marginally negatively associated with enmity RT ($r=-.21, p=.06$). In addition, intertemporal PIVO was not associated with either general Eurovision RT ($r=-.05, p=.62$) or with Eurovision participation RT ($r=-.12, p=.28$).

The results of Study 1 indicated that as expected, PIVO was associated with categorizing more outgroups as hostile and to more rapid categorization when employing an enmity criterion than a neutral one. These findings support the notion of PIVO as a schema: Participants for whom the notion of perpetual victimhood was chronically aroused (i.e., participants characterized by high levels of PIVO) responded more quickly to a notion that was congruent with this schema; that is, that the world is divided into “hostile” and “non-hostile” groups. The fact that PIVO was not related to a similar pattern of responses on the Eurovision task—a context that is highly evocative of

Table 1. Contribution of PIVO to predicting attribution of intentions

Predictor	Hostile intentions			Neutral intentions			Benevolent intentions		
	β	F_{change}	R^2	β	F_{change}	R^2	β	F_{change}	R^2
Step 1									
PIVO	.43***	21.61***	.17	-.30	9.50**	.08†	-.06	.35	.01
Step 2									
PIVO	.29*			-.29			.10		
Political orientation	.22†	3.55†	.21	.01	.01	-.27*	.10	4.56*	.05*

Note: PIVO, perpetual ingroup victimhood orientation.

group identity and intergroup politics (e.g., Doosje & Haslam, 2005; Raykoff & Tobin, 2007)—implies that it was the potential for outgroup animosity, not merely the notion of intergroup relations, that triggered the PIVO schema.

Categorizing most outgroups as entities hostile to one's own group is quite a broad construal of intergroup relations. A more concrete manifestation of the perception that the world is inimical to the outgroup would be the attribution of hostile intentions to the outgroup (rather than seeing their general nature as essentially adversarial). In terms of real-life consequences, attributing hostile (or benevolent) intentions to specific outgroup members in daily social interactions could have an immediate effect on the texture of intergroup relations, at least as much as seeing the abstract entity of the outgroup as hostile or non-hostile. In the next set of studies, we turned our attention to the cognitive process of attribution—specifically, attribution of intentions.

Our aim was to examine the relationship between PIVO and attribution of intentions to members of an adversarial outgroup in ambiguous social situations. We also tested how activating PIVO via reminders of ingroup historical victimization affected these relationships. To achieve these goals, we conducted a series of three studies.

Study 2: Attributions of Intentions to an Unfamiliar Outgroup Member

Attribution of malevolent (rather than benevolent or neutral) intentions to the adversarial outgroup, even when the situation is highly ambiguous, is one of the most common cognitive processes in conflicts (Brockner & Rubin, 2012; Kriesberg, 2007). It was explored in the context of USA-USSR relations during the Cold War (Bronfenbrenner, 1961) and was later applied to a variety of conflict situations and researched extensively (Bar-Tal, Raviv, Raviv, & Dgani-Hirsch, 2008; Fisher, 2012; Hewstone, 1988, 1990; Hunter, Stringer, & Watson, 1991). The goal of Study 2 was to examine the effects of perpetual ingroup victimhood orientation on attributions of intent to enemy outgroup members in ambiguous situations. Study 2a measured PIVO and presented participants with several open-ended scenarios describing an ambiguous interaction between an ingroup and outgroup member (both unfamiliar to the participants). It assessed participants' attribution of intentions to these outgroup members in an intergroup interaction. In Study 2b, baseline PIVO was measured before perceived perpetual victimhood was manipulated through texts describing historical incidents of persecution and suffering at the hands of various outgroups. Then, participants' attribution of intention was assessed by employing a very similar set of intergroup interactions. Finally, in Study 2c, PIVO was measured several months prior to the perpetual victimhood manipulation, and two additional control conditions (i.e., experimental primes of general threats to the

ingroup and increased salience of group identity) were included to better assess the unique effect of perceived perpetual victimhood on attribution of intentions.

Study 2a

Participants and Procedure

One hundred and five Jewish-Israeli students at Tel-Aviv University volunteered to participate in the study (46 women, 22 men, 37 declined to answer; age range: 18 to 53, $M = 24.13$, $SD = 3.70$). Participants were approached on campus by research assistants, invited to the research laboratory, and asked to complete a short pen-and-paper questionnaire. A post hoc power analysis for correlations (bivariate normal models) confirmed there was adequate power (power = .88) to detect the effects found.

Measures

Unless otherwise mentioned, all items were rated on a scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*).

Perpetual ingroup victimhood orientation was assessed using a pen-and-paper version of the same tool described in Study 1 ($\alpha = .89$).

Attribution of intentions was measured using three open-ended short vignettes describing ambiguous interactions between Jewish-Israelis and Palestinians (e.g., a man gets lost hiking in the Judean desert; he sees an Arab shepherd who looks at him and then calls out to someone else). After reading each vignette, participants were presented with three possible intentions of the outgroup member: benevolent (e.g., the Arab shepherd is calling to his companion to come and help the Israeli hiker), neutral (the shepherd is calling out to the sheep), or hostile (the shepherd is calling his companion to come and attack the hiker). For the full measure, see Appendix 2. Participants were requested to assess the probability of each intention, so that the sum of probabilities would add up to 100%. Each type of intention was calculated as the mean of the attributed probability in all three stories (α benevolent intentions = .38; α neutral intentions = .58; and α hostile intentions = .69).³

Political orientation was measured using the same items as in Study 1 (higher scores indicate right-wing political tendencies).

Results and Discussion

As expected, PIVO ($M = 3.71$, $SD = 1.15$) was moderately to strongly positively associated with attribution of hostile ($r = .43$, $p < .001$) and moderately, negatively

³The relatively low reliabilities may result from different nuances and subtle emphases on different situational elements in the vignettes. Because the reliability of hostile intentions was acceptable and of neutral intentions almost acceptable, and as a preliminary exploration of our hypothesis, we decided to analyze the results of the study and interpret the results more cautiously.

associated with neutral ($r = -.30, p < .01$) intentions to the outgroup members. PIVO was not related to attribution of benevolent intentions ($r = .06, p = .56$). Next, three hierarchical linear regressions were conducted to assess the distinctive contribution of PIVO to predicting attribution of intentions. In the first step, PIVO was entered, predicting the attribution of hostile intentions ($M = 18.99, SD = 14.32$). In the second step, political orientation was entered. The analysis was repeated for the attribution of neutral ($M = 60.19, SD = 17.20$) and benevolent ($M = 20.74, SD = 10.87$) intentions (Table 2). PIVO was a significant predictor of both hostile and neutral intentions, above and beyond political orientation. Intertemporal PIVO ($M = 3.58, SD = 1.16, \alpha = .86$) was similarly associated with attribution of hostile intentions ($r = .38, p < .001$), negatively associated with attribution of neutral intentions ($r = -.24, p = .02$), and not related to attribution of benevolent intentions ($r = -.06, p = .56$). Thus, PIVO was positively and moderately associated with the attribution of hostile intentions to unfamiliar outgroup members in ambiguous interactions and was negatively and moderately associated with the attribution of neutral intentions to these outgroup members. No relationship was found for attribution of benevolent intentions; this may be the result of the low internal reliability of the measure, which makes it more difficult to draw conclusions from the results of this analysis. To examine how priming perpetual ingroup victimhood (i.e., via reminders of ingroup historical victimization) would influence this bias (using improved measures for the attribution bias) and thus to assess its causal role in conflict information processing, Study 2b was conducted.

Study 2b

Participants and Procedure

Seventy-eight Jewish-Israeli students in Tel-Aviv University volunteered to participate in the study (59 women, 19 men; age range: 20 to 74, $M = 26.13, SD = 8.55$). Participants were approached on campus by research assistants and invited to the research lab. They first completed the PIVO measure, then read and integrated several short texts. Participants were randomly assigned either to the experimental condition

(texts about historical ingroup suffering and persecution) or to the control condition (neutral texts). After summarizing the texts, the participants completed the intention attribution measure (an adapted version of the measure used in the previous study). These experimental tasks proved themselves somewhat difficult for some of the participants who volunteered to take part in the study, and 17 respondents did not complete the integration task according to instructions (either did not write a response at all, or wrote an insufficient summary). These participants were excluded from further analysis, which was conducted on the valid data collected from the remaining 61 participants (46 women, 15 men; age range: 20 to 74, $M = 26.54, SD = 9.58$). A post hoc power analysis for linear multiple regression (fixed model) confirmed there was adequate power (power = .99) to detect the effects found after the exclusion of these participants.

Measures

Perpetual ingroup victimhood orientation was assessed using the same measure as in Study 1 and 2a ($\alpha = .86$).

To manipulate the salience of ingroup perpetual victimhood, participants completed a task presented as a study focusing on semantic processing. Participants read six short texts (average length approximately 200 words) and were instructed to write a short essay integrating the texts in a way that captured what they saw as the essence of the information presented. Texts in the experimental condition described incidents in which Jews were harmed by members of other groups (attacks on the Rhineland Jews during the First Crusade and on the Jews of York in the 11th century, the personal stories of a Holocaust survivor, and an Israeli woman whose husband and daughters were killed in a terror attack in the 1970s; the story of the Israeli toddler who survived the 2008 terror attack in Mumbai). The experimental manipulation was designed to reflect the enduring, never-ending nature of ingroup victimhood implied in the PIVO mindset. The texts in the control condition described inventions and discoveries (e.g., the invention of the telephone by Bell, the discovery of penicillin by Fleming, and the discovery of the sources of the Nile by Speke and Burton).⁴

Attribution of intentions was assessed through participants' responses to four open-ended stories. The stories

Table 2. Contribution of PIVO to categorizing outgroups according to the "hostility" criterion

Predictor	General enmity			Enmity RT		
	β	<i>F</i> change	r^2	β	<i>F</i> change	r^2
Step 1 PIVO	.41***	16.45***		-.32**	8.63**	.09
Step 2 PIVO	.40	.06		-.27*	2.03	.10
Political orientation	.02			-.16		

Note: PIVO, perpetual ingroup victimhood orientation.

⁴The effectiveness of the historical reminders manipulation in increasing PIVO was tested in a study conducted among Jewish-Israeli students ($N = 32$). As part of a larger study participants completed the PIVO questionnaire. Three weeks later, they were randomly assigned to read and integrate either victimhood or neutral texts. The task was identical to the one described in Study 2b. After completing the integration assignment, participants again completed the PIVO measure. While no differences were found between the two groups in levels of PIVO in the first wave ($t(30) = .49, p = .63$), PIVO was higher among participants in the victimhood condition in T2 ($M = 4.42, SD = .82$) than among those in the control condition ($M = 3.79, SD = 1.07$), $t(30) = 1.996, p = .054$.

were adapted from the ones used in Study 2a and described Jewish-Israelis trying to find their way in different situations and encountering Palestinians. For example, one story presented Yotam, a man who on his way to visit friends accidentally goes into Palestinian territories and stops by a house to fix a flat tire. Three men exit the house and approach Yotam. Three alternative reasons for their approach are provided: They realize he is in trouble and want to help him (benevolent intentions), they recognize the Israeli license plates and want to harm him (hostile intentions), or he is unfamiliar and they want to find out what he wants (neutral intentions). Participants were instructed to indicate the likelihood of each ending on a scale ranging from 1 (*no chance this would happen*) to 7 (*this will certainly happen*); participants were thus not constrained to the 100% probability required in the previous study. Each type of intention was calculated as the mean score of the three stories (hostile: $\alpha = .66$; benevolent: $\alpha = .63$; neutral: $\alpha = .51$).

Results and Discussion

To examine the manipulation's effect on attribution of hostile intentions and whether this effect was moderated by PIVO, we used Hayes' (2013) PROCESS bootstrapping command (Model 1) to test the conditional effect, $R^2 = .23$, $F(3, 57) = 5.51$, $p < .002$. This regression analysis did not reveal a significant main effect for the manipulation ($b = 0.25$, standard error [SE] = 0.24, $t = 1.06$, $p = .29$; CI = [-0.22, 0.73]). However, the analysis revealed a significant main effect for PIVO ($b = 0.33$, SE = 0.11, $t = 2.95$, $p = .005$; CI = [0.11, 0.56]), as well as an interaction effect ($b_{\text{interaction}} = b = .48$, SE = 0.23, $t = 2.11$, $p = .04$; CI = [0.3, 0.93]). An analysis of the conditional effects revealed that the manipulation had a significant effect on participants with high PIVO (those whose victimhood score was 1 standard deviation above the mean score; $b = 0.75$, SE = 0.35, $t = 2.18$, $p = .03$). The manipulation did not significantly affect attribution of hostile intentions among low-victimhood participants (those whose PIVO score was 1 standard deviation below the mean score; $b = -0.25$, SE = 0.34, $t = -0.78$, $p = .44$). The results indicate that high-PIVO participants attributed significantly more hostile results to outgroup members when reminded of historical group traumas (Figure 1). The analysis was repeated for neutral and benevolent intentions as dependent variables. Neither the experimental condition ($b = 0.28$, SE = .23, $t = .46$, $p = .65$) nor the interaction between priming historical group traumas and PIVO ($b_{\text{interaction}} = .10$, SE = .23, $t = .46$, $p = .65$; CI = [-0.35, 0.44]) predicted attribution of neutral intentions to members of the enemy outgroup in ambiguous social interactions. Neither experimental condition ($b = 0.24$, SE = 0.23, $t = -1.02$, $p = .31$) nor the interaction between condition and PIVO ($b_{\text{interaction}} = -0.27$, SE = 0.22, $t = -1.19$, $p = .24$; CI = [-0.35, 0.44]) predicted attribution of benevolent intentions either. When the analysis was repeated with intertemporal PIVO ($M = 4.06$,

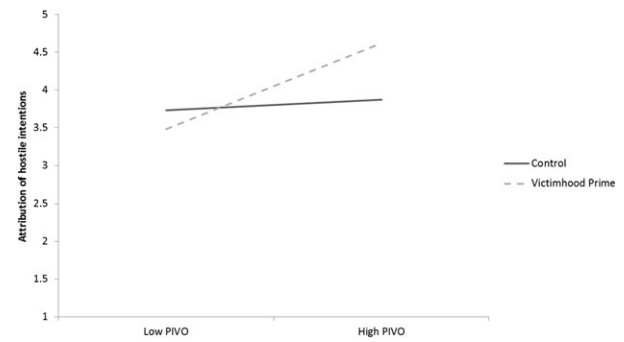


Fig. 1: Study 2b: The effect of reminders of historical group traumas on attribution of negative intentions to outgroup members as a function of PIVO

$SD = 1.07$, $\alpha = .83$), the pattern of results was similar, although weaker. Intertemporal PIVO was a significant predictor of attribution of hostile intentions ($b = 0.31$, SE = 0.11, $t = 2.78$, $p = .007$; CI = [0.09, 0.53]). However, the interaction between PIVO and the experimental condition was only marginally significant ($b_{\text{interaction}} = .39$, SE = 0.22, $t = 1.76$, $p = .08$; CI = [-0.05, 0.84]). Simple slope analysis indicated that participants with high levels of intertemporal PIVO attributed significantly more hostile results to outgroup members when reminded of historical group traumas ($b = 0.70$, SE = 0.35, $t = 2.01$, $p = .049$).

The results of Study 2b provide some additional support for the notion that high levels of perpetual ingroup victimhood are associated with attributing more negative intentions to outgroup members in ambiguous situations. Although no main effect was found for the victimhood manipulation on attribution of intentions, the interaction between PIVO and experimental condition implies that individuals' worldview regarding historical group trauma(s) may also play a part in how the recollection of historical persecution can affect the attribution process. Possibly, one needs to embrace perpetual victimhood, at least to some degree, in order to be affected by reminders of historical group trauma and persecution. The interaction between the situation and the individual differences in PIVO suggest that possibly group members characterized by high levels of PIVO are more attuned to situational cues, and would notice and respond to elements that other group members would ignore. The similar pattern of results we found when the analysis was conducted with intertemporal PIVO as a moderator—reflecting the core element of PIVO, the link between past and present enemies—also provides support regarding the nature of the construct and the influence of reminders of historical traumas.

However, several questions remain. The internal consistency of the measures for the attribution bias, which remain only moderate (around $\alpha = .60$) made the results less reliable and more difficult to interpret. Improved measures and a larger sample size would be helpful in both providing clearer results and in defining the factorial structure of PIVO. PIVO was not subjected to factor

analysis in previous studies that were part of the present research because of limitation of sample size, but its composition should be explored. Is it a single coherent construct, as hypothesized here, or alternatively an amalgamation of several constructs (including uniqueness, mistrust, and a link between past and present enemies)? Furthermore, the experimental design did not rule out the possibility that other elements of the manipulation could have led to the observed effect. One alternative explanation is that simply presenting a threatening stimulus or signaling potential harm could produce a bias in attribution of intentions, similar to the bias found in ingroup categorization in the presence of threat (Miller, Maner, & Becker, 2010). Another explanation is that reminders of historical persecution increase the salience of ingroup identity (e.g., Wilder & Shapiro, 1991), which in turn may have created the attribution bias observed in Study 2b. Finally, completing the PIVO questionnaire immediately prior to the attribution measure could increase the situational sense of group victimhood and induce the attribution bias. To address these questions, Study 2c was conducted.

Study 2c

Participants and Procedure

Two hundred and sixty-two Jewish-Israeli participants responded to an internet questionnaire in exchange for approximately \$2.50. The sample was made up of 142 men and 120 women ranging in age from 18 to 73, $M = 42.83$, $SD = 15.30$. As part of a larger study, the participants completed the PIVO measure. They were approached again 7 months later and were randomly assigned to one of four conditions: perpetual victimhood prime, general threat, group identity prime, or neutral prime (the inventions and discoveries prime employed in Study 2b). In all conditions, participants were asked to read, recall and integrate four short texts in a format similar to the one used in Study 2b. After integrating the texts, participants completed the intention attribution measure (slightly modified from the task used in Study 2b). Thirty-one participants who did not follow the instructions for the integration task or did not complete the study were excluded from further analysis, which was conducted on the valid data collected from the remaining 231 participants (107 women, 124 men; age range: 18 to 73, $M = 42.53$, $SD = 15.27$). A post hoc power analysis for analysis of variance (ANOVA; fixed effects, omnibus, one-way) confirmed there was adequate power (power = .94) to detect the effects found after the exclusion of these participants.

Measures

Perpetual ingroup victimhood orientation was assessed using the same measure as in the previous studies ($\alpha = .93$). The experimental manipulation was composed of four short texts in each condition. In the

perpetual victimhood prime and the neutral condition, the texts were very similar to the ones used in Study 2b, slightly edited and modified. In the general threat condition, participants read four texts about natural hazards in Israel: earthquakes, venomous snakes, tsunami, and heat stroke. Two of the texts (earthquakes and tsunami) mentioned previous occurrences, thus including an element of historical danger similar to the perpetual victimhood condition. The group identity condition included descriptions of four geographical sites in Israel, which are all positively (or well) associated with the country (the Hula lake, Eilat, the Dead Sea, and the Tel-Aviv metropolitan area). The two latter conditions were designed to create a sense of general threat (not related to intergroup conflict, but somewhat related to ingroup identity through the emphasis on the locality of the threat and repeated use of the words "Israel" and Israeli"; and a heightening of group identity without group affirmation, by describing unique natural and urban sites in Israel. Each text was presented on a different page. After reading all four texts, participants were asked to recall and write down the subject of each text, and then write a concise summary of all four texts.

Attribution of intentions was assessed through participants' responses to four open-ended stories. Three stories were identical to the stories used in Study 2b, and the fourth story described a situation reminiscent of several events that had occurred during the then-ongoing conflict escalation. The fourth vignette described a Palestinian car driven by two teenagers crashing into a military roadblock and injuring a soldier. Participants were asked to indicate the likelihood of the driver and passenger rushing to help the injured soldier (benevolent intentions); the driver and passenger quickly exiting the car and standing beside it, frightened and bewildered (neutral intentions); and the driver attempting to run over other soldiers while the passenger shoots at them (hostile intentions). As in Study 2b, participants were instructed to indicate the likelihood of each ending on a scale ranging from 1 ("no chance this would happen") to 7 ("this will certainly happen"). Each type of intention was calculated as the mean score of the four stories (hostile: $\alpha = .80$; benevolent: $\alpha = .75$; neutral: $\alpha = .55$).

Results and Discussion

To test whether PIVO was indeed a single-factor construct, we first conducted a principal components analysis, varimax rotation. Results revealed only one eigenvalue above 1, indicating that as hypothesized, PIVO constitutes a single factor (Eigen value = 7.09; % of variance = 59.11). A screen test from the principal component analysis supported the single-factor solution. Item loadings ranged between 0.64 and 0.85 (for a complete list of factors loadings and communalities, see Appendix 1).

We then ran an ANOVA followed by a post hoc Bonferroni multiple comparison test on attribution of intentions with the four experimental conditions

(historical victimhood, general threat, group identity, and neutral control) as the independent variable. Consistent with our hypothesis, participants who were exposed to descriptions of historical group persecution attributed more negative intentions to outgroup members encountered in ambiguous situations ($M=5.24$, $SD=1.02$) than the participants in all other conditions. This included the inventions and discoveries control condition ($M=4.53$, $SD=1.21$) ($p=0.005$, one-way ANOVA with post hoc Bonferroni), the general threat condition ($M=4.68$, $SD=1.06$, $p=.051$), and the group identity condition ($M=4.72$, $SD=1.24$, $p=.057$), $F(3, 227)=4.48$, $p=.004$, $\eta^2=.06$. No significant differences between conditions were found in attribution of neutral, $F(3, 227)=.56$, $p=.65$, or benevolent intentions, $F(3, 227)=1.74$, $p=.16$ (Figure 2).

We next tested the conditional effect of victimhood priming on attribution of hostile intentions moderated by baseline PIVO, using Hayes's (2013) PROCESS macro (Model 1; $R^2=.34$, $F(3, 113)=18.98$, $p<.0001$). Based on the previous analysis, this comparison was conducted between the victimhood priming and the neutral control conditions. Within this model, and taking into account the interaction, both the experimental manipulation ($b=0.54$, $SE=0.15$, $t=3.63$, $p<.001$) and PIVO ($b=0.43$, $SE=0.05$, $t=8.44$, $p<.001$) were significant predictors of attribution of hostile intentions. However, the two-way interaction was not significant ($b=0.05$, $SE=0.12$, $t=0.42$, $p=.67$). We repeated the analysis with attribution of neutral intentions and attribution of benevolent intentions. Attribution of neutral intentions was predicted only by PIVO ($b=-0.30$, $SE=0.05$, $t=-5.66$, $p<.001$), but not by the experimental manipulation ($b=-0.05$, $SE=0.15$, $t=-0.32$, $p=.75$) or by the interaction ($b=0.02$, $SE=0.12$, $t=0.17$, $p=.87$). Benevolent intentions were also predicted only by PIVO ($b=-0.43$, $SE=0.06$, $t=-7.41$, $p<.001$), but not by the experimental manipulation ($b=-0.12$, $SE=0.17$, $t=-0.74$, $p=.46$) or by the interaction ($b=-0.18$, $SE=0.13$, $t=-1.36$, $p=.18$). In both analyses, high levels

of PIVO were associated with perceiving neutral or benevolent intentions as less likely in the four scenarios.

When the analyses were repeated using intertemporal PIVO ($M=4.96$, $SD=1.33$, $\alpha=.91$), a similar pattern was found. Hostile ($b=0.41$, $SE=0.04$, $t=8.26$, $p<.001$), neutral ($b=-0.29$, $SE=0.05$, $t=-5.80$, $p<.001$), and benevolent ($b=-0.42$, $SE=0.06$, $t=-7.74$, $p<.001$) intentions were all significantly predicted by PIVO; neither the experimental condition nor the interactions were significant predictors of the attributed intentions.

The results of Study 2 support the hypothesis regarding the effect of perpetual victimhood on the social cognitive process of intention attribution: High levels of PIVO were associated with the attribution of more negative intentions to the outgroup. The impact of PIVO was found both when the sense of ongoing victimhood was measured (Study 2a) and when experimentally induced (Study 2c). PIVO was associated with greater attribution of negative intentions and less attribution of neutral and benevolent intentions even when measured 7 months prior to the assessment of the attribution bias (Study 2c), which supports the notion that it is a chronic, relatively stable mindset. The qualified pattern found in Study 2b, according to which only a combination of victimhood manipulation and high levels of PIVO produced more attribution of hostile intentions, was extended to an unqualified main effect with a larger sample (Study 2c). This implies that possibly all group members may be susceptible to situational increases in perpetual victimhood orientation and can be affected by it. However, subtle differences in the manipulations used in Studies 2b and 2c could also account for the different results; additional research would help shed more light on who is influenced by reminders of historical group trauma, and how.

Finally, the factor analysis conducted in Study 2c demonstrates that despite reflecting several elements and nuances, PIVO is a single (rather than a multi-factor) structure. However, still more work is needed to conform the one structure suggested by this study.

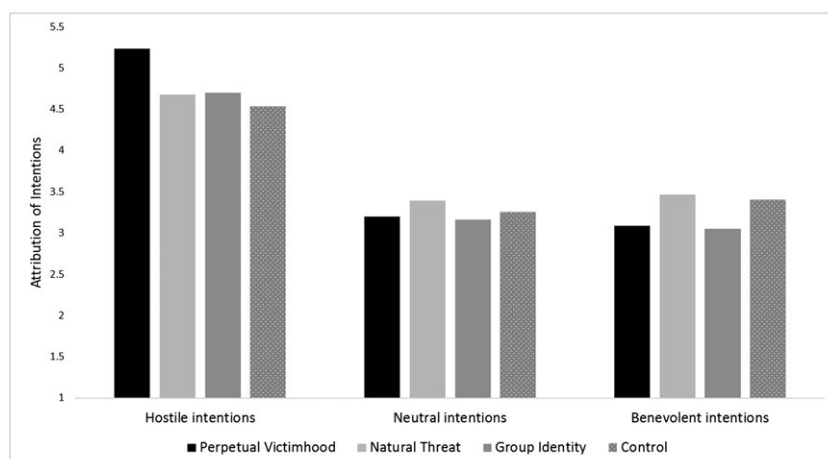


Fig. 2: Study 2c: The effect of experimental condition on attribution of intentions to outgroup members

Replication in additional contexts and confirmatory factor analysis in future studies would add additional support for the findings of the present research.

In all three studies, the intertemporal element of PIVO exhibited a very similar effect to the full measure of the constructs. This indicates that indeed the intertemporal aspect tapped in the present research was associated with attribution of more hostile and less neutral intentions to the outgroup. Results also imply that the full PIVO scale is still a somewhat stronger predictor and that all its facets, including those that do not directly and explicitly refer to the connection between past traumas and present suffering, are needed to fully understand how a sense of enduring victimhood is related to cognitive biases in present conflicts.

Overall, the results of Study 2 provided encouraging support for the description of PIVO as a schema or lens that affects cognitive processes—in this case, echoing the element of mistrust. The main effect of the intertemporal victimhood manipulation demonstrated in Study 2c shows that by summoning the memory of past traumas, not only is the sense of perpetual victimhood aroused but also that the PIVO schema affects the cognitive process of attribution. Furthermore, this effect was not the result of general threat or salient group identity: It only occurred when the specific mindset of perpetual victimhood was induced. The fact that attribution of negative intentions was higher among participants exposed to reminders of historical traumas, but not those who read about natural hazards or unique national landmarks, indicates that the trigger for the intention attribution bias is historical victimhood and not general threat or salience of group identity. Taken together, these findings indicate that perpetual victimhood is not only the result of individual differences but can be situationally aroused.

General Discussion

Historians (e.g., Robins & Jones, 2009; Zrubavel, 2004), philosophers (e.g., Enns, 2012; Williams, 2008), social psychologists (e.g., Bar-Tal *et al.*, 2009; Noor *et al.*, 2012; Vollhardt, 2012), and international relations scholars (e.g., Jacoby, 2015) have all attempted to understand the processes that make members of historically victimized groups indifferent and hard-hearted toward their current adversaries' plight, and sometimes even become active victimizers themselves. To further complicate this issue, third-party observers who are reminded of another group's historical victimhood expect members of the victimized group to behave more compassionately toward their opponents because "they should know better" (Branscombe, Warner, Klar, & Fernández, 2015). In contrast, when members of the historically victimized group are reminded of their group's past victimhood, they feel less guilty for the mistreatment of the group's current opponents (Wohl & Branscombe, 2008). Possibly, the most prominent reaction to the ingroup's historical victimization is the "Never Again" response,

which carries with it an obligation to secure and defend the group no matter what price exacted from its adversaries (e.g., Klar *et al.*, 2013).

The perception of the ingroup as a perpetual victim, whose enemies are eternally reincarnated into new adversaries that seek to harm and even annihilate it, is likely to exacerbate this "Never Again" mentality. For example, high levels of perpetual ingroup victimhood orientation led Jewish-Israelis to report less group-based guilt toward the Palestinians and greater tolerance toward collateral casualties among them; both effects were shown to be mediated through moral entitlement; that is, the belief that the group can do anything in its defense regardless of moral considerations (Schori-Eyal, Klar, *et al.*, 2015).

The goal of the present research was to make two novel contributions to the field of group-based victimhood. First, it aimed to explore the impact of a perpetual victimhood orientation on basic cognitive processes related to conflict information processing. The second goal was to examine whether temporarily increasing the salience of historical group victimhood would enhance these effects on cognitive processes experimentally. In Study 1, the automatic categorization of a variety of outgroups according to the criterion of hostile versus benign intentions toward the ingroup was examined. PIVO was associated with categorizing more outgroups as hostile toward the ingroup, and with more rapid responses when determining that the outgroups were hostile. In Studies 2a, 2b, and 2c, attribution of intention of unfamiliar members of an adversarial outgroup in ambiguous situations was explored. PIVO was positively associated with attributing malevolent intentions and negatively associated with attributing neutral intentions to members of an enemy outgroup in ambiguous situations. In all four studies, focusing on the intertemporal aspect of the PIVO construct (i.e., using only items which explicitly mention the historical, enduring nature of the group victimhood) yielded very similar results.

The effect of historical victimhood priming on attribution of intentions was in line with the original predictions: It was expected that increasing the salience of perpetual victimhood would increase the tendency to attribute malevolent intentions to outgroup members. This effect was found solely with regard to negative intentions (priming victimhood did not decrease the attribution of neutral or benevolent intentions), which perhaps reflects how PIVO resonates with the perception that the world is populated by hostile, ill-willed groups. In Study 2b, a conditional effect of the manipulation was found, and in Study 2c, the effect was extended to the entire group. This implies that possibly inducing a sense of perpetual victimhood would affect most group members, regardless of their basic worldview. However, future research is needed to clarify the pattern of influence and to determine the boundary conditions of the effects of perpetual group victimhood.

Was the effect of the manipulation indeed due to an increase in perpetual victimhood based on historical trauma? We argue that it was, for two reasons. First of

all, an additional study (see footnote 1) demonstrated that the manipulation led to an increase in PIVO. Second, greater attribution of negative intentions occurred when participants were exposed to reminders of historical victimization, but not to a general threat or when group identity was made more salient. The memory of group trauma and suffering thus can impact how distant descendants of those who were abused and persecuted process information in the context of a completely different intergroup conflict.

Exploring the effects of temporary activations of perceived perpetual victimhood (above and beyond its chronic manifestations) is of extreme real-world significance: Perpetual victimhood may be triggered by variety of means, such as politicians' speeches, mass media, and even national or religious rites. Several real-world examples illustrate this point. On June 28th, 1989, Slobodan Milošević, at the time the president of Serbia, delivered a speech at the Gazimestan monument, near the location where the Battle of Kosovo had taken place 600 years earlier. This pivotal battle marked the defeat of the medieval Serbian state, the death of the Serbian prince Lazar Hrebeljanović and the subsequent extended victimization at the hands of the Ottomans; it is of great importance to Serbian tradition and national identity (Dierauer, 2013). Speaking to a huge crowd gathered to commemorate the 600th anniversary of the battle, Milošević declared,

Six centuries later, now, we are being again engaged in battles and are facing battles. They are not armed battles, although such things cannot be excluded yet. However, regardless of what kind of battles they are, they cannot be won without resolve, bravery, and sacrifice, without the noble qualities that were present here in the field of Kosovo in the days past. (Cohen, 2014, p. 25)

These references to historical defeat and victimization elicited waves of nationalistic enthusiasm in Serbia, which according to many observers contributed to the breakout of the Yugoslavian Wars of the 1990s (Sell, 2003).

Another historical example of how perpetual victimhood is triggered is the use of the term "Amalek" (or Amalekites) to denote the succession of all the victimizers and enemies of the Jewish people. The Jewish festival of Purim commemorates the defeat of Haman in ancient Persia (who according to myth is a descendant of the Amalekites) who sought to annihilate all the Jews in ancient Persia. The public reading this story on the eve of Purim is accompanied by loud noises such as booing, catcalling, using noisemakers, horns, and cap guns whenever Haman's name is mentioned. One morning after this reading (25 February 1994), an Orthodox Jewish settler Dr. Baruch Goldstein entered the Cave of the Patriarchs in Hebron, armed with a rifle, and killed 29 Muslim worshippers. The connection between this violent act and the Purim Festival's content of victimhood and redemption (which includes the

recitation of the Biblical instruction to "blot out the name of Amalek") has been pointed out by several scholars (e.g., Horowitz, 2006; Robins & Post, 1997). The Shiite Day of Ashura, commemorating and mourning the massacre of Husain ibn Ali in the Battle of Karbala, has also triggered self-sacrifice and violence on several occasions (Deeb, 2005; Schbley, 2003).

The current studies provide the first experimental evidence for the effects of triggering the victimhood schema on cognitive processes. Given the real-world importance of this issue, clearly more research is needed. It is important to note that reminders of historical victimhood are not necessarily related to hard-heartedness and callousness toward outgroups. Vollhardt (2009, 2012) suggests that past group trauma can also lead to what she terms "inclusive victim consciousness": a sense of perceived similarity and shared fate with members of other victim groups, which results in the perceived duty to prevent other groups' suffering. Similarly, fear of victimizing (FOV) is a mindset that is also rooted in historical victimhood, and which leads to a greater commitment to avoid engaging in excessive violence, or committing moral transgressions toward the ingroup's enemies (Schori-Eyal, Klar, et al., 2015). Along with being negatively correlated with perpetual ingroup victimhood, the FOV orientation is associated with higher levels of group-based guilt, less tolerance of enemy collateral casualties, and greater support for forgiveness and reconciliation. It is therefore possible that alternative victimhood schemas exist, where social information is organized very differently. Future studies should explore whether the effects of FOV extend to cognitive processes as well.

While we believe the present research provides the first experimental evidence for the effects of perceived victimhood (measured and manipulated) on cognitive processes, these studies have several limitations. Testing whether other forms of inducing perpetual victimhood, including those less subject to demand characteristics and social desirability (e.g., implicit priming) could also contribute to our knowledge of the effect of victimhood on cognitive processes. Testing the effect of victimhood priming on additional processes (beginning with categorization and then, e.g., memory/forgetting processes, and other forms of attribution) would help solidify its suggested impact. Finally, the research was conducted in the context of a single conflict, which limits its generalizability. Future studies should address all these limitations. Extending the research to additional conflictual contexts in different stages (e.g., active conflict, resolution, and reconciliation phases), comparing the effects of different conceptualizations of collective victimhood, and examining the effects of additional cognitive processes could enhance our understanding of the mechanisms of group-based victimhood.

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Appendix 1: Perpetual Ingroup Victimhood Orientation (PIVO) Scale, including factor analysis (Study 2c)

Instructions: Please indicate the extent to which you agree with each statement about the history of (the ingroup) and its current situation, by rating it from 1 to 7 on the scale. Before you begin reading, please recall an event in which (the ingroup) was harmed by another group.

The historical event: _____

	Communalities	Exploratory factor analysis loading
1. Even under different guises, the hatred toward us is basically the same.	.59	.77
2. No group or people have ever been harmed as we have.	.66	.81
3. Our existence as a group and as individuals is under constant threat.	.67	.82
4. Many peoples hate us.	.59	.77
5. All our enemies throughout history share a common denominator—the will to annihilate us.	.73	.85
6. The suffering we have been through cannot be compared to that of any other group.	.40	.64
7. One of the reasons we were harmed was that we put too much trust in other people.	.63	.80
8. As they have harmed us in the past, so will our enemies wish to harm us in the future.	.68	.82
9. We must not rely on other countries and peoples.	.61	.78
10. History teaches us that we must be suspicious of other groups' intentions toward us.	.44	.67
11. All our enemies throughout history share a common denominator—their hatred toward us.	.51	.71
12. At the end of the day, we can only trust ourselves.	.58	.76

Appendix 2: Intention attribution, Study 2a

In this study, you will be presented with short open-ended stories. Each text will be followed by three possible endings. Please indicate the probability of each ending in light of the information presented in the text. Note: The probabilities must add up to 100%.

- On his way to the Dead Sea, Noam stops at a gas station near Jericho. He notices two Palestinians, a man and a woman in their twenties, who look at him and his vehicle as he fills his gas tank. The two speak softly to each other, and then the man makes a call from his cellphone while the woman approaches Noam. Please indicate the probability of each of the following endings (remember that the probabilities must add up to 100%):
 - They like Noam's car and want to buy it for their father, who has been looking for just this model: ____%
 - The two were not talking about Noam at all, and the woman is walking toward the restroom and not Noam: ____%

- (c) The two want to abduct Noam and are calling other militants who belong to the same terror organization—the woman intends to engage Noam in a conversation until the rest of the cell members arrive: ___%
2. Yiftach is hiking alone in the Judean desert. He realizes he is probably lost and consults a map to try and find his way. When he looks up, he notices an Arab shepherd on the horizon. The shepherd looks at him and calls out in Arabic.
Please indicate the probability of each of the following endings (remember that the probabilities must add up to 100%):
- (a) The shepherd was calling out to the sheep to make them go faster: ___%
 - (b) The shepherd realized Yiftach was in distress and called his friend, another shepherd, to come and help him: ___%
 - (c) The shepherd realized Yiftach was alone and called his friend to help him attack Yiftach: ___%
3. Rachel and David are driving home late at night on their way back from visiting relatives in Alon More in Samaria. David decides to take a shortcut and drives along a road that passes by the Palestinian village of Hawara. Suddenly, David notices smoke coming out of the car hood. He stops by the side of the road and exits the vehicle to check the engine. He then notices a vehicle with a Palestinian license plate that passes him, slows down and then continues into Hawara. David does not think of this as important, but a few minutes later he notices a vehicle that seems similar driving out of Hawara. Please indicate the probability of each of the following endings (remember that the probabilities must add up to 100%):
- (a) This is a different vehicle: ___%
 - (b) This is the same vehicle, the driver came back to assist David: ___%
 - (c) This is the same vehicle, the driver went to get a weapon from his house, and now, he is coming to hurt David and Rachel: ___%