Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Faculty of Social Science

Department of Political Science

Rejectionist Attitudes toward Arabs in Israel

Final Research Project for "Approaches & Theories in Political Science"

Handed to Prof. Mario Sznajder and Mr. Chanan Cohen

Submitted by Doron Gilad, Yoav Shaham, Anat Nahamu

<u>Introduction</u>

Every now and then we are surprised from the media publications of surveys about rejectionist attitudes of Israeli Jews toward their Arab fellow Israeli citizens. 75% of the Jewish public, according to one survey, are reluctant to live nearby Arabs. 61% do not wish to have Arab friends who will visit their houses. 55% agree that in entertainment places Jews and Arabs must be separated (NRG). Another survey shows resembling results within high-school youth (Haaretz).

Many researches have shown similar results about rejectionist attitudes of Jewish Israeli toward their Arab fellow citizens. While 70% of Arabs are ready to live in mixed neighborhoods, only 34% of Jews agree to this (Smooha 2005: 19). While 79% of Arab youth show readiness to meet Jewish youth, only 47% are ready to do it vice versa. Most of Arab youth are ready to host Jews in their houses, while only a quarter is ready to do the same vice versa (Kupermintz et al. 2007: 8). According to a Friedrich Ebert Institute research, majority within the Jewish youth tend to agree to the deprivation of Arab citizens from their basic political rights (Zemah 2011: 94).

Few scholars have researched the psychological and emotional elements of the Jewish-Arab relations in Israel (Halperin et al. 2009; Maoz 2006; Bar-Tal & Teichman 2005) but did not attempt to find correlations between such attitudes and a prior contact and experience with Arab citizens. Our research asks what influences Jewish-Israeli citizens to express rejectionist attitudes toward Arab citizens of Israel? Or more preciously, to what extent can such rejectionist attitudes in Israel be explained in terms of (a) merely a feeling of perceived security threat as part of a wider ethnic competition and/or (b) intergroup contact, i.e., the lack of quantitative or qualitative integration between the two collectives also play an explanatory factor?

In the conceptual background of this research lies the notion that every state, especially a relatively young democracy whose borders hasn't yet fully determined and therefore lives consistently under security threats and bound to experience more crucial political and institutional changes in the future, has to rely on a strong and solidary civil society, otherwise it might not surmount its future coming challenges. This research might give us some indications concerning the reasons of rejectionist attitudes between Israel compatriots.

<u>Theory</u>

In the realm of our research there are two main theoretical and contradictory traditions that can be distinguished. One tradition builds on propositions derived from realistic group conflict theory and ethnic competition theory, starting from the actual competition between majority and minority groups that is proposed to induce negative attitudes and hostility (Coser 1956; LeVine and Campbell 1972; Scheepers, Gijsberts and Coenders 2002). The other tradition is grounded on intergroup contact theory, starting from actual inter-group contact that is proposed to reduce negative attitudes and hostility (Allport 1954; Pettigrew and Tropp 2006).

The ethnic competition theoretical framework is based on two influential as well as complementary theories, namely realistic group conflict theory and social identity theory. Realistic group conflict theory assumes that competition between social groups, such as ethnic groups, over scarce resources and values, induces conflict of interest between those groups and eventually antagonistic inter-group attitudes (Coser 1956; LeVine and Campbell 1972; Austin and Worchel 1979). According to Bobo (1988), perceived threat is the most direct determinant of unfavorable attitudes towards ethnic minorities.

Ethnic competition theory argues that the processes of social identification and social Contra-identification become intensified under conditions of actual intergroup competition and/or perceptions of ethnic threat, which eventually will induce negative attitudes towards outgroups (Scheepers, Gijsberts and Coenders 2002; Coenders et al. 2004). According to ethnic competition theory, perceived threat operates as a mediating factor between, on the one hand, individual and contextual-level determinants referring to competitive interethnic conditions, and, on the other hand, anti-outgroup attitudes.

The second theoretical tradition we will use to explain rejectionist attitudes in Israel, is intergroup contact theory. Allport (1954) stressed that contact between groups can effectively reduce negative attitudes towards outgroups, if contact takes place under 'optimal' conditions, i.e. equal group status within the situation, common objectives, intergroup cooperation, and the support of authorities, law or custom. These conditions were later extended (Amir1969, 1976; Amir and Ben-Ari1986).

Pettigrew and Tropp (2006), based on their meta-analytical study, concluded that the effect of intergroup contact reducing negative attitudes towards outgroup is the most important. Nonetheless, not all Allport's conditions are crucial for intergroup contact to reduce negative attitudes towards outgroups, though contact under these conditions will reduce negative attitudes more strongly. According to Amir (1969), one of these conditions is contact which is intimate rather than casual. McLaren argued that negative attitudes towards outgroups will be reduced, if '[...] a contact situation provides an opportunity to see that beliefs are actually similar' and '[...] the primary type of contact that should provide this opportunity, is intimate contact, such as friendship' (McLaren 2003: 913). Additionally, Dixon and Rosenbaum (2004) argued that workplace contact may meet fewer of Allport's 'optimal contact conditions' and is therefore to be expected to less strongly reduce negative attitudes towards ethnic minorities.

Hypotheses

We start our research with two hypotheses. Our first hypothesis complies with the Intergroup Threat Theory, thus H1: *The higher the perceived threat from Arabs reaches, in turn will induce rejectionist attitudes toward them.* Our second hypothesis will be that intergroup contact plays a role in reducing rejectionist attitudes, thus H2: *the more one encounters with Arabs, so it will reduce her rejectionist attitudes toward them.*

However, there is also an alternative hypothesis regarding H2. It might be true that not the quantity of the contact itself with the outgroup members is the decisive factor to reduce rejectionist attitudes but the quality of such contact. A casual encounters with the outgroup members can be also sometimes detrimental to intergroup relations, but a thorough and qualitative interaction. Our third hypothesis then coheres with the intergroup contact theory, thus H3: *The more qualitative intergroup interaction (such as friendships and colleague statuses) will have with Arabs, in turn will reduce rejectionist attitudes toward them.* It might be true that people who are engaged with Arabs on casual basis are not inclined to lower levels of rejectionist attitudes as much as people who interact with Arabs on an equal status and with common goals.

<u>Data</u>

The data for the analysis was collected from a survey including 413 adult Jewish Israeli respondents. The survey was conducted during April 2013, and the sampling method was snowball sampling, meaning the initial respondents, who randomly responded to advertisements on social networks, were asked to recruit additional respondents from among their acquaintances. As a result, the sample is highly biased and suffers a low level of representativeness. Compared to the sample of *The Israeli Democracy Index 2012* that was collected by the Israel Democracy Institute, the ideological positions of the respondents were strongly biased to the left. Moreover, the sample was highly biased in terms of education, religious affiliation and ethnicity. Table 1 compares the data with that of IDI 2012 (Some minor necessary adjustments have been made to match between the two surveys):

Table 1: distribution of religious affiliation, ideology, education and ethnicity in comparison with IDI 2012 (percent):

		Current Survey	IDI			Current	IDI
Religious Affiliation	Haredi	1.5	6	**Education**	No University Degree	22.0	63.4
	Religious	17.2	26.7		Has University Degree	78.0	35.9
	Traditional	13.6	20.7				
	Secular	67.8	45.6		N/a	-	0.7
	N/a	-	1	**Ethnicity**	Both Parents From Israel	49.2	24.8
Ideology	Right	21.4	21.5		Euro/US	29.5	9.6
	Moderate-Right	31.6	29.1		Africa/Asia	12.4	33.5
	Center	13.8	29.8				
	Moderate-Left	21.8	7.2		USSR	5.6	13
	Left	11.4	3.7		Other/Mixed	3.4	19.1
	N/a	-	8.7				

In short, the bias in our survey indicates that our "average respondent" is more secular, better-educated, more of a leftist and more of an "Ashkenazi" than the "average Israeli" described in the IDI. However, the main attempt of our research is to achieve better understanding of the relations between feelings of threat, contact with Arabs and rejectionist attitudes, which supposedly cross all lines of identity and

affiliations. Nevertheless, the difference in the relations between these factors among all of the groups mentioned above has to be accounted for.

Correlative Analysis

A series of Likert-type items (with four or five response categories, typically of strongly agree to strongly disagree) was constructed for measuring rejectionist attitude, feeling of threat and interaction with Arabs. Two different scales were constructed to measure rejectionist attitudes: the first one, which was aimed to measure rejection in general, included items that refer to Arabs on the national, group or government policy level in addition to items that refer to them on the individual, interpersonal level. The second one focused solely on the interpersonal level (thus, the items employed to measure personal rejection were included on both scales). Additional Scales were constructed to measure feelings of threat, quantitative and qualitative interactions. A detailed account of the scale construction can be found in the appendix. The distribution of the scales is as follows:

Table 2: distribution of rejection, threat and interaction:

	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
General Rejection	0.00	0.90	0.32	0.23
Personal Rejection	0.00	1.00	0.22	0.29
Threat	0.05	1.00	0.56	0.21
Interaction (Quantitative, 1 year)	0.00	1.00	0.44	0.25
Interaction (Quantitative, 5 years)	0.00	1.00	0.52	0.24
Interaction (Qualitative)	0.00	1.00	0.48	0.26

In order to provide another dimension of the distribution of rejectionist attitudes, we compared means of the general rejection scale and self-reported ideology scale with regard to the different religious Jewish groups in Israel. Both rejection and ideology are measured in 0-1 scale (1 being the far right). The findings are as follows:

Graph1: Means Comparison, Rejection and Self-Reported Ideology (Religiosity)
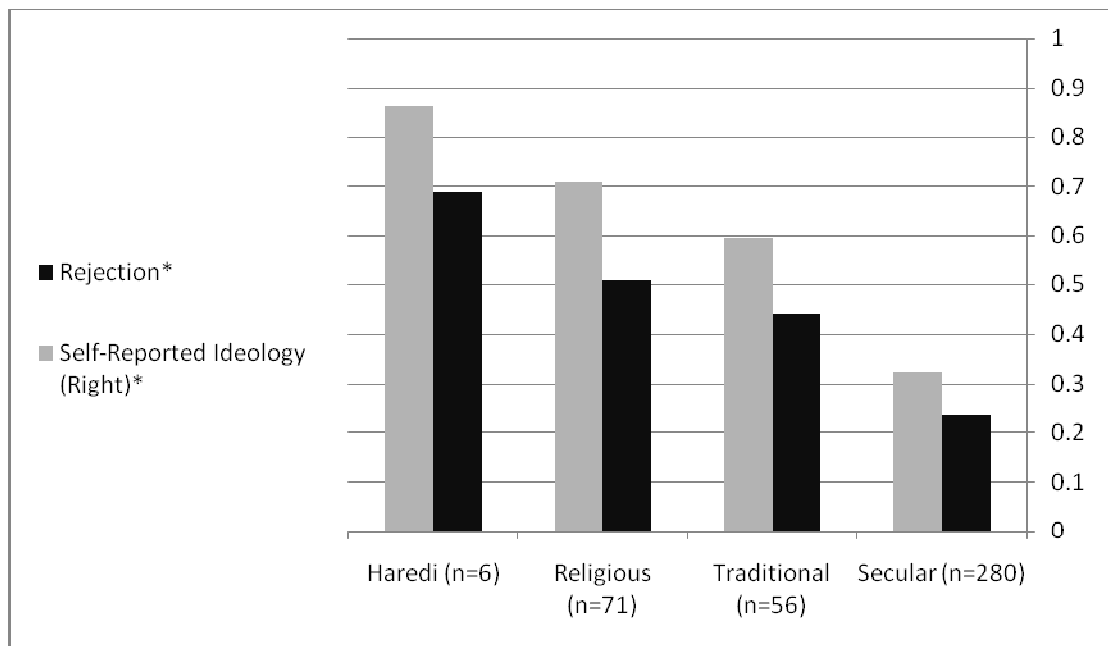
* p<0.001

One can see that the more secular one is, the less rejection he expresses toward Arabs and the more leftist he is. Haredi respondents seem to have the highest levels of rejectionist attitudes and tendency to the right wing, the religious Jews situated after them, then traditional Jews and eventually secular Jews. It must be stated though that the number of Haredi respondents is remarkably low and cannot be indicative. These findings, however, are theoretically plausible: while secular Jews in Israel identify themselves more in national and civic terms, it was found that for religious Jews, religious elements play a stronger role in their personal identity (Smooha: 118). One can further assume then that differences in self-reported identity might have an influence over the way of perceiving the other. It is possible that secular Jews refer to the conflict mainly as a political one and which can be solved by political compromise. On the other hand, religious Jews might analyze it in religious and dogmatic terms and therefore perceive the Arabs as a religious outgroup, with whom a compromise is impossible.

Of course, the results do not indicate any causality between religiosity and attitudes of rejection, as well as ideology, but merely a descriptive result. However, these findings call for further investigation of the relationship between religious views and rejection.

The correlations between the scales, in addition to their correlations with self-reported political ideology are as follows:

Table 3: correlations between rejection, threat, interaction and self-reported ideology:

	Threat	Interaction (Quantitative, 1 year)	Interaction (Quantitative, 5 years)	Interaction (Qualitative)	Right-Left	General Rejection
Threat	1					
Interaction (Quantitative, 1 year)	-0.1047	1				
Interaction (Quantitative, 5 years)	-0.1416	0.7843	1			
Interaction (Qualitative)	-0.1857	0.5249	0.5288	1		
Right-Left	0.6406	-0.1455	-0.1482	-0.2277	1	
General Rejection	0.6238	-0.1644	-0.1706	-0.2833	0.7626	1
Personal Rejection	0.5307	-0.1484	-0.155	-0.2929	0.642	0.891

All coefficients are significant at p<0.05

These coefficients are of great importance to the hypotheses: it is evident that rejectionist attitudes positively correlate with feelings of threat. The correlation between interaction and rejection is much weaker, although the qualitative scale better correlates with rejection than the quantitative scales. Nevertheless, all interaction scales correlate in the expected direction of the hypotheses: negative. The more one encounters Arabs, and the more the interaction is qualitative, the less the level of rejection she feels towards Arabs.

However, self-reported ideology seems to correlate with rejection better than threat and interaction. The more right winger a person is, the higher her level of rejection is. Ideology also seems to strongly correlate with threat level. Linear regression analysis is needed to measure and compare the unique effect of each one of the dependent variables on rejectionist attitudes.

As for the personal rejection scale, the coefficients do not indicate a significant difference between personal and overall rejection. Although the correlation between threat level and personal rejection and between self-reported ideology and personal rejection is relatively weaker than their correlation with general rejection, the correlation with interaction scales remains relatively weak.

Another possibility we wanted to explore is that rejection, interaction and threat correlate differently among various demographic groups. Usually, political attitudes are explained by such demographic variables as gender, religiosity, ethnicity,

education and socio-economic status (הרמן וייכטמן-ייער 1997 : 204). Therefore, we tested the correlation between threat and rejection (both general and personal) and between qualitative interaction and rejection among different groups of respondents. The groups are as follows:

- Men and women.
- University degree holders and those with no degree.
- People who were recently fired or were afraid to lose the jobs, and those who held steady jobs (these categories were used since no better technique of determining respondents' economic situation was available).
- People whose parents were born in Israel, Europe or U.S., Asia or Africa, and the former U.S.S.R.
- Secular traditional and religious people (we chose not to separate Haredi from religious because of the low quantities of respondents from these groups).
- People with left wing, centrist and right wing self-reported ideology.

Correlations between rejection and quantitative interaction remained low and mostly insignificant within all groups. Conversely, the correlation between rejection and self-reported ideology remained high. We therefore chose to focus on correlations between rejection and threat, and between rejection and qualitative interaction:

Table 4: correlations between personal rejection, threat, and qualitative interaction among various groups:

	Threat – General Rejection	Qualitative Interaction – Rejection	Threat - Personal Rejection	Qualitative Interaction - Personal Rejection
All Respondents (n=413)	0.62*	-0.28*	0.53*	-0.29*
Men (n=218)	0.63*	-0.25*	0.52*	-0.27*
Women (n=195)	0.62*	-0.32*	0.52*	-0.33*
Degree Holders (n=322)	0.57*	-0.30*	0.54*	-0.29*
No Degree (n=91)	0.64*	-0.27*	0.47*	-0.28*

	Threat – General Rejection	Qualitative Interaction – Rejection	Threat - Personal Rejection	Qualitative Interaction - Personal Rejection
Recently Fired / Afraid to Be Fired (n=46)	0.57*	-0.19	0.50*	-0.34*
Not Afraid to Be Fired (n=335)	0.64*	-0.28*	0.55*	-0.27*
Parents Born in Israel (n=203)	0.64*	-0.32*	0.55*	-0.36*
Africa/Asia (n=51)	0.61*	-0.51*	0.47*	-0.46*
Euro/US (n=122)	0.59*	-0.09	0.50*	-0.08
USSR (n=23)	0.64*	-0.72*	0.61*	-0.66*
Religious (n=71)	0.50*	-0.1	0.44*	-0.32*
Traditional (n=56)	0.39*	-0.23	0.33*	-0.52*
Secular(n=280)	0.55*	-0.18*	0.40*	-0.17*
Left (n=219)	0.29*	-0.17*	0.08*	-0.17*
Center (n=57)	0.5*	-0.20*	0.46*	-0.23*
Right (n=137)	0.21	-0.26*	0.16	-0.32*

* $p<0.05$

In most cases, the correlations between threat and rejection and between qualitative interactions and rejection do not change drastically after holding different group variables constant. However, in some interesting cases, the correlation between qualitative interactions and rejection is unusually high. The most notable group in this context is respondents whose parents were born in the former U.S.S.R. For this group, the correlation between rejection (both general and personal) and interaction was actually stronger than the correlation between rejection and threat. Additionally, qualitative interaction strongly correlates with rejection among respondents whose parents were born in Africa or Asia. Another group that has an unusually strong correlation between personal rejection and interaction is those who defined

themselves as traditional Jews; one can see that on the personal level, interaction has a stronger correlation for traditional Jews, than threat. These findings are to be treated with caution, as all these groups had a relatively low number of respondents. Nevertheless, they are significant and call for further investigation.

Moreover, there is a notable difference between the correlation of threat and rejection before holding self-reported ideology constant and after it. The correlation is remarkably weaker among all three ideological groups: left wing, centrist and right wing. This difference is of no surprise, given the strong correlation between the threat scale and self-reported ideology. It is therefore imperative to conduct linear regression analysis to compare each variable's unique effect on rejection.

Linear Regressions

We have conducted six linear regression analyses: three for each dependent variable (general rejection and personal rejection). For each dependent variable, two regressions were conducted using the 1 year quantitative interaction scale to measure quantitative interaction, and one regression was conducted using the 5 year quantitative interaction scale. Furthermore, for each dependent variable, the statistic interaction between being secular and experiencing qualitative interaction was tested (with the 1 year quantitative interaction scale to measure quantitative interaction). The results are as follows:

Table 5: Linear Regression, General Rejection (N=413)

	General Rejection		
Constant	0.09	0.09	0.17
Threat	0.233*	0.233*	0.225*
(Standardized)	0.21	0.21	0.2
Quantitative Interaction (1 year)	-0.006	-	-0.01
(Standardized)	-0.007		-0.011
Quantitative Interaction (5 years)	-	-0.002	-
(Standardized)		-0.002	
Qualitative Interaction	-0.094*	-0.096*	-0.267*
(Standardized)	-0.1	-0.1	-0.29
Self-reported Ideology	0.438*	0.438*	0.439*
(Standardized)	0.54	0.54	0.54
Mizrahi	0.01	0.01	0.011
(Standardized)	0.02	0.02	0.02
Former USSR	0.013	0.013	0.011
(Standardized)	0.01	0.01	0.01
Education (College Degree)	-0.018	-0.018	-0.02
(Standardized)	-0.03	-0.03	-0.04
Secular	-0.052*	-0.052*	-0.17*
(Standardized)	-0.1	-0.1	-0.34
Secular*Qualitative Interaction			0.255*
R^2	0.631*	0.631*	0.648*

* $p < 0.05$

Table 6: Linear Regression, Personal Rejection (N=413)

	Personal Rejection		
Constant	0.12	0.12	0.26
Threat	0.232*	0.232*	0.218*
(Standardized)	0.16	0.16	0.15
Quantitative Interaction (1 year)	0.02*		0.013
(Standardized)	0.017		0.011
Quantitative Interaction (5 years)		0.013	
(Standardized)		0.010	
Qualitative Interaction	-0.183*	-0.179*	-0.476*
(Standardized)	-0.16	-0.16	-0.42
Self-reported Ideology	0.375*	0.374*	0.378*
(Standardized)	0.37	0.37	0.37
Mizrahi	0	0	0.007
(Standardized)	0	0	0.01
Former USSR	0.009	0.009	0.007
(Standardized)	0.007	0.007	0.001
Education (College Degree)	-0.013	-0.014	-0.016
(Standardized)	-0.02	-0.02	-0.02
Secular	-0.15*	-0.15*	-0.349*
(Standardized)	-0.02	-0.02	-0.56
Secular*Qualitative Interaction			0.434*
R^2	0.495*	0.495*	0.525*

* $p<0.05$

Before addressing the regression coefficients, we must address the possibility of multicollinearity and heteroscedasticity. The strong correlation between threat and self-reported ideology suggests a problem of multicollinearity. However, a VIF test indicates that there is no severe multicollinearity between the independent variable – for each of the variables, the VIF value does not exceed 2.16. We must also assure that there is no heteroscedasticity, meaning the error term has a constant variance across all independent variables. The p value of the Breusch Pagan Godfrey test for all of the independent variables together, and for each and every one of them separately, is extremely low ($p<0.001$), meaning heteroscedasticity exists in our model. Therefore, we had to rerun our regression with heteroskedasiticity consistent

standard errors. Heteroscedasticity-consistent standard errors regression had showed that the coefficients and their significance did not drastically change after taking heteroscedasticity into account. Finally, we would like to point out that for all six regressions the error term is normally distributed.

Several patterns are evident in the regression tables. First, R^2 values in all six equations are relatively high. These results suggest that the combination of threat from Arabs, qualitative interaction with Arabs, self-reported ideology and demographic variables such as education, ethnicity and religiosity account for much of the variation of rejectionist attitudes. The R^2 value for general rejection is somewhat higher than the R^2 value for personal rejection. This difference possibly suggests that there might another factor that was left out of the equation and heavily affects rejection towards Arabs as individuals.

Second, both of the quantitative interaction scales are not significant predictors of rejection in any of the equations. Not only the coefficients are extremely low and insignificant, but their positive coefficients in the equations of personal rejection are in the opposite direction to the expected one. It is therefore quite safe to determine at this point that no evidence was found to support H2. The quantity of contact between Israeli Jews and Arabs does not seem to be a decisive factor of any kind in the reduction of rejectionist attitudes among Jewish Israelis. Other variables that proved to be insignificant and weakly correlated with rejection are education and race (both Mizrahi and Former USSR).

As for the threat scale, the regression equation shows once again that it is strongly related to rejection. It appears to have the same impact on general rejection and personal rejection of Arabs. Although its unique effect is not as strong as the effect of self-reported ideology, threat does account for a considerable degree of the variation in the level of rejection. This evidence supports H1- although perceived threat is not a sole predictor of rejectionist attitudes towards Arabs, it is indeed correlated with it.

The situation is a little more complex when examining the relations between threat, qualitative interaction, ideology and rejectionist attitudes. Self-reported ideology proves to be a strong predictor of rejectionist attitudes in general and of personal rejection as well. A comparison of the standardized coefficients shows that even

though threat is a strong predictor of rejection, its effect is not as strong as the effect of self-reported ideology. Although threat strongly correlates with self-reported ideology, meaning people with a right wing ideology are more likely to express high level of threat, the unique effect of self-reported ideology is stronger than the unique effect of threat. It is worth noting that similar regression equations that were calculated after excluding the independent variable of self-reported ideology produced lower levels of R^2, meaning the variable accounts for a decent degree of the variation in the rejection scales. It appears then that when an Israeli Jew defines herself as a "leftist" or a "rightist", she implies a great deal about her attitudes towards Arabs in general and about her attitudes towards Arabs as individuals.

The significant interaction factor between the qualitative interaction variable and secularity means we cannot analyze the effect of each of these variables separately. Qualitative interaction with Arabs was found significant only among non-secular respondents. For the secular respondents, qualitative interaction did not prove to be a significant factor of rejectionist attitude. The following graph demonstrates the effect of qualitative interaction on rejection of Arabs among secular and non-secular respondents:

Graph2: Predicted effect of qualitative interaction on general rejection
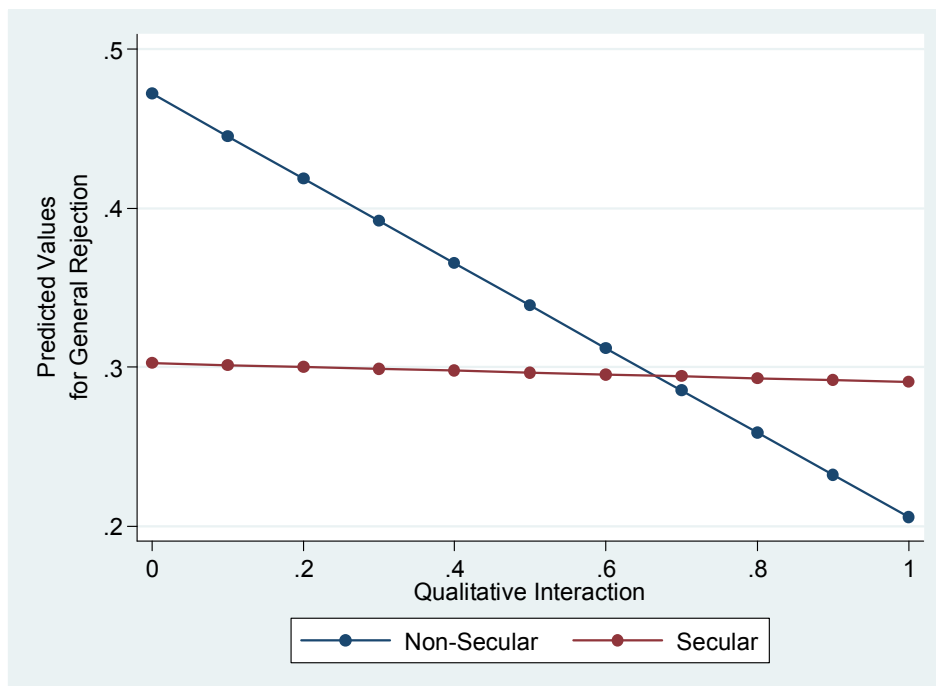
*Control variables are held constant in their mean values. The slope for secular respondents is -0.012, and is insignificant (p=0.762); the slope for non-secular respondents is -0.267 and is significant (p<0.001).

Graph3: Predicted effect of qualitative interaction on personal rejection
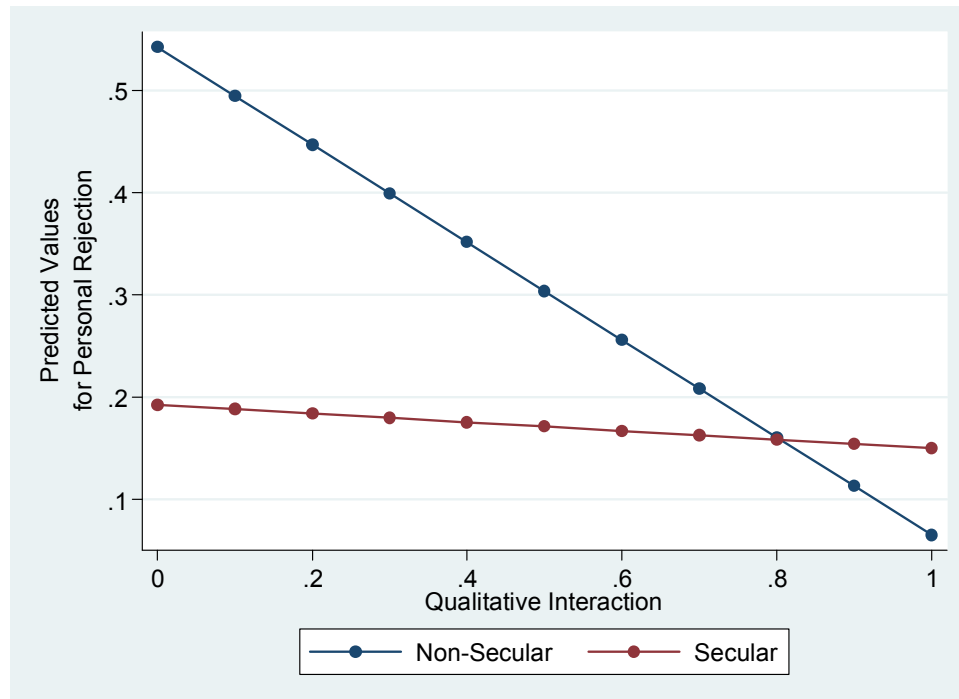
*Control variables are held constant in their mean values. The slope for secular respondents is -0.0426, and is insignificant (p=-0.0426); the slope for non-secular respondents is -0.476and is significant (p<0.001).

The difference between secular and non-secular respondents in respect to qualitative interaction is striking: while the qualitative interaction scale fails to account the level of rejection among seculars, it is a decent predictor of rejection among non-seculars. For secular respondents, the level of both general and personal rejections remains the same across all levels of qualitative interaction. For non-seculars, however, the situation is quite different: higher levels of interaction decrease the level of rejection drastically.

The initial predicted level rejection for a secular person who does not interact with Arabs is much lower than the predicted level of rejection for a non-secular with a similarly low level of interaction. But as interaction levels increase, non-secular's rejection decreases, up to a point after which the non-secular's predicted level of rejection drops below the secular's predicted level of rejection. Not too surprisingly, the unique effect of qualitative interaction in comparison with threat increases after changing the dependent variable from general rejection to personal rejection. As a matter of fact, the measured effect of qualitative interaction on non-secular respondents' level of personal rejection was stronger than the effect of both threat and self-reported ideology.

This evidence is somewhat contradictory to the perception of religious people as more dogmatic than secular people. An explanation for the difference between the two might be possible: One can say that religious people who do not interact with the outgroup tend to emphasize the religious differences, while religious people who do interact with the outgroup may notice the similarities between religious beliefs and practices. For instance, a religious Jew who has strong personal relations with an Arab person will notice the similarities between his own religion and the Arab's religion (be it Islam or Christianity) far more easily than a religious Jew who does not interact with Arabs.

This suggests that while threat is a strong predictor of rejection in general, qualitative interaction is relatively as effective as threat to predict non-secular Jews' rejection toward Arabs on the personal level. These results provide moderate support to H3: while qualitative intergroup interaction does not seem to reduce rejectionist attitudes in the same manner for everyone, it certainly plays an important role for those who have strong religious affiliation.

Still in the context of qualitative interaction, we wished to examine cooperation with Arabs, which is one of the basic components of the additive scale more closely. Respondents were asked to rate the level of cooperation they had with Arabs in the past, ranging from constantly to no interaction at all. We then compared the means of both general and personal rejection in respect to the level of cooperation. The results are as follows:

Graph4: Means Comparison, General Rejection and Personal Rejection (During your encounters with Arabs, did you have to cooperate with them in order to achieve a common goal?)
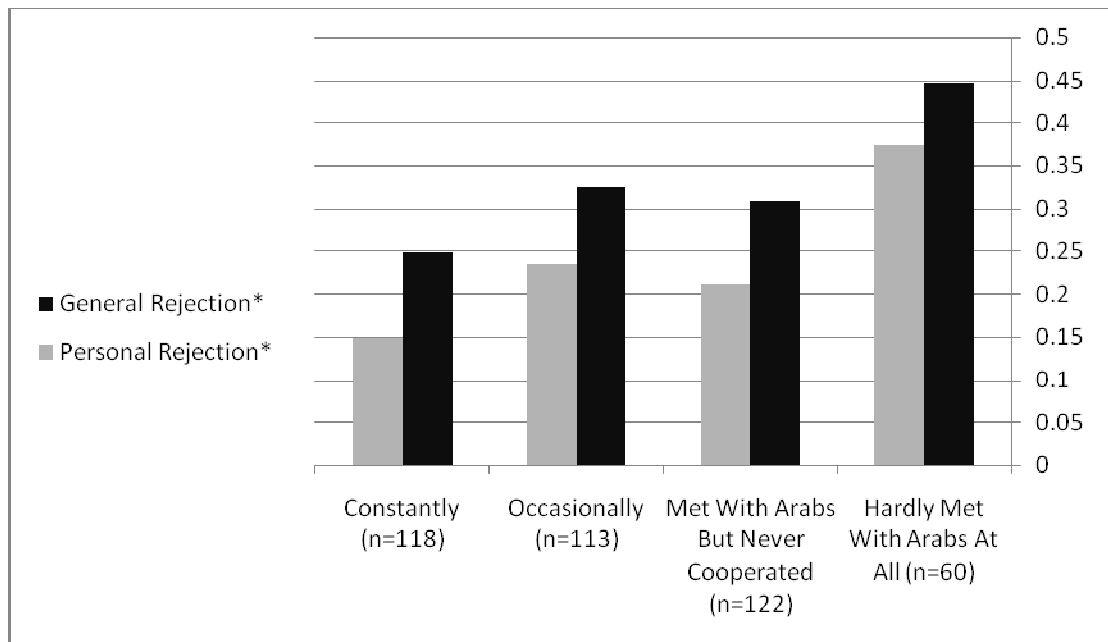
* p<0.001

These results are quite supportive of our hypothesis about qualitative interaction. It appears that those who had to constantly cooperate with Arabs displayed the lowest levels of both general and personal rejection. Those who did not regularly cooperate or hardly ever met Arabs at all tend to display greater rejection toward Arabs. Nevertheless it appears that those who cooperated with Arabs only on occasional basis show a similar level of rejectionist attitudes (both on the general and the personal levels) as the ones who never cooperated with Arabs before. It is possible that only a constant interaction with Arabs and pursuit of common goals and objectives is associated with lower levels of rejectionist attitudes. Clearly this does not imply that qualitative interaction is the *cause* of reducing rejectionist attitudes.

Conclusions

Our research relied on two main theoretical pillars: ethnic competition theory and intergroup contact theory. It was our belief that various conditions, namely perceived threat and lack of substantial contacts between Jewish and Arab Israelis foster rejectionist attitudes. Nonetheless, the relative effect of each of these factors individually was unclear and demanded further investigation. The main attempt of this

research was to achieve better understanding of the actual relationship between these two theories.

The evidence presented here supports our hypotheses in part. Substantively, the results indicate that both ethnic competition theory and intergroup theory account for a considerable part of the variation in rejectionist attitudes. H1 is strongly supported by the findings, indicating that high level of perceived threat strongly correlates with high levels of rejectionist attitudes. The relationship is strong, even holding constant gender, education, economic stability and ethnicity (the only weak correlation was found among those who defined themselves as rightist or leftist, indicating the strong relationship between self-reported ideology and rejection). Nevertheless, it is not possible to state that this correlation implies causation, and we cannot argue that the true relationship between threat and rejection is unidirectional. It is therefore unclear whether attempts to reduce feelings of threat constitute a prescription for preventing the escalation of anti-Arab sentiment.

On the other hand, no evidence was available to support H2. The quantity of the encounters between Israeli Jews and Arabs proved to be insignificant determinants of rejectionist attitudes. Nevertheless, future distinction between the quantity of encounters in different settings, i.e. workplace, school or recreation, may show that quantity of interaction does matter in certain contexts.

As for qualitative intergroup interaction, the evidence offer limited support to H3. Qualitative interaction proved to negatively correlate with rejectionist attitudes only among non-secular respondents – traditional, religious and Haredi Jews. In the context of rejectionist attitudes of non-seculars on individual terms (approval of individual socializing with Arab people), the effect of qualitative interaction proved to be even stronger than the effect of threat and self-reported ideology. The results suggest that while seculars tend to shape their attitudes toward Arabs with little or no regard to their actual social interaction with them, non-seculars' rejectionist attitudes closely interact with such contacts, perhaps because these contacts emphasize similarities between religions. It is possible then that the lack or weakness of religious affiliation hinders the effect of qualitative in a certain manner. In addition, a closer examination in one of the most central components of the qualitative scale - the pursuit of common goals - indicates that a constant qualitative interaction with Arabs

is indeed related to low levels of rejectionist attitudes. In any case, further investigation of the relationship between qualitative interaction and religious beliefs – including sharper definitions of religious beliefs –may give a clearer picture of the manner in which interaction and religion affect rejectionist attitudes.

However, we have learned that ideology is the great unknown in the context of rejectionist attitudes. Self-reported ideology proved to be a major predictor of such attitudes, either towards Arabs as a whole or towards Arab individuals. This finding suggests that a systematic analysis of political ideology and its construction must be combined with traditional theories of threat and contact in order to enhance the understanding of the development of rejectionist attitudes. Although it seems that ideology is the strongest predictor of such attitudes, it is clear that ideology (let alone self-reported ideology, which makes the term prone to various interpretations) is only one of various factors that affect rejection. The role of ideology, which obviously plays a decent role in this context, is yet to be fully determined.

In the context of our research, several explanations for the decisive role of self-reported ideology are possible. The self-reported scale might be highly idiosyncratic. It is not farfetched to assume that when respondents were asked to report their ideological affiliation, they tended to rely on their own subjective attitude towards Arabs in order to place themselves on the ideological spectrum. In this sense, when a respondent ranks herself as a leftist, what she actually meant is: "I have positive attitudes towards Arabs". If this is true, then it might not be a matter of ideology but of idiosyncrasy. It is also possible that ideology is itself a dependent variable, and is affected by threat, interaction or demographic variables. Different levels of rejectionist attitudes towards Arabs might not be the result of ideology, but rather its cause.

However, the ideological factor must be taken into account in any future research. Only a more sophisticated scale of political ideology, which identifies and distinguishes among the different ideological dimensions, would help researchers better explore the ideological effect. Even though the scale we used suffered from clear oversimplification, it is not unreasonable that some of the core features of political ideology in Israel deeply correlate with rejectionist attitudes towards Arabs.

A final remark in this context is that one must keep in mind the character of our sample. We are confident that a greater demographic diversity of the research sample could provide a more thorough understanding of the relationship between political ideologies, rejectionist attitudes and demographic features. The fact that we found some notable differences in the level of rejection within the different religious and ethnic groups in Israel emphasizes this point.

Although none of the scales measuring perceived threat, interaction with Arabs, rejectionist attitudes towards Arabs and self-reported ideology investigated here can be considered finished products, there are reasons to assume that further work would produce scales that are more sensitive and reliable. As we noted above, there is still much room for additional scales that measure economic situation, religiosity and several demographic features.

We prefer to consider this research as just a beginning. More thought is necessary to explore and measure the effect of perceived threat and intergroup interaction. Based on our theoretical background, we have assumed threat and interaction affect rejectionist attitudes, but not vice versa. As we have noted above, this might be an oversimplification. A careful investigation of the dynamics of threat and intergroup interaction that will help us better understand the sources of rejectionist attitudes in Israel, is still much needed.

Bibliography

Allport, G. W. (1954/1979). *The Nature of Prejudice*.Boston: Beacon Press.

Amir, Y. (1969). Contact hypothesis in ethnic relations. *Psychological Bulletin*, 71, 319–342.

Amir, Y. (1976).The role of intergroup contact in change in prejudice and race relations. In Katz, P. and Taylor, D. A. (Eds.), *Towards the Elimination of Racism*. New York: Pergamon Press, pp. 245–308.

Amir, Y. and Ben-Ari, R. (1986). Internationaltourism, ethnic contact, and attitude change. *Journal of Social Issues*, 41, 105–115.

Austin, W. G. and Worchel, S. (1979). *The Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations*. Monterey, California: Brooks/Cole.

Bar-Tal, D., & Teichman, Y. (2005).*Stereotypes and prejudice in conflict: Representations of Arabs in Israeli Jewish society*. Cambridge University Press.

Bobo, L. D. (1988). Group conflict, prejudice, and the paradox of contemporary racial attitudes. In Katz, P. A. and Taylor, D. A. (Eds.), *Eliminating Racism. Profiles in Controversy*. New York: Plenum Press, pp. 85–114.

Coser, L. A. (1956).*The Function of Social Conflict*. Glencoe, Illinois: Free Press.

Dixon, J. C. and Rosenbaum, M. S. (2004). Nice to know you? Testing contact, cultural and group threat theories of anti-Black and anti-Hispanic stereotypes. *Social Science Quarterly*, 85, 257–280.

Halperin, E., Canetti‐Nisim, D., & Hirsch‐Hoefler, S. (2009). The Central Role of Group‐Based Hatred as an Emotional Antecedent of Political Intolerance: Evidence from Israel. *Political Psychology*, *30*(1), 93-123.

Hermann, T. Atmor, N. Heller E & Lebel Y. (2012). *The Israeli Democracy Index 2012*. Jerusalem, Israel: The Israel Democracy Institute.

Kupermintz*, H., Rosen, Y., Salomon, G. and Husisi R. (2007). *Mutual Perceptions of Jewish and Arab youth in Israel: 2004-2005*. Haifa, Israel: University of Haifa

LeVine, R. A. and Campbell, D. T. (1972). *Ethnocentrism: Theories of Conflict, Ethnic Attitudes, and Group Behaviour*. New York: John Wiley and Sons.

McLaren, L. M. (2003). Anti-immigrant prejudice in Europe: contact, threat perception, and preferences for the exclusion of migrants. *Social Forces*, 81, 909–936.

Pettigrew, T. F. and Tropp, L. R. (2006).A meta-analytic test of intergroup contact theory. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 90, 751–783.

Scheepers, P., Gijsberts, M. and Coenders, M. (2002).Ethnic exclusionism in European countries. Public opposition to civil rights for legal migrants as a response to perceived ethnic threat. *European Sociological Review*, 18, 17–34.

Smooha, S. (2004*).Index of Arab–Jewish Relations in Israel*. Haifa, Israel: The Jewish–Arab Center, University of Haifa.

הרמן, ת. יוכטמן-יער, א. (1997). היש מנדט לשלום? דעת הקהל בישראל והתהליך המדיני. בתוך כספי, ד. (עורך). תקשורת ודמוקרטיה בישראל, 222-191. –

http://www.nrg.co.il/online/1/ART1/561/972.html (27/4/2013)
http://www.haaretz.co.il/news/education/1.1806596 (27/4/2013)

Appendix: Scale Construction

Rejectionist attitudes - general

The items included in the scale are as follows:

- In general, how would you define your attitudes towards Arabs in Israel? (1-4, strongly positive to strongly negative)
- Would you approve if an Arab family will move in to your neighborhood? (1-4, Definitely yes to definitely no)
- Would you agree to have an Arab Israeli friend of your age? (1-4, Definitely yes to definitely no)
- If an Arab of your age invited you over to his house, would you go? (1-4, Definitely yes to definitely no)

To what degree do you agree with the following statements? (1-4, strongly agree to strongly disagree)

- Arabs in Israel are deprived in comparison with Jews
- Arabs in Israel should be given cultural autonomy
- The Israeli government should encourage Arabs to migrate out of Israel*
- Arabs in Israel pose a risk to security*
- Arabs in Israel are a burden on the Israeli economy*
- Arabs in Israel take away Jews' jobs*
- The Israeli government should allocate additional funding to improve the economic situation of Arabs*

* Items were later reversed so that the highest value represented a more rejectionist attitude.

All items proved to be highly consistent with each other (α=0.91) and were recoded to a 0-1 additive scale of rejection.

Rejectionist attitudes - personal

- Would you approve if an Arab family will move in to your neighborhood?
- Would you agree to have an Arab Israeli friend of your age?
- If an Arab of your age invited you over to his house, would you go?

These three items highly correlate with each other (α=0.87). They were recoded to a 0-1 additive scale of personal rejection.

Feeling of threat

The items included in the scale are as follows:

- Do you feel an existential threat on the state of Israel? (1-4, Definitely not to definitely)

To what degree you feel the following situation poses a threat? (1-5, Not at all to very much so)

- Giving away territories for peace.
- The loss of the Jewish majority in Israel.
- An independent Palestinian state.
- The continuation of the Intifada.
- A war with Syria.

All items proved to be reasonably consistent with each other (α=0.70) and were recoded to a 0-1additive scale of threat.

Interaction with Arabs (quantitative):

The items included in the scale are as follows:

- Did you interact with Arabs in your workplace during the last year? (1- Constantly, 2- Occasionally, over 10 times, 3- Occasionally, under 10 times, 4- Not at all, 5- N/a)
- Did you interact with Arabs in your workplace during the last five years?
- Did you interact with Arabs in your school or college during the last year?
- Did you interact with Arabs in your workplace during the last five years?
- Did you interact with Arabs while using public transportation during the last year?
- Did you interact with Arabs while using public transportation during the last five years?
- Did you interact with Arabs in times of recreation or leisure during the last year?
- Did you interact with Arabs in times of recreation or leisure during the last five years?

Two additive scales were computed, one for interaction during the last year and another one for interaction over the last 5 years. Both scales had a fair level of internal consistency (α =0.51 for the last year, α =0.49 for the last 5 years).

Interaction with Arabs (qualitative):

The items included in the scale are as follows:

- Do you, or did you ever have an Arab friend? (Yes-No)
- During your interaction with Arabs at work, were you on an equal status with them? [i.e. same rank, same salary level, etc.] (1- Always, 2- Sometimes equal, sometimes different, 3- No, I was above the Arab person, 4- No, the Arab person was above me, 5- I have never worked with Arabs, 6- n/a)*
- During your interaction with Arabs at school or college, were you on an equal status with them? [i.e. classmates] (1- Always, 2- Sometimes equal, sometimes different, 3- No, I was above the Arab person, 4- No, the Arab person was above me, 5- I have never studied with Arabs, 6- n/a)*
- When meeting with Arabs, did you have to cooperate to pursue a common goal? Was cooperation necessary? (1- Constantly, 2- Occasionally, 3- I have met Arabs but cooperation was not necessary, 4- I have barely interacted with Arabs).*
- Have you ever spoken to an Arab person about the problems between Arabs and Jews (1-4, never to many times)?

* Items were later recoded so that the highest value represented a qualitative interaction (equal status, high level of cooperation).

All five items proved to be fairly consistent with each other (α=0.56) and were recoded to a 0-1 additive scale of qualitative interaction.