

Explaining the Occurrence and Dynamics of Dominant Group Violence:
Uncertainty, Threat, and Israeli Settler Violence in the West Bank

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Dedication

To my wife Danielle for her unyielding love, support, encouragement and understanding.

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Why do dominant ethnic groups perpetrate violence against ethnic minorities and why does this violence vary in its frequency, severity, target choice, and level of popular participation over time?

Addressing the first question, I argue that existing explanations of dominant group violence lack a unifying theoretical framework that explains why dominant group violence occurs. In order to address this lacuna, I propose an explanation of dominant group violence founded on the social-psychological concept of uncertainty that can account for a range of existing explanations.

I build on the theoretical distinction between physical and social threat in order to explain the dynamic nature of dominant group violence. I posit that physically threatening events tend to trigger relatively frequent and severe attacks against minorities by a relatively large proportion of the dominant group. In contrast, socially threatening events tend to trigger attacks against symbolic sites representing the culture and identity of ethnic minorities by a relatively small and intolerant subsection of the population.

In order to test my theoretical arguments, I employ a mixed methods research design relying on the West Bank as the primary case of analysis. The quantitative portion of my analysis uses both time-series regression and district-level descriptive analyses of an original dataset of contentious activities in the West Bank and East Jerusalem (2010-2015). In order to examine the mechanisms underlying the quantitative results further, I conduct a historical case study of anti-

Arab violence by Jewish civilians in Israel-Palestine from 1929 through 2015. The qualitative analysis builds on secondary literature and approximately 50 original interviews with Israeli settlers conducted in the West Bank in 2016 and 2017.

This research helps to bridge existing explanations of dominant group violence by developing a unifying theoretical framework and adds nuance to theoretical arguments linking threat and political violence. The results of the study suggest that as long as ethnonationalist sentiments remain entrenched, attempts to resolve ethnic conflict that do not fundamentally alter horizontal political inequalities are likely to exacerbate rather than moderate intercommunal conflict.

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Table of Contents

Introduction:.....	1
Dominant Group Violence: Conceptualizing the Object of Study.....	5
Dominant ethnic groups:	5
Ethnic Violence:	8
Dominant Group Violence:	9
Selecting a theoretical approach for explaining dominant group violence:	13
Ideational theories:	13
Behavioral Theories:.....	14
Relational Theories:.....	16
The Case: Jewish settler violence.....	18
The structure of the dissertation:	26
Chapter 1: Ethnic Democracy, Structural Uncertainty, and the Occurrence of Dominant Group Violence	29
Existing research on regime type and domestic conflict:.....	33
Defining ethnic-democracy:	38
Hegemonic ideology:.....	39
Segmented rule:	43
Democratic governance:	44
How ethnic democracies produce minority dissent:	49
Why governments in ethnic-democracies employ a mixed strategy of conflict management:..	55
How the government’s mixed strategy of conflict management produces dominant group violence:	61
Conclusion:.....	65
Chapter 2: Threat and the Dynamics of Dominant Group Violence	67
Threat and political violence: dissidents, governments, and dominant ethnic groups.....	71
An interactive dynamic approach:.....	75
Threat and the dynamics of dominant group violence:	81
Physical threat:	83
Social threat:	90
Relative effects of physical and social threat:	96
Conclusion:.....	103

Chapter 3: Research Design.....	104
Quantitative study of ethnic violence:.....	108
Introducing the West Bank Contentious Events Dataset (WBCED):	113
A rough test of data reliability:	133
Qualitative analysis:	136
Conclusion:.....	138
Chapter 4: Data Analysis	140
The post-second Intifada period:.....	141
Uncertainty and spatial variation in the level of Israeli settler violence:	147
Testing rival hypotheses for dominant group violence:	152
Demographic polarization argument:	152
Social isolation argument:	153
Vigilantism argument:	154
Temporal variation in Israeli settler violence:.....	157
Regression Models:	158
Dependent variables:	164
Independent variables:.....	166
Results:	167
Physical threats and the frequency of dominant group violence:.....	168
Social threats and the frequency of dominant group violence:	171
Relative effects of physical and social threats on the frequency of dominant group violence:	173
Relative effects of physical and social threats on the severity of dominant group violence:	175
Physical threats, social threats, and target choice:.....	181
Conclusion:.....	184
Chapter 5: Qualitative Analysis	186
How uncertainty helps to explain both the occurrence and absence of dominant group violence in Israel-Palestine:	187
Uncertainty and the 1949-1967 “interregnum”: A Puzzle.....	187
The emergence of uncertainty in the West Bank:.....	196
The perception of uncertainty among Israeli settlers:	202
Uncertainty and the reemergence of anti-Jewish violence (1967-1979):.....	204

How variation in the level of physical and social threat helps to explain the dynamics of Israeli settler violence:	209
The perception of physical threat in the West Bank:.....	210
The perception of social threat in the West Bank:.....	215
Physical threat, social threat, and the history of Israeli settler violence: A Periodization ..	218
Conclusion:	255
Theoretical contributions and policy implications:.....	257
Democratization and ethnic violence:	257
Theories of dominant group violence:.....	259
Threat and ethnic violence:.....	264
Israeli settler violence:.....	267
Future work:	270
Bibliography:	276

List of Tables:

Table 3.1 Summary statistics for Israeli settler attacks (2010-2015).....	118
Table 3.2 Settler attacks by tactic and district (2010-2015)	119
Table 3.3 Palestinian violence by district (2010-2015)	123
Table 3.4 Palestinian demonstrations against the Israeli occupation by district (2010-2015)....	124
Table 3.5 State repression by district (2010-2015).....	127
Table 3.6 Settlement evacuations and expansion by district (2010-2015)	130
Table 3.7 Settler population by district (2010-2015).....	132
Table 4.1 District level variation in settlement activities and Israeli settler violence in the West Bank (2010-2015).....	148
Table 4.2 District level variation in demographic characteristics and Israeli settler violence in the West Bank (2010-2015).....	154
Table 4.3 District level variation in Palestinian dissent, state repression of Palestinians, and Israeli settler violence in the West Bank (2010-2015).....	155
Table 4.4 Event types in the regression models and their corresponding measures by arena of interaction	158
Table 4.5 Effects of conflict events on the frequency of Israeli settler violence	167
Table 4.6 Temporal processes for settler attacks by type of attack	176
Table 4.7 Effects of independent variables on violent tactics (day)	178
Table 4.8 Effects of independent variables on violent tactics (week)	179
Table 4.9 Correlation matrix for violent tactics and overall frequency of Israeli settler violence	183
Table 5. 1 Periodization of threat regimes for Jewish settlers in the Occupied Palestinian Territories and patterns of Israeli settler violence against Palestinians (1967-2015)	219

List of Figures:

Figure 1.1 How ethnic democracy increases the likelihood of dominant group violence	32
Figure 3.1 Map of Administrative districts in the West Bank	114
Figure 3.2 Number of clashes between Israeli security forces and Palestinians as reported by official Israeli and Palestinian sources (2010-2015).....	134
Figure 4.1 Time-series of incidents of Israeli settler violence (2010-2015).....	141
Figure 4.2 Time-series of clashes between Palestinians and Israeli security forces in the West Bank (2010-2015)	142
Figure 4.3 Time-series of organized Palestinian demonstrations and Israeli security forces in the West Bank (2010-2015).....	143
Figure 4.4 Time-series of clashes between Palestinians and Israeli security forces in the West Bank and Israeli military raids (June 1, 2014 – August 27, 2014)	145
Figure 5.1 Settler attacks on Palestinian Religious Sites (2010-2015).....	251
Figure 5.2 Firebombings of Palestinian homes (2010-2015)	252

Introduction:

This dissertation asks two questions: why do non-state actors from dominant ethnic groups perpetrate violence against ethnic minorities and what accounts for the dynamics of that violence? In other words, why does dominant group violence occur and why does it vary in frequency, severity, target choice, and level of popular participation over time?

Violent conflict around the globe is increasingly characterized both by its occurrence within state boundaries as well as between ethnic identity groups (Horowitz 1985, Brubaker and Laitin 1998, 424-5).¹ According to one estimate, 82 percent of the world's independent states comprise two or more ethnic groups, which are often involved in disputes either with each other or with the state itself (Toft 2003).² Most of these conflicts occur at a low level of intensity most of the time – that is, they are not carried out by paramilitary groups, but rather are perpetrated in a non-militarized manner by some members of rival ethnic communities in localized areas (Balcells, Daniels, and Escribà-Folch 2016, 36). Understanding the causes and dynamics of this type of violence is important because these events can prevent the building of inter-ethnic trust and are socially and economically disruptive (Balcells, Daniels, and Escribà-Folch 2016, 34,

¹ While some debate has occurred around the definition of ethnicity, scholars generally acknowledge two important criteria: membership is 'decent based' and it is perceptible to in-group and out-group members (Chandra 2006).

What is most important, in other words, is that ethnic identities are 'sticky,' (relatively) visible, and salient.

This global trend toward intrastate conflict and the increasing saliency of ethnic identities in these conflicts has produced a plethora of scholarship focusing on ethnic violence (Horowitz 1985, 1999, 2001, Kaufman 2001, Lake and Rothchild 1996, Olzak 1992, Lyall 2010, Posen 1993, Toft 2003, Williams 1994, Brubaker and Laitin 1998, Varshney 2002, 2007, Snyder 2000).

² Others have estimated that the number of multi-ethnic states stands at over 90 percent (Connor 1994: 96).

Blair, Blattman, and Hartman 2017). In addition, persistent low-intensity violence can escalate into more severe confrontations, which can increase the incentives for the re-emergence of armed groups and large-scale political violence (Balcells, Daniels, and Escribà-Folch 2016, 34, Wimmer, Cederman, and Min 2009).³

Recent research has shown that violent conflict is particularly likely to occur in polarized societies, where a single dominant ethnic group controls the state's institutions while systematically excluding large minority populations from positions of political power (Collier 2001, Collier, Hoeffler, and Rohner 2009, Cederman, Wimmer, and Min 2010, Wimmer 2002). Charles Tilly's polity model is instructive here. The model differentiates between three independent domestic actors: government agents, polity members, and challengers (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001, Tilly 1978).⁴ *Governments* are "substantial, durable, bounded organization[s] that exercise control over the major concentrated means of coercion within some territory" (Tilly 2003, 9). *Polity members* are constituted political actors enjoying routine access to government agents and resources; *challengers* are constituted political actors lacking that routine access.⁵ Cederman, Wimmer, and Min (2010) adopt Tilly's polity model to the context of

³ Lapses into systematic, extremist violence are an ever-present danger in protracted social conflicts. As of 2009, for example, the Political Instability Task Force has identified 43 episodes of genocide or politicide in the global system since 1955 (Marshall and Cole 2009, 17).

⁴ The authors also include outside actors and subjects in their static polity model. The current analysis focuses on domestic dynamics of ethnic violence and therefore focuses primarily on actors engaging in contentious actions.

⁵ Constituted actors refer to "those that have names, internal organization, and repeated interactions with each other in the realm of public politics" broadly defined (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001, 11). Their constituted nature is

ethnically divided societies. In the updated model, polity members are members of *included ethnic groups* and challengers are conceptualized as *excluded ethnic groups* – that is, members of an ethnic group excluded from state power. Dominant groups represent a subset of included ethnic groups. Specifically, dominant groups are those ethnic groups that have successfully taken control of the state’s institutional framework.⁶

Most of the ethnic violence literature focuses on challenges to state authority by ethnic groups largely excluded from state power (minorities) and the response of governments defending their sovereignty. While the acknowledgement of dominant group participation in ethnic conflict is not new (e.g. Horowitz 1985), dominant ethnic groups are often overlooked in analyses of ethnic violence because of a narrow focus on the repressive activities of government agents (Earl 2003, 46, Davenport 2005, x). However, members of dominant ethnic groups also perpetrate ethnic violence independently from the state (Rosenbaum and Sederberg 1976b).⁷ This form of violence is often highly consequential not only because it is destructive, but also because it tends to exacerbate state-challenger contention (Maney 2005, 2016, Alimi and Hirsch-Hoefler 2012, Grubb 2016).

what differentiates dominant group members and challengers from “subjects” – persons and groups not currently organized into constituted political actors.

⁶ While small non-dominant ethnic groups that ally themselves with the government may also have routine access to government agents and resources, they do not enjoy the same level of access or favor as dominant ethnic groups.

⁷ Goldstone (2003, 9), makes similar argument when he points out that “the notion that there are in-groups and out-groups, and that the latter engage in protest while the former engage in politics, is a caricature with little relationship to reality.”

Those studies of ethnic violence that do differentiate between dominant groups and government agents have found that governments, dominant ethnic groups, and dissenting minorities tend to perpetrate violence for different reasons (e.g. Maney 2005, White 1993a, Cavanaugh 1997). Consequently, recent work has increasingly highlighted the importance of theorizing the specific causes of dominant group violence (e.g. Horowitz 2001, Maney 2005, Pedahzur and Perliger 2003, Kaufman 2015, Kaufmann and Haklai 2008, White 1999) in addition to the regimes they control (Maney 2016, 163-182, Tilly and Tarrow 2007).⁸

Despite being relatively common, the occurrence of dominant group violence is puzzling. While ethnic exclusion is likely to foster significant grievances among ethnic minorities excluded from state power, it should have the opposite effect on members of the dominant group because of the political, cultural, and economic advantages exclusionary systems afford them (Wimmer 1997, 643, Horowitz 1985). In addition, the state's security forces are likely to work closely with the dominant group on issues of security (Rosenbaum and Sederberg 1976b, 14-16) and are less likely to employ severe repression in their interactions with them (White 1999, White and White 1995). Why would dominant groups choose to perpetrate violence against ethnic minorities in such a context?

In addition, while the extant literature explaining dissent and rebellion by minorities has largely focused on their grievances and opportunities for rebellion (e.g. Sambanis 2001, Wucherpfennig et al. 2012, Hillesund 2015, Cederman, Weidmann, and Bormann 2015,

⁸ Some examples of dominant group violence are Jewish violence against Palestinians in Israel-Palestine, Protestant violence against Catholics in Northern Ireland, and anti-Muslim violence by Hindus in India and by Buddhists Myanmar.

Cederman, Weidmann, and Gleditsch 2011, Cederman, Wimmer, and Min 2010), these approaches have difficulty explaining the dynamics of dominant group violence. That is, they have trouble explaining temporal variation in the frequency and severity of violent attacks by dominant group members, the types of targets they strike, and the level of popular participation in violent activities. This is because, unlike minority groups, dominant groups tend to maintain a relatively high capacity for violence and relatively low levels of grievance over time. As Oliver (2017) points out, dominant ethnic groups tend to have access to democratic processes for achieving group goals, tend to face relatively low levels of state repression, and, given their close relationship to the government, do not have the same need for allies, identity construction, processes of consciousness raising, and bases of mobilization that minority populations do. This suggests a second puzzle: once radicalization has occurred among members of the dominant ethnic group and intercommunal violence has commenced, what accounts for the dynamics of dominant group violence?

Dominant Group Violence: Conceptualizing the Object of Study

Dominant ethnic groups:

Dominant groups are ethnic groups that are “able to define [their] own standards and cultural markers as normative for the society as a whole” (Rothschild 1981, 103).⁹ Elite members of dominant groups, by definition, hold dominant power in the executive, even if some limited inclusion of “token” members of other groups exists (Cederman, Wimmer, and Min 2010). As such, the existence of a dominant ethnic group assumes a type of “ranked” social order in which

⁹ Smith (1986) referred to these groups as “core ethnic,” arguing that many of them have premodern roots or, at a minimum, propagate myths of ancestry and homeland that justify their dominance.

“the unequal distribution of worth between superiors and subordinates is acknowledged and reinforced by an elaborate set of behavioral prescriptions and prohibitions,” whether formal or informal (Horowitz 1985, 24).

Since the establishment of the post-World War II world order, dominant ethnic groups have increasingly tended to represent a majority (or at a minimum a plurality) of the population within their respective countries. The shift to majority rule is a significant deviation from the premodern period when dominant minorities proliferated (Kaufmann and Haklai 2008) and is closely linked to changing norms surrounding the illegitimacy of minority rule (Wimmer 2002). In their insightful examination of the modern shift from minority to majority rule, Kaufmann and Haklai (2008) explain that in some cases majority ethnic groups work to reinforce their own identity and privilege while simultaneously attempting to craft a more inclusive national identity in order to increase the perceived legitimacy of the regime among minority groups and outside actors. In other cases, dominant ethnicity dominates unabashedly as ethnic nationalism, maintaining little pretense of neutrality. Elites sometimes provide the impetus for the decision to pursue an openly exclusionary regime, but more often pressure toward exclusion is driven by those elites’ ethnic base. Where this is the case, even if state statutes support the notion of inclusive citizenship, exclusionary ethnic narratives and boundaries persist in civil society, the private sphere, and even in portions of the public sphere.

While closely linked to the government, the dominant ethnic group remains independent from state authorities (Alimi and Hirsch-Hoefler 2012, Maney 2016, Tilly and Tarrow 2007, chapter 8). Consequently, the possibility of tensions and conflict between members of the dominant group and government authorities still exists. This is true even when members of the dominant group support the maintenance of an exclusionary regime. Examples of such tensions

abound, both in the context of low-level ethnic conflict and ethnic war. For instance, Protestant militias in Northern Ireland clashed with British authorities during the Troubles, Jewish settlers have clashed with Israeli authorities in the West Bank, and ultra nationalist Sinhalese members of the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) have clashed with Sri Lankan authorities on numerous occasions. In all of these cases, it should be noted, authorities tend to refrain from using severe forms of repression against members of the dominant group because these groups are unlikely to be viewed as an existential threat by authorities given that “their behavior and existence are compatible with the preferences and symbols of the government” (Staniland 2015b, 777).¹⁰ The important point here is that the dominant ethnic group is not synonymous with the government even if members of the dominant group control the state’s institutions and maintain a unique relationship with the government.

¹⁰ It should be noted however that while extreme forms of repression are usually reserved for dissidents from minority populations, directly confronting the state with violence undermines the privilege generally afforded to members of the dominant group. For example, the ultranationalist Sinhalese JVP has long been involved in violence against ethnic Tamils in Sri Lanka. While the government has sanctioned the group in response to their involvement in large scale violence against Tamil civilians, as when the political wing of the JVP was outlawed following the 1983 anti-Tamil riots, the government generally refrained from using repressive tactics normally reserved for Tamil dissidents. However, when the JVP confronted the Sri Lankan state directly, once in 1971 and again in 1987, the government brutally repressed members of the JVP. For this reason, dominant group members are most likely to target members of the excluded group, even if they do so to send a message to the government.

Ethnic Violence:

Ethnic violence is violence that is collective, political, and ethnic in nature. *Violence* here refers to “behavior designed to inflict physical injury on people or destruction of property” (Graham and Gurr 1969) or as “any observable interaction in the course of which persons or objects are seized or physically damaged” (Tilly 1978, 176). *Collective violence* immediately inflicts physical damage on persons and/or objects; involves at least two perpetrators of damage; and results at least in part from coordination among persons who perform the damaging acts (Tilly 2003, 2005b). It should be noted here that an act of violence is conceptualized as collective even when there is only a single perpetrator as long as that act is part of a larger violent campaign (Sprinzak 1999, 312). A terrorist attack by a single suicide bomber, for example, is an act of collective violence, as long the attack is part of a more general pattern of violence by a particular movement or organization.

In the broadest sense, violence becomes *political* when it is perpetrated in order to damage a political adversary (Della Porta 2013, 6).¹¹ More specifically, political violence is a form of “costly signaling” carried out by political actors, including governments, militias, rebel groups, insurgents, terrorist organizations, violent networks, and members of social movements

¹¹ Social movement scholars have tended to conceptualize violent tactics as a part of a more general repertoire of contention that groups may adopt. These tactics range from legal and/or legitimate (e.g. non-violent demonstrations, lobbying, or petitions), to non-violent but illegal and/or illegitimate (e.g. blocking traffic, strikes, squatting), to violent and illegal and/or illegitimate (e.g. violent demonstrations, bombings, and assassinations) (Alimi, Demetriou, and Bosi 2015).

(Kydd and Walter 2006, Valentino 2014, 91). *Ethnic violence*, then, is a subcategory of collective political violence. More specifically, ethnic violence is collective political violence

perpetrated across ethnic lines, in which at least one party is not a state (or a representative of a state), and in which the putative ethnic difference is coded—by perpetrators, targets, influential third parties, or analysts—as having been integral rather than incidental to the violence, that is, in which the violence is coded as having been meaningfully oriented in some way to the different ethnicity of the target (Brubaker and Laitin 1998, 428).

Dominant Group Violence:

Dominant group violence is ethnic violence perpetrated by members of a dominant ethnic group against ethnic minorities. Dominant group violence, then, is not any violence perpetrated by the dominant ethnic group; it requires that the dominant group be the perpetrator of violence and an ethnic minority be the victim.¹² The concept of dominant group violence builds on what Rosenbaum and Sederberg (1976a) call “social group control vigilantism.”¹³ Social group control

¹² This does not imply that dominant group members perpetrate all incidents of violence against ethnic minorities. There are many cases of excluded group members assisting the government in its fight against their ethnic kin. See (Kalyvas 2008, Stanton 2015).

¹³ While the concept of dominant group violence shares some similarities with certain forms of “vigilantism,” I do not adopt the term vigilantism here. The problem with the concept of vigilantism is that it encompasses a wide a range of disparate phenomena (Pratten and Sen 2007, Rosenbaum and Sederberg 1976b, Abrahams 1987, Berg and Wendt 2011) including anti-crime activities (Rosenbaum and Sederberg 1976b, Abrahams 1987, 1998, Buur and Jensen 2004, Adinkrah 2005, Brown 1975), anti-minority violence (Weisburd 1988, Sprinzak 1987, Gazit 2015, Pedahzur and Perliger 2003, Brown 1975, Rosenbaum and Sederberg 1976b), anti-government violence

vigilantism is motivated by a desire to prevent pariah communal, economic, and political groups that threaten the prevailing social order from succeeding in altering the sociopolitical status quo. Social group control vigilantes use categorical targeting strategies, focusing on targets from threatening social groups regardless of their personal participation in dissident activities. Unlike social group control vigilantism, however, dominant group violence does not assume that those perpetrating the violence are supportive of the regime. It does imply, however, that the perpetrators of violence oppose the erosion of the dominant group's advantaged position within the polity.¹⁴

I conceptualize dominant group violence using the weakest link principle – that is, I conceptualize an ethnic group as violent if members of the group carry out regular attacks against ethnic minorities. This conceptualization builds on the group level of analysis approach developed by scholars such as Donald Horowitz and Ted Gurr, who explicitly theorize the causes of group level violence while acknowledging that most members of violent ethnic groups do not personally participate in violent activities (Gurr 1993, Horowitz 1985). This approach is also similar to that of social movement scholars who have attempted to explain the behavior of social movements while acknowledging that these movements lack a coherent structure. Meyer and Staggenborg (1996, 212) put it this way:

(Rosenbaum and Sederberg 1976b), and in-group policing (Silke 1999, Silke and Taylor 2000), making it unwieldy as an explanatory framework.

¹⁴ The implication here is not that members of the dominant group are always motivated to carry out attacks in the interest of staving off the sociopolitical demotion of their ethnic group. Rather, the important point is that dominant group members are unlikely to carry out a violent campaign against minorities if they are opposed to the stratified sociopolitical structure of the regime.

Actors within...movements who agree on many goals may not negotiate a common or coherent strategy; collective actors execute a number of independent strategies within movements with varying degrees of awareness of their allies' efforts. Moreover, strategies continue to change in response to events and actions of others. Nonetheless, by looking at the prevalence of key aspects of strategy over time, we can discern overall patterns in movement strategies. The mix of strategic elements at particular times can provide insight into activists' perceptions of viable political opportunities and their reactions to the actions of opponents, authorities, and other actors and events in the environment.

Consistent with Horowitz and Gurr, the unit of analysis in this dissertation is the ethnic group as opposed to the movement, organization, network, or individual.¹⁵

Dominant groups may perpetrate violence against dissenting minorities in order to alter their behavior or in order to communicate with, and ultimately alter, the behavior of the government. In other words, although ethnic minorities are the victims of dominant group violence by definition, this does not imply that minorities are the intended object of that violence. It is important, therefore, in any analysis of dominant group violence, to account for both what Bergesen (2007) calls two-step and three-step models of collective violence. In the former, the targets of violence are also the objects, while in the latter, the targets and objects of violence differ.¹⁶

¹⁵ This is particularly important given that at the individual level, members of dominant ethnic groups may carry out attacks against ethnic minorities for reasons not directly linked to the conflict. For example, marginal members of the dominant group may carry out violence against excluded group members in an attempt to prove to themselves or to those securely in the dominant group, that they are indeed members (Fearon and Laitin 2000, 857).

¹⁶ The concept of terrorism relies heavily on the distinction between victim and target. According to Bergesen (2007, 112), "the defining property of terrorist violence is the fact that the victim is merely the means to affect the target..." This logic is, for example, central to "outbidding" arguments that contend that organizations carry out violence

There are at least two reasons why dominant groups may attack minorities when the government is the intended audience. One reason is that dominant group violence tends to emerge as “counter-mobilization” when the state yields to challenger demands and the structure of social relations is therefore perceived to be under threat (Maney 2005, Alimi and Hirsch-Hoefler 2012, Rosenbaum and Sederberg 1976b).¹⁷ Both dominant and minority groups understand that the government has the authority to alter the structure of social relations within the polity. Consequently, minorities tend to hold the government responsible for their sociopolitical exclusion. As a result, minorities tend to direct most of their violence against government agents (Hillesund 2017). In contrast, dominant group members tend to view minority dissent as the primary threat to their sociopolitical dominance. Therefore, they tend to direct most of their attacks against minority targets. They do so even when responding to government activities that they perceive as threatening to their social status. So, for example, in Northern Ireland “loyalist myths typically demonize Republicans, [and] Republican myths typically vilify the British.” Consequently, during the Troubles, Loyalist paramilitaries primarily targeted Irish Nationalists, while Republican paramilitaries primarily targeted British soldiers (Maney 2005, 72).

Another reason dominant group members may attack minorities in order to communicate with the government is that they are reluctant to destabilize the regime that privileges their own

against the state or rival ethnic groups in order to increase support for the organization among their ethnic or religious kin (Bloom 2004).

¹⁷ For a discussion of “counter-mobilization” in struggles between mostly non-violent movements and counter-movements see (Meyer and Staggenborg 1996, Zald and Useem 1987).

ethnic group. Therefore, while members of the dominant group may attempt to alter the policies of the government through institutional politics and civil disobedience, they are unlikely to perpetrate severe acts of violence against the government and its agents (e.g. Hellinger, Hershkowitz, and Susser 2018). In the unusual circumstances where dominant group members do attack co-ethnics, they tend to clash with security forces in an attempt to prevent material concessions to minorities or to target specific political officials for assassination (Pedahzur and Perliger 2003).

Selecting a theoretical approach for explaining dominant group violence:

Building on Tilly's (2003) taxonomy, explanations of dominant group violence may be divided into three perspectives: ideational, behavioral, and relational.

Ideational theories:

Ideational theories generally claim that humans acquire beliefs, concepts, rules, goals and values from their environments, reshape their own (and each other's) impulses in conformity with such ideas, and act out their socially acquired ideas. For example, Juergensmeyer (2001) contends that religious beliefs play an important part in radicalizing and mobilizing religious terrorists. Similarly, Moore (2000) views monotheistic religions as fostering gross intolerance and the readiness to kill outsiders because of their sharply drawn distinctions between worthy and unworthy, the pure and the impure.

Relying primarily on ideological factors to explain dominant group violence is problematic, however, because the relationship between ideology and political violence is highly endogenous. Crenshaw (2011), for example, shows that militant organizations rarely rely on consistent ideologies; they borrow elements of various ideologies that serve their interests. This is consistent with evidence suggesting that violent actors adopt religious rhetoric to solve the logistical challenges associated with violence, including access to mobilizing resources and recruitment and retention of members (Isaacs 2016). In addition, case studies of dominant group violence have indicated that the ideological orientations of violent actors are often heterogeneous (e.g. Willems 1995).

While attributing a causal role to ideology is problematic given the endogenous relationship between ideology and political violence, ideology does play an important role in collective political violence. While ideology is malleable, it tends to be “sticky” – that is, it is difficult to alter ideologies drastically in the short-term. Consequently, while ideology is flexible, “it also places limits on the violence agents can justify at any given point in time” (Aran and Hassner 2013). Therefore, ideology does help to determine the boundaries of legitimate behavior in the short-term. However, over time, the perceived efficacy of political violence for achieving group goals tends to shape ideology. Ideology, then, cannot explain medium to long-term trends in collective political violence.

Behavioral Theories:

Behavioral studies that emphasize motives, impulses, and the opportunities that enable actors to act on them represent a second perspective for understanding dominant group violence. Behavioral studies founded on assumptions regarding the motivations compelling individuals to

perpetrate violence include studies that assume that people are driven by “extremely general needs and incentives for domination, exploitation, respect, deference, protection, or security” (Tilly 2003, 5).¹⁸ Some behavioral theories emphasize cognitive processes and emotions, while others stress the structural conditions that produce opportunities for violence.

Cognitive and affective theories often incorporate structural conditions, but stress how these conditions affect the cognitive processes and emotional reactions of conflict actors. For example, Kaufman (2001) argues that the presence of ethnic myths and fears, combined with the opportunity to act on them, creates a context ripe for ethnic violence. Consequently, he contends that ethnic wars occur when the politics of ethnic symbolism goes to extremes, providing hostile actions and leading to a security dilemma. Similarly, Snyder (2000, 66-69) contends that democratization in the context of weak political institutions often produces ethnic violence through national exclusions that provoke enmity, inaccurate and biased strategic assumptions, logrolling nationalist interest groups, and popular nationalist outbidding. Others preference emotional processes triggered by uncertainty in times of structural change (Horowitz 2001, Lake and Rothchild 1996, Peterson 2002).

Structurally oriented scholars focus less on the cognitive and affective effects of structural change and more on the structures that motivate and/or provide opportunities for

¹⁸ Tilly argues that because motivations for violence remain relatively static, many scholars have focused on the presence of opportunities for actors to express their motives. However, opportunity based theories tend to focus on challengers rather than dominant groups. This is logical given that some ability for the dominant groups to carry out violence against excluded groups is likely to be more or less constant. Variation in opportunity, therefore, is more likely to explain challenger violence than dominant group violence.

violence. Olzak (1992, 13), for instance, suggests that ethnic violence is caused by niche economic competition, where “changes in inequality foster ethnic conflicts and protests.” Others focus on the effects of structural conditions such as state collapse (Posen 1993, Lake and Rothchild 1996), the configuration of governing institutions (Horowitz 1991, Lijphart 1990, Peleg 2007) and the structure of civil society (Varshney 2002). Behavioral theories are useful for uncovering conditions conducive to collective violence and are therefore useful for explaining its occurrence. However, the relatively stable nature of structural conditions makes them insufficient for explaining the dynamics of ethnic violence within conflict episodes. When they do explain dynamics, the scope tends to be rather limited, concentrating on specific focal points such as elections.

Relational Theories:

Relational or interactional explanations of dominant group violence focus primarily on transactions between persons or groups.¹⁹ As Tilly (2003, 6) puts it, relational explanations conceptualize collective political violence as “a kind of conversation, however brutal or one-sided that conversation may be.” These explanations understand dominant group violence to be a

¹⁹ Some scholars have sought to differentiate between relational and interactional approaches. According to Emirbayer (1997), an interactional approach assumes that actors do not generate their own action, but rather, “the relevant action takes place among actors”, whereas a relational approach assumes that “the very terms or units involved in a transaction derive their meaning, significance, and identity from the (changing) functional roles they play within that transaction” (286). The interactional approach, according to this view, focuses on the causal effects of interactions between actors, while the relational approach focuses on the way interactions shape and reshape the actors themselves. While acknowledging the value of the latter approach, I conceptualize relational as a focus on interactions between actors and therefore use relational and interactional interchangeably.

response not only to change processes, but to the actions of other domestic actors (i.e. states and minorities challenging the regime) (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001, 46).²⁰ Underlying this approach is the notion that while structural theories may be useful for explaining general patterns of conflict, they are ill-suited to address conflict processes because they “are essentially static ‘input-output’ or ‘stimulus-response’ type models, not dynamic models of interaction” (Moore, 1995: 132).

Adopting a relational approach requires an explicit consideration of the various arenas within which interactions occur (Alimi, Demetriou, and Bosi 2015). Broadly speaking, the “arenas of interaction approach” assumes that interactions between conflict actors are central to explaining the behavior of those actors during conflict. In the context of ethnically ranked societies where one group controls the state’s institutions, one may differentiate at least three distinct arenas of interaction: government-dominant group, government-minority group, and dominant group-minority group. Interactions within each of these arenas has a unique effect on the violent behavior of dominant ethnic groups (Alimi and Hirsch-Hoefler 2012, Luders 2003, Maney 2005, Pedahzur and Perliger 2003) implying that explaining the dynamics of dominant group violence requires an acknowledgement that there are multiple causes of dominant group violence that occur within a single conflict.²¹

²⁰ For examples of this approach in the terrorism literature see (Moore, Bakker, and Hill 2011, Asal et al. 2015).

²¹ This approach borrows heavily from the work of social movement scholars who have highlighted the importance of interactions in explaining the dynamic nature of both violent and non-violent domestic conflicts (Meyer and Staggenborg 1996, Zald and Useem 1987). Most of the literature focusing specifically on ethnic movements, it should be noted, focus primarily on state-challenger relations in order to explain dissident violence or state

Any comprehensive explanation of dominant group violence must give attention to ideas, structure, and social interactions. Which of these receives the greatest attention is somewhat determined by the research question. If the research question aims to explain how individuals become radicalized, ideas will play a prominent role in explanation. If the question is about the conditions that increase the probability of dominant group violence then structural explanations are central. For questions about conflict dynamics, one must examine ongoing and unfolding interactions between conflict actors. Given my focus on the occurrence of dominant group violence and its dynamics, my theoretical arguments adopt a behavioral and relational orientation respectively.

The Case: Jewish settler violence

Jewish violence against Palestinians dates back to the early twentieth century when Jews and Palestinians began to compete for control of the territory known today as Israel-Palestine. Following the outbreak of the Arab Revolt in 1929, when Arab nationalists in Palestine perpetrated a series of anti-Jewish riots and programs that killed 133 Jews and resulted in the deaths of 116 Arabs, militant Jews began to carry out indiscriminate attacks against the local Arab population. Then, in 1949, following the establishment of the state of Israel, Jews outside of Israel's security forces largely ceased their violent activities against Israel's Arab population. Upon Israel's capture of the West Bank in 1967, however, Jewish settlers began to settle the

repression (Alimi 2011, 2007b, Alimi, Demetriou, and Bosi 2015, Della Porta 2013, Alimi, Bosi, and Demetriou 2012).

newly acquired territory and non-institutionalized Jewish violence quickly reemerged. This time, Jews did not perpetrate violence as a beleaguered minority. Instead, they did so from a position of power and privilege (Pedahzur and Perliger 2009, Sprinzak 1999).

Scholars have developed a number of explanatory frameworks to explain the occurrence and dynamics of Israeli settler violence. Three have focused on the ideological orientation of Israeli settlers and one has highlighted the desire of Israeli settlers to solidify their control over the West Bank.

To begin, the existing literature proposes three distinct ideological models. The first focuses on the sanctification of violence by spiritual leaders, the second focuses on the tension between expectations created by settlers' ideological orientation and the political realities they have been confronted with on the ground, and the third highlights the causal impact of "catastrophic events."

The sanctification of violence approach has been adopted to explain the violent behavior of the Kach movement, supporters of Rabbi Meir Kahane who have historically represented a small subset of the larger settler community.²² This dissertation does not treat Kahane or Kahanism in depth, yet any discussion of Israeli political violence against Palestinians must include mention of Kahane.

Kahane founded the Jewish Defense League (JDL) in the United States in May 1968 in response to the black anti-Semitism that emerged from the New York City school strike. The JDL was a self-proclaimed vigilante movement committed to the use of violence in the name of defending Jews against anti-Semitism. In September 1971, following a severe escalation in the

²² On Kahane see, (Cromer 1994, Sprinzak 1985, 1991, 1999, Ravitzky 1986, 1996).

severity of JDL's violent activities in the United States, and Kahane receiving a five-year suspended sentence for disturbing the peace and illegal arms smuggling, Kahane immigrated to Israel in with a number of his supporters (Sprinzak 1999, 187-189).

Upon his arrival in Israel, Kahane quickly began vociferously protesting against Christian missionaries, Black Hebrews who had settled in the southern town of Dimona, and began advocating for the expulsion of Arabs from both Israel and the occupied Palestinian territories. He personally participated in illegal violent activities targeting the local Arab population. Kahane was arrested dozens of times by Israeli authorities for his participation in these activities, culminating in a nine month stint in prison for planning to blow up the Dome of the Rock mosque on the Temple Mount in 1980 (Sprinzak 1999, 186). In 1984, he was elected to the Israeli Parliament as leader of his Kach party and in 1987, he was removed from office under a newly legislated "Racism Law" written specifically to outlaw him and his party from Parliament.

Kahane's ideology, known as Kahanism, regarded violence against non-Jews in Israel as legitimate given the historical persecution of Jews by gentiles (Sprinzak 1999, 180). Consequently, Kahane openly advocated revenge against Palestinians for acts of violence against Jews, believing that "the vengeance the Jews are expected to take is...not simply a personal act but God's revenge for the humiliation He suffered through the desecration of His people" (Sprinzak 1999, 182). Taking this logic one step further, Kahane argued that since Jews had been victimized for so long, "Jewish violence in defense of Jewish interests is *never* bad" (Sprinzak 1999, 209 emphasis in the original).²³

²³ Echoing these sentiments in his justification of the massacre of Palestinians by a follower of Meir Kahane in 1994, Rabbi Yitzhak Ginsburgh, a member of the Lubavitch Hasidic sect and not formally a Kahanist, explained,

While legitimizing revenge against gentiles for specific acts of violence, Kahane's ideological orientation went further by sanctifying violence against non-Jews for its own sake. Kahane believed that "Jewish freedom implies the ability to humiliate the gentile. The stronger the Jew is, the more violent and aggressive, the freer he becomes" (Sprinzak 1999, 183). Kahane based this notion on the belief that "the Holocaust and the countless pogroms that preceded it, inflicted serious damage on the nation's collective psyche and that Jewish independence alone could not redress the damage. Only revenge, the physical humiliation of the Gentiles, could fulfill this role."²⁴

While Kahane's ideology is important in the history of the Israeli settler movement given that Kahane's teachings and those of his students have certainly proliferated within the larger settler movement, I argue in this dissertation that ideology cannot explain – or cannot fully explain - the emergence of Israeli settler violence. The reason is that Jewish spiritual leaders in the settler movement have altered their ideological framework to justify disobedience, including violence, in response government actions that are perceived to threaten the movement and in response to growing calls within the movement to adopt more radical tactics (Hellinger, Hershkowitz, and Susser 2018). A closer examination of Kahane confirms this proposition. Upon

"Revenge arises from a bond with God. Revenge vindicates the revelation of the world's judge in that the hand of Israel prevails...the Palestinians who attack Jews today are the continuation of Amalek and they must be wiped out" (Hellinger, Hershkowitz, and Susser 2018, 117).

²⁴ It is not surprising, therefore, that one of Kahane's heroes was David Raziell, the former Irgun commander who was the first to advocate indiscriminant categorical violence against the Arabs in response to terrorism against Jews (Sprinzak 1999, 209).

his arrival in Israel, Kahane sought to build his movement and translate it into political support that would propel him into the Israeli Knesset and eventually to the premiership. His primary strategy for doing so was to advocate a bellicose stance toward the Arabs. However, the increasingly aggressive stance and violent behavior of many members of Gush Emunim, the mainstream settler movement comprised primarily of followers of Rabbi Zvi Yehuda Kook, undermined Kahane's ability to use this antagonistic posture to grow his own support base. Consequently, Kahane decided to engage in a strategy of outbidding, whereby he would ratchet up his own aggressive rhetoric and violent behavior in order to increase his support among right-wing radicals (Sprinzak 1999, 190-193). Rather than developing an ideological framework that drove the behavior of his followers, "many of Kahane's theories had been written after the fact, after the JDL's or Kach's violent operations had already been conducted" in order to justify their activities (Sprinzak 1999, 207).

In addition, Kahane's growing radicalism stemmed from the same political circumstances that radicalized other elements of the religious-Zionist community. Most notably, Kahane was devastated by Menachem Begin's signing of the Camp David Accords in 1978 and became noticeably more extreme and outspoken in the following years (Sprinzak 1999, 192).²⁵ As will be discussed in detail in chapter five, this same pattern was evident with other elements of the settler movement that were quite disconnected from Kahane and his particular ideological framework. In sum, while Kahane and Kahanism surely are relevant to the overall history of Israeli settler violence, they cannot explain why this phenomenon became so prevalent among

²⁵ It should be noted that other events likely also contributed to his radicalization around this time, including the founding of Peace Now in 1978 and Kahane's arrest and imprisonment by Israeli authorities in 1980.

Israeli settlers and their supporters or why patterns of Israeli settler violence have varied over time.

Another ideological explanation advanced to explain the onset of Israeli settler violence highlights the dissonance between the fundamentalist ideology of the Israeli settler movement and the refusal of both left and right wing Israeli governments to advance the settlement project in an unrestricted manner. This explanation focuses primarily on the radicalization of the mainstream religious-Zionist settler movement adhering to the teachings of Rabbi Zvi Yehuda Kook. In his pioneering study of Jewish fundamentalism in the occupied Palestinian territories, Lustick (1988, 6) explains that a belief system is defined as fundamentalist “insofar as its adherents regard its tenets as uncompromisable and direct transcendental imperatives to political action oriented toward the rapid and comprehensive reconstruction of society.” Adopting a similar understanding of the fundamentalist orientation of the Kookist camp, Ravitzky (1996, 139) argues that the belief that the extension of Jewish sovereignty into the territories Israel captured in 1967 was part of the ongoing process of redemption, could not cope with the political realities inhibiting this expansion. Failing to push this process forward was not only frustrating for Israeli settlers; it was a direct challenge to their understanding of the relationship between the secular Zionist project and redemption. As a result, many Israeli settlers supported radical activities, such as civil disobedience and even violence, in order to further the expansion of Jewish sovereignty and thus preserve their convictions regarding the ongoing process of redemption.

Ravitsky’s explanation of settler radicalization, while astute, struggles to explain why anti-Arab violence did not occur following Israel’s victory in its war of independence (1948-1949). As in 1967, religious-Zionists were euphoric following Israel’s victory in 1949 not only

because it meant the founding of the Jewish state, but also because they viewed it as part of the unfolding process of messianic redemption. As in 1967, the political reality soon clashed with their theologically driven expectations. The secular Israeli government accepted the partition of the historic land of Israel, ceding the heartland of the biblical kingdom of Israel (i.e. the West Bank) to Jordan. Consequently, one would expect a similar radicalization process to occur in the 1940s and 1950s that occurred in the 1960s and 1970s. However, this did not occur and religious-Zionists did not adopt violent tactics toward the Arab population in Israel. In short, while Ravitsky's theory may help to understand why settler violence occurred after 1967, it cannot explain why it did not occur, even on a smaller scale, after 1949.

A third variant of the ideology model advanced by Pedahzur and Perliger (2009) highlights the insular nature of the settler movement. According to this argument, Israeli settlers have become susceptible to radicalization by their social isolation in "counterculture communities based on totalistic ideologies." When these counterculture communities are subject to potentially threatening external events, the framing of these events as existentially threatening by community leaders significantly increases the likelihood that members of these communities will turn to violence. While the focus on ideology suffers from the same issues I have just discussed, the focus here on "catastrophic events" such as the two intifadas, the Camp David Accords, and the Oslo process is important because it highlights the particular contexts within which Israeli settler violence has occurred. However, various catastrophic events have produced very different patterns of settler violence and many acts of settler violence have occurred outside of the immediate context of these events. A narrow focus on these events struggles to explain why this is the case. I therefore contend that additional work is needed to explain why different types of threatening events produce different patterns of Israeli settler violence and why settler

violence occurs even in the absence of threatening events at the national level that Israeli settlers may perceive as “catastrophic.”

Moving away from the ideological explanations, a number of scholars have developed a community defense model to explain Israeli settler violence. Pioneering this approach, Weisburd (1989) uses a series of surveys conducted in West Bank settlements to argue that settler violence is a “community-supported strategy of social control.”²⁶ He finds that the strategy of violence is widely discussed and broadly supported in the settlements because settlers believe that anti-Palestinian violence is an effective deterrent to Arab lawbreaking and a means for expressing the eventuality of Jewish control in these areas by demonstrating Jewish dominance. In this regard, Weisburd contends that while operating outside of the law and the institutional framework of the state, settlers view themselves as extensions of the state given that their methods of social control are in line with those methods employed by the military. A number of scholars have built on Weisburd’s approach. For example, Alimi and Hirsch-Hoefler (2012) trace the shifting political context in the West Bank to argue that settlers have increased their use of violent tactics against Palestinians during periods in which Palestinian efforts to undermine the perceived legitimacy of Jewish sovereignty in the territory appear to be succeeding. By doing so, they help to explain not just why settler violence occurs, but why it changes in intensity over time.

I build on this approach by (i) emphasizing the uncertain context in the West Bank created by Israel’s refusal to adopt a position regarding the final status of the territory and (ii) by highlighting the ways in which external threats produced by both Palestinian and government actions affect patterns of Israeli settler violence. I contend that the reason Jewish civilian’s in the

²⁶ On settler violence as social control, see also (Gazit 2015).

West Bank have adopted violent tactics against their Arab neighbors in the West Bank, but did not do so in Israel after 1949, is that the Israeli government took a clear stance regarding the final status of the territory under its control in 1949, but did not do so in 1967. In other words, the Israeli government created a sense of certainty for the Jewish population in Israel after 1949, negating the need for the civilian population to signal their determination to assert their sovereignty over the territory. After 1967, however, the Israeli government prevaricated, creating an uncertain context for Israeli settlers in which they have felt the need to assert their determination to hold on to the West Bank in spite of Palestinian resistance, international pressure, and reluctance by the Israeli government to officially impose Jewish sovereignty over the territory. In addition to highlighting the causal role of uncertainty, I argue that both government concessions to Palestinians and Palestinian violence affect Israeli settler violence through their effect on settler threat perceptions, which helps to explain why the frequency, severity, target choices, and level of popular participation of Israeli settler violence vary over time.

The structure of the dissertation:

The structure of the dissertation is as follows. In the first chapter, I argue that dominant group violence is particularly likely to occur where dominant ethnic groups face uncertainty regarding their dominant status within the polity. This is most likely to occur, I argue, where governments fail to take a clear stance regarding the inclusion or exclusion of ethnic minorities from the polity. Adopting a structural approach, I contend that this condition is likely to be most pronounced in a regime type called ethnic democracy.

In the second chapter, I develop a theoretical framework to explain the dynamic nature of dominant group violence. In this chapter, I differentiate between two types of threat - physical

and social - that dominant groups face, and develop a series of hypotheses about the individual and relative effects of each. Adopting a relational approach, I argue that interactions between the government, excluded minorities, and the dominant group send signals to the dominant group about variation in the extant level of both physical and social threats. I contend that both events that signal physical threat as well as those that signal social threat tend to increase the frequency of dominant group violence. However, I posit that each type of threat produces a unique pattern of violence. In short, I hypothesize that events that signal physical threat are likely to increase the frequency and severity of dominant group violence more than those that increase the perception of social threat. In contrast, I expect that events that increase the perception of social threat tend to increase attacks against symbolic sites representing the culture and values of dissenting minorities more than do events that increase the perception of physical threat.

In the third chapter, I introduce my mixed methods research design. The research strategy is designed to assess the feasibility and utility of my arguments about the occurrence and dynamics of anti-minority violence using Israel-Palestine as my primary case of analysis. This research strategy includes a focused historical case study of anti-Arab violence in Israel-Palestine, a quantitative time-series analysis of a unique daily subnational dataset, and a qualitative analysis of the mechanisms underlying the statistical results.

In chapter four, I use my original dataset of contentious interactions in the West Bank (2010-2015) to test my theoretical arguments. I begin the chapter with a descriptive discussion of the patterns of contention during the temporal scope of the data. I then analyze descriptive statistics in order to show that uncertainty about sociopolitical dominance provides a better explanation of district level variation in the frequency of Israeli settler violence in the West Bank than competing explanations. The results provide support for the central argument proposed in

chapter two. Then, following a presentation of my Error Correction Models (ECMs), I report the results of my regressions and discuss their implications for my theoretical arguments. I also assess the autoregressive properties in the settler violence variables using ARIMA modeling techniques to uncover the distinct logic of various violent tactics employed by Israeli settlers.

In chapter five, I present my qualitative analysis of Israeli settler violence. While the results of the quantitative analysis in chapter four are supportive of the hypotheses derived from my theoretical arguments, they cannot directly test whether the mechanisms I proposed in chapters one and two underlie the results. In order to explore these underlying mechanisms further, I build on secondary literature and original interviews with Israeli settlers conducted in 2016 and 2017 to argue that (i) uncertainty can explain both the cessation and reemergence of anti-Arab violence by Jews in Israel-Palestine in 1949 and 1967, respectively, and that (ii) events that signal physical threat to Israeli settlers increase the frequency and severity of violence by a relatively large segment of the population, while events that signal an increase in the level of social threat increase violence against symbolically charged targets by a relatively small and intolerant group of dominant group extremists.

In the final chapter I conclude by providing a synopsis of the dissertation, discussing how the arguments developed in the dissertation contribute to the ethnic violence and settler violence literatures, and enumerate a number avenues for future research.

Chapter 1: Ethnic Democracy, Structural Uncertainty, and the Occurrence of Dominant Group Violence

In the mid-1930s, the already tense relations between Jews and Arabs in Palestine deteriorated markedly. With Jewish immigration to the region booming, the Arab population became increasingly worried about their ability to exercise sovereignty over the territory when the British relinquished their control. In 1936, these tensions exploded into a full-blown “Arab revolt,” marked by widespread violence against the territory’s Jewish population. The Irgun, the revisionist Jewish militia in Palestine, responded to Arab violence with small-scale reprisal attacks against local Arabs almost immediately. In November 1937 the Irgun escalated its attacks, formally rejecting the policy of restraint (*havlga*) that had been a core tenet of Jewish militias in Palestine. During its violent campaign, the Irgun primarily targeted Arab civilians in public places, such as in markets and on civilian buses. By the end of the revolt, Arabs had killed 236 Jews and Jews had killed 435 Arabs (Horne 2003, 239).

In 1940, with the war in Europe under way, the Irgun shifted its focus to Europe and assisting the British in their war effort. This, along with the waning of the Arab revolt in 1939, resulted in a drastic reduction in the frequency and severity of the Irgun’s campaign against the Arab civilian population in Palestine. Anti-Arab violence by Jewish civilians did continue, however, up until 1948, when The United Nations General Assembly officially recognized Israel’s independence. Within a year of Israel’s independence, the Israeli government monopolized the use of force in the territories under its control and anti-Arab violence by Jewish civilians ceased. Despite continued tensions between the Jewish and Arab populations, the Jewish population in Israel deferred to the government on security matters rather than engage the

Arab population directly. This pattern of restraint would continue for nearly 20 years despite continued threats from the local Palestinian population.

By the early 1970s, anti-Arab violence was again occurring on a regular basis in Palestine. This time, the violence was largely relegated to the Israeli occupied West Bank. Israeli settlers, who had moved into the West Bank following Israel's acquisition of the territory in the 1967 Arab –Israeli war, quickly adopted a confrontational approach to the local Arab population, engaging in regular violent attacks against civilians. This was not a temporary phenomenon; systematic violence of this type has persisted to the present. This presents a puzzle. Whereas the Jewish community in Israel, including those supporting anti-Arab violence, refrained from these types of attacks in Israel from 1949-1967, Jewish settlers engaged in regular attacks against the local Arab population in the West Bank almost as soon as they arrived there and have continued to do so for a half century. What explains this variation? Why did Jews decide to refrain from anti-Arab violence from 1949-1967 and then continue to perpetrate this type of violence from 1967 to the present? Uncertainty is a key part of the answer.

In this chapter, I argue that dominant group violence – that is, violence perpetrated by civilian members of the dominant ethnic group against ethnic minorities - is particularly likely to occur where dominant ethnic groups face uncertainty regarding their dominant status within the polity. Building on the work of Eitan Alimi and Gregory Maney, I contend that this condition is most likely to be met in ethnic democracies – that is, in states that combine elements of liberal democracy with systematic exclusion of ethnic minorities (Alimi and Hirsch-Hoefler 2012, Maney 2016). To be clear, I do not argue here that ethnic democracy is a necessary condition for dominant group violence. There are of course cases of dominant group violence in both democratic (e.g. anti-Muslim violence in the United States) and autocratic (e.g. anti-Uighur

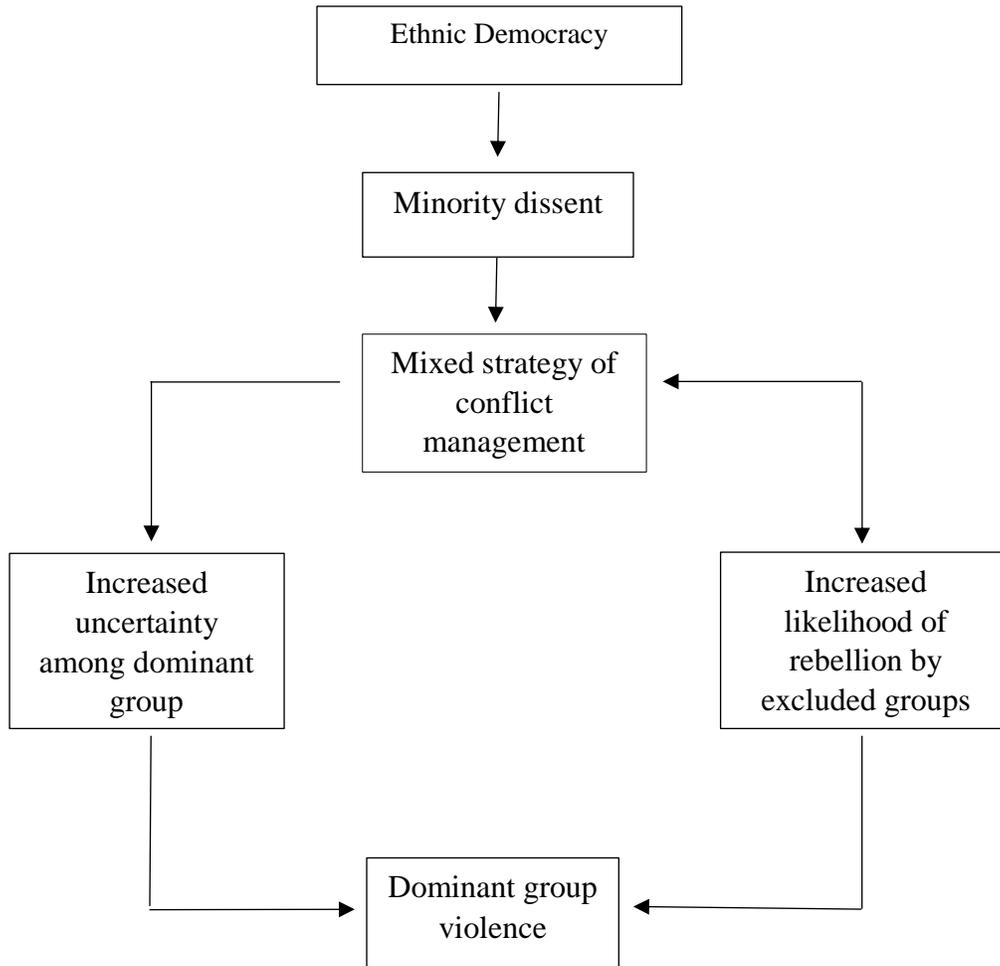
violence in China) states. Instead, I argue that ethnic democracy produces conditions that significantly increase the probability of dominant group violence because of the motivation and opportunity the regime produces for dominant groups to perpetrate violence against ethnic minorities.

Figure 1 lays out the chapter's theoretical argument. As integral components of and representative bodies for dominant ethnic groups, ethno-democratic governments are under pressure from their constituents to promote the interests of the dominant ethnic group within their territory. At the same time, however, the government must contend with international pressure to adopt political institutions indicative of inclusive governance. In contending with these countervailing pressures, ethno-democratic governments tend to manage minority dissent through a mixed strategy of repression of and concessions to minority groups. This mixed strategy of conflict management produces both grievances and opportunities for dissent among minority groups systematically excluded from power and therefore increases the likelihood of minority mobilization against the regime. As a result, conflicts between governments and excluded minorities are likely to be both common, persistent, and eventually violent.

The government's mixed strategy of conflict management also contributes to a context of uncertainty for dominant groups who feel threatened by the state's accommodations to minorities and declared support for democratic governance, while simultaneously buoyed by the state's repression of dissidents and declaration of its commitment to the dominant group's elevated status. Within this uncertain environment, dominant groups receive mixed signals about the sustainability of their dominant position within the polity. When this occurs, dominant groups seek to undermine government efforts toward accommodation. They will likely pursue their interests through institutional channels at first, but when non-violent tactics fail to prevent

accommodation, hinder further ethnicization of the state, and fail to curb dissident violence against the dominant group, dominant ethnic groups are significantly more likely to use violence to achieve their objectives.²⁷

Figure 1.1 How ethnic democracy increases the likelihood of dominant group violence



²⁷ Ethnicization and racialization are terms most commonly used in the field of sociology. Ethnicization refers to the strengthening of a state’s “ethnic character” (Peleg 2007). Ethnic democracies may democratize by disassociating the state’s institutions and symbols from the dominant ethnic group or they may ethnicize by increasing exclusionary policies that advantage the dominant group and increase the association of the state’s symbols with those of the dominant group.

I begin the chapter by briefly reviewing existing research on the relationship between regime type and the likelihood of domestic conflict. The review indicates that a regime type known as ethnic democracy is particularly prone to domestic conflict. Second, I define ethnic democracies and argue that these regimes are characterized by the widespread adoption of an exclusionary ideology among the dominant ethnic group, a stratified system of rule, and democratic institutions such as elections, party politics, and a free or partially free press. Third, I argue that the contradiction between ethnic exclusion and democratic governance in ethnic democracies makes them particularly prone to violent dissent. Fourth, I discuss the way in which an inconsistent government response to dissent in ethnic democracies significantly increases uncertainty among the dominant group which, in turn, increases the probability that members of the dominant group will wage a violent campaign against ethnic minorities challenging the regime. Finally, I conclude by briefly summarizing the chapter's theoretical argument.

Existing research on regime type and domestic conflict:

Early studies of regime type and domestic conflict found a linear relationship between the level of democracy and domestic political violence (Davenport 1999, Poe and Tate 1994). These studies indicated that because democracies tend to be perceived as more legitimate forms of government, they are more tolerant of dissident behavior, are more likely to allow moderate levels of domestic unrest to take place, are less likely to face violent dissent, and are therefore less likely to feel threatened (Davenport 1995).

Despite the intuitive nature of these findings, scholars quickly realized that the relationship between regime type and domestic instability was more accurately characterized as curvilinear, with semi-democratic states exhibiting far higher levels of instability and conflict

than democracies or autocracies (Fein 1995, Muller and Weede 1990, Snyder 2000, 66, Muller 1985, Fearon and Laitin 2003, Regan and Henderson 2002, Gates et al. 2006, Jones and Lupu 2018).²⁸

According to this research, the reason that semi-democracies are particularly unstable is that they create both grievances that motivate dissent and opportunities for dissidents to challenge the regime.²⁹ Most authoritarian states produce significant grievances, but they are able to suppress dissent by perpetrating high levels of repression (Hegre et al. 2001, Regan and Henderson 2002). In autocracies, that is, the level of grievance among potential dissidents is

²⁸ It should be noted that not all scholars agree that semi-democracies independently affects the likelihood of violence. Fearon and Laitin (2003, 83), for example, hypothesize that the inverted U relationship may be a result of semi-democracies being weak regimes. They contend that leaders in these countries lack “the resources to be successful autocrats or contain an unstable mix of political forces that makes them unable to move to crush the nascent political groups.” While this may be true in some cases, it cannot explain persistent conflicts in relatively strong states such as Israel, Northern Ireland, and India.

The majority of extant scholarship considers “semi-democracy” as a distinct category from democracies and autocracies (e.g. Regan and Henderson 2002, Muller 1985, Fein 1995, Zakaria 2007, Levitsky 2010, Hegre et al. 2001). These regimes mimic democracies in some respects and often claim to be democratic in both the domestic and international arenas in order to increase the legitimacy of the regime (Zakaria 2007), but their “mixed” institutional frameworks do not fit the generally accepted definitions of democracy or autocracy.

²⁹ The term “regime” captures the structure of “regular relations among governments, established political actors, challengers, and outside political actors, including other governments” (Tilly and Tarrow 2007, 45). More precisely it clumps myriad transactions among people into these categories and then abstracts mightily from them” (Tilly 2003, 31).

high, but there is little opportunity for open dissent. Unlike authoritarian governments, most democracies neutralize dissent by implementing massive reforms or extending modest concessions that are sufficient to defuse, or at least institutionalize, protest activity (Goldstone and Tilly 2001, 192, Regan and Henderson 2002). Democracies also tend to reduce the scale and intensity of their domestic conflicts when they do occur by channeling them into mainly nonviolent forms of contention. In this way, they reduce the levels of death, damage, and destruction that result directly from contestation (Tilly and Tarrow 2007, 145, Snyder 2000, Wimmer, Cederman, and Min 2009). In democracies, then, the level of opportunity for open dissent is high, but grievances are usually not sufficient to motivate the use of violence. In both democracies and autocracies, then, the level of violent domestic conflict is likely to be muted.

Unlike democracies and autocracies, semi-democracies tend to produce both grievances and opportunities for dissent, making them particularly prone to instability and domestic conflict.³⁰ The reason is that these regimes tend to employ moderate levels of repression – that is,

³⁰ The conflict literature has long been mired in a polemic about whether grievances or opportunities are the main cause of conflict. That said, most scholars concede that both grievances and opportunity are necessary to explain the occurrence of political violence (Cederman, Gleditsch, and Buhaug 2013). Even some of the strongest proponents of the opportunity model have relented and admitted that grievances can contribute to the occurrence of domestic conflict (Fearon and Laitin 2011, Goldstone and Tilly 2001). For example, discussing a number of rebellions that do not seem to fit the feasibility model, Goldstone and Tilly (2001, 183) admit that these instances were “mobilizations in the face of repression in the hope of changing a feared or hated status quo or resisting unwelcomed changes, not simply responses to rising opportunities.” Similarly, proponents of grievance based models have conceded that both grievances and opportunities are necessary for explaining the outbreak of violent conflict (Gurr 1993, Gurr 2000). As (Gurr 1993, 167) puts it, “if grievances and group identity are both weak, there is little prospect of mobilization

they are “semi-repressive” (Muller 1985, 48). Because of this, the cost of collective action is not prohibitive, making minority mobilization possible. At the same time, opportunities for effective participation are restricted. In this environment, dissidents are likely to regard “civil disobedience and violence as both a feasible and necessary strategy for pressing their claims to a share of influence over political decisions” (Muller 1985, 48). As a result, semi-democratic governments face particularly extensive, credible, and persistent, threats from dissidents (Regan and Henderson 2002, 123). In considering how to respond to these threats, semi-democratic governments lack clear guidelines given the incoherent nature of the regime. Without strict institutional restrictions on the use of force, the government often turns to repression in an effort to demobilize dissidents (Fein 1995). However, semi-democratic governments are unlikely to use severe forms of repression that are common in autocratic states given their ostensible commitment to inclusionary democratic governance (Muller 1985, 48).³¹

by any political entrepreneurs in response to any external threat or opportunity. On the other hand, deep grievances and a strong sense of group identity and common interest...provide highly combustible material that fuels spontaneous action whenever external control weakens.” In other words, grievances motivate mobilization, but opportunities are necessary for its actualization. Combining the two models suggests that ethnic violence is most likely when and where the levels of both grievance and opportunity are high, less likely where either grievance *or* opportunity are low, and least likely when there is neither motivation nor opportunity to rebel.

³¹ Research has also shown that states that adopt democratic institutions may not easily abandon their repressive activities, especially when democratization is a product of international pressure. Instead, these governments often employ militias as a substitute for direct state repression (Staniland 2015a), introducing an element of uncertainty that can further exacerbate conflict (Koren 2015).

Despite the important contributions this research has produced, it has become increasingly apparent that “semi-democracy” is an overly aggregated category (Jones and Lupu 2018) because it does not account for the social structure of the regime. When the social structure of the regime is considered, the effect of semi-democracy on the likelihood of conflict seems to significantly decline or disappear altogether. Reexamining the relationship between semi-democracies and civil war, Vreeland (2008) disaggregates semi-democracies based on the individual criteria the Polity democracy index uses in its scoring. He finds that the only significant predictor of civil war is the presence of “factionalism” in the political system.³² Similarly, Goldstone et al. (2010, 198) analyze the effects of regime type on the likelihood of civil war onset and adverse regime changes. They find that of all regime types, semi democracies with factionalism are by far the most unstable.³³ They conclude that it is “a certain kind of relationship among political elites – a polarized politics of exclusive identities or ideologies, in

³² Polity defines factionalism as “a pattern of sharply polarized and uncompromising competition between blocs pursuing parochial interests at the national level”(Goldstone et al. 2010, 196).

Despite his finding, Vreeland was unwilling to impart significance to “factionalism” out of fear that Polity’s measure was capturing high levels of political violence, thus making the relationship between factionalism and political violence tautological. Responding to this concern, Goldstone et al. (2010) run a number of reestimation models which include controls for political violence. If factionalism is simply a proxy of civil conflict, factionalism should become insignificant. Instead, they found no significant change in the odds ratios or significant levels for the regime type measure, or in overall accuracy.

³³ They find that partial democracies with factionalism were nearly 30 times more likely than full autocracies to experience civil war onset.

conjunction with partially democratic institutions – that [their] categories capture, and that most powerfully presage instability.”

While factionalism need not occur along ethnic lines, where societies are ethnically divided, political factionalism tends to correspond with ethnic cleavages (Horowitz 1985). Given that ethnic divisions increase the likelihood that conflicts will escalate to civil war (Eck 2009), these results suggest that “ethnic-democracies”, which combine elements of democratic governance and ethnic exclusion, are particularly prone to domestic unrest.

Defining ethnic-democracy:

A growing body of work has acknowledged the uniqueness of states that combine elements of democratic governance with ethnic exclusion (Smootha 2002, Peleg 2007, Yiftachel and Ghanem 2004, Smootha 1990, Tilly and Tarrow 2007: Ch. 8, Yiftachel 2006, Maney 2016, Wimmer, Cederman, and Min 2009). I refer to these regimes as “ethnic democracies” (Smootha 1998, 1990, Peled 1992), but they have also been labeled “ethnocracies” (Yiftachel 1998, Wallenstein 1999, Howard 2012, Ghanem 2011), “segmented composite regimes” (Alimi and Hirsch-Hoefler 2012, Tilly and Tarrow 2007), and “hegemonic regimes” (Peleg 2007).³⁴ Unlike other semi democracies, ethno-democratic regimes are characterized by factional governance *and* significant political inequalities “between culturally defined groups” (Stewart 2008b).³⁵

³⁴ I adopt the term ethnic democracy in referring to regimes that combine elements of democratic governance with ethnic exclusion.

³⁵ Recent scholarship has been particularly interested in political inequality as opposed to economic inequalities - which dominated earlier work on revolution and rebellion (e.g. Davies 1974, 1962, Gurr 1968). The reason for this

In order to sustain themselves, ethnic democracies require three conditions be met. They require 1) a hegemonic ideology favoring the interests and desires of the dominant ethnic group, 2) a segmented style of rule, and 3) the presence of institutions generally considered democratic such as elections, party politics, and free or partially free expression.

Hegemonic ideology:

A “hegemonic ideology” is characterized both by its commitment to ethnic exclusion and by its overwhelming adoption by members of the dominant ethnic group.³⁶ While exclusionary ideologies adopted by political elites can influence government policy even in the absence of widespread acceptance, once the ideology has been publicly adopted to the point of hegemony, it becomes particularly “difficult to radically change that vision” (Staniland 2015b, 778). This is

shift in focus occurred as scholars determined that “fighting for higher prices, subsidies, and wages, and for more jobs, does not necessarily generate as much passion and violence as does ethnic or nationalist mobilization. The masses have often been much more willing to come out on the street for ethnic issues than for economic ones ” (Varshney 2003). Micro-level tests have also provided support for these arguments by linking the perceived level of political inequalities and support for ethnic violence (Hillesund 2015).

³⁶ I borrow the concept of hegemonic ideology from (Lustick 1993, 41). He uses the term in the context of territorial (in)divisibility. According to Lustick, ideological hegemony within a territory means that for some large percentage of the population, conflict over territory represents conflict over the regime itself, the “rules of the game.” Loss or disengagement from territory threatens “the integrity of the regime [and] the underlying balance of power enshrined by state institutions [are] threatened.”

This exclusionary ideology may be hegemonic among both dominant and excluded ethnic groups, but in the contemporary period is far more likely to be hegemonic among the dominant group and rejected by excluded groups (Kaufmann and Haklai 2008).

because a hegemonic exclusionary ideology becomes so embedded that the concept of “hegemonic ethnicity” becomes internalized and is therefore “perceived as ‘natural,’ making the use and abuse of state power for exclusive ethnic goals normal and non-controversial” (Peleg 2007, 12-13). Once this occurs, elites are limited in their ability to accommodate minorities even if they personally prefer an accommodative approach.

At the heart of this hegemonic ideology is a narrow exclusivist conceptualization of the “nation.” In the modern period, ‘nation’ has become a powerful symbol and basis of classification in the international system of nation-states. However, modern nationalisms have operated in the name of at least two major meanings of nation-subject relations.³⁷ One view conceptualizes nation as a relation known as citizenship, in which the nation consists of collective sovereignty based in common political participation (Verdy 1996, 226-7, Smith 1986, 1991, 9-13). Civic nationalism conceptualizes the nation as the domain of those within its geographical boundaries. Civic nationalists have largely ignored ethnicity, building national criteria that emerge from common life together, on common suspicion of neighbors, or on state-made boundaries (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001, 232, Snyder 2000). Often, inclusion in the ‘nation’ depends on birth or long-term residence within the nation’s territories, through sufficient knowledge of the nation’s language and institutions to participate in the nation’s civic life may be a criterion for the naturalization of resident aliens (Snyder 2000, 24). Civic nationalism is therefore *inclusionary* in its understanding of the nation in that it allows for the full incorporation of disparate identity groups into the polity. While ethnic identities may (and often do) exist

³⁷ Whether nations and nationalism are purely a modern phenomenon or have ancient roots is a contested question in the nationalism literature (Smith 1986, Gellner 1983, Anderson 1983).

within states adhering to civic-nationalist ideologies, they are largely relegated to the private sphere.

A second view understands nation as a relation known as ethnicity, in which the nation comprises all those of supposedly common language, history, or broader cultural identity (Verdy 1996, 226-7, Smith 1986, 1991, 9-13). Because notions of self-determination and sovereignty for the 'nation' underlie the current international system, the definition of nation adopted by the polity has significant implications for the structure of inter-ethnic relations within its domain. Defining "nation" along ethnic boundaries implies that governments define the state as the domain of one ethnic group and out-group members, while tolerated, can never become fully incorporated members of the polity. The state is viewed as the exclusive province of a single dominant "nation" and as such it can grant other groups within it limited rights only and reserve to itself the right to revoke those rights (Peleg 2007, 73).

The distinction between those included as full members of the nation and those excluded manifests itself both formally and informally. Formally this discrepancy may manifest itself through government policies that advantage one ethnic group economically, politically, and culturally (De Votta 2004, Yiftachel 2006). Informally, regimes may differentiate between ethnic groups by excluding disadvantaged groups from ruling coalitions and from economic and political positions of power and influence (Haklai and Norwich 2016). In short, ethnic nationalists use ethnicity as a way to distinguish their own community from others and they contend that this distinction lends legitimacy to struggles for (in the case of excluded groups) or perpetuation of (in the case of dominant ethnic groups) ethno-national self-determination (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001, 232). This position is fundamentally *exclusionary* in that it

aims to maintain the distinction between in-group and out-group and it seeks to maintain the elevated status of the dominant ethnic group.

The fact that incumbents in ethnic democracies rely on constituency support to retain power, makes hegemonic ideologies vital for the regime's survival. While some elites may desire inter-ethnic accommodation and conciliation within these regimes, most will accede to the exclusionary demands of their constituency in order to maintain their power and influence (De Votta 2004, 12, Lake and Rothchild 1996).³⁸ They do so by supporting exclusionary and hostile policies toward minorities in an attempt to appeal to the fears and anxieties of their ethnic base (Snyder 2000, Mansfield and Snyder 2005, Lake and Rothchild 1996, Kaufman 1996, Fearon 2006, De Votta 2004, 4).³⁹ When political elites refuse to do so, they are likely to be replaced (Kaufman 2001).⁴⁰

Whether this hegemonic exclusionary ideology materializes through a “bottom up” or “top down” process or both is interesting and important, but it is not of particular concern to me here because the effect of a hegemonic ideology is likely to be the same regardless of its source.

³⁸ For example, given the level of support for exclusionary anti-Tamil policies among the Sinhalese population in Sri Lanka during the 1950s and 1960s, Sinhalese political elites had no choice but to support an exclusionary agenda that favored Sinhalese over Tamils (De Votta 2004).

³⁹ When the dominant group overwhelmingly supports exclusionary policies, the development of pan-ethnic identities becomes more difficult for elites (Kaufmann and Haklai 2008).

⁴⁰ The leaders of Georgia's main ethnic groups, for example, attempted to restrain ethnic mobilization during glasnost and after the fall of the Soviet Union. They did so despite widespread support for exclusionary policies among the public. As a result, incumbents were removed and replaced with representatives that would take a more aggressive stance against ethnic rivals (Kaufman 2001).

The important point is that once a hegemonic ideology is in place, it is quite difficult to dislodge because over time groups are likely to choose leaders that reflect their attitudes. Even if a leader comes along who wishes to change these views, it is exceedingly difficult for them to do so. The first characteristic of ethnic democracies, then, is that the maintenance of an exclusionary regime enjoys near consensus support among the dominant ethnic group.

Segmented rule:

The second characteristic of ethnic democracies is that the regime is segmented in the sense that it employs “different systems of rule” for dominant and excluded ethnic groups (Tilly and Tarrow 2007, 163). Having adopted an ethnonationalist ideology, ethno-democratic governments “energetically promote the interests of a single ethno-political group” by promoting the geographic expansion of the dominant group in contested territory and its domination of domestic power structures (Yiftachel 2006, Peleg 2007, 3, De Votta 2004). Within these regimes, the government tends to maintain distinct rules of engagement for members of dominant and excluded ethnic groups. The distinction between the two systems of rule rests on the source of state authority. Discussing this distinction in the Israeli case, Alimi (2007b, 34) explains that the authority of the Israeli regime among the Jewish population “‘relies on citizens’ compliance with the law and their acceptance of the rules of the game,’ which in turn provides power to authorities.” He goes on to argue that “the segregated Palestinian polity within Israel delineates a different model. The essence of the military rule is force. Military decrees, fear, brutal violence, and manipulation maintain order in the Palestinian community (Alimi 2007b, 34). This type of bifurcated rule is not unique to Israel-Palestine and has been noted in many other cases such as Northern Ireland (White 1999), Sri Lanka (De Votta 2004), Guinea (Rørbæk and Knudsen 2015),

and the American south during the civil rights era (Luders 2003). In all of these cases, relations between dominant groups and the government resemble state-society relations in liberal democracies, while relations between the government and minorities resemble state-society relations in semi-democratic or even authoritarian states where civil liberties are severely restricted.

Democratic governance:

The third characteristic of ethnic democracies is that they are characterized by the presence of democratic institutions such as elections, party politics, and a free or partially free expression. Ethnic democracies may implement democratic institutions due to a commitment to democracy (at least for the majority group), but often do so in whole or in part to gain “external legitimacy.” Ilan Peleg (2007, 67-68) puts it this way,

An ethnic polity that desires to sustain its hegemony in the face of the pressures to change might adopt policies that look as if they are democratic, even if in reality they are democratically problematical. Such means are many and diverse, and they include elections, referenda, complicated coalition building..., parliamentary votes..., and even supreme courts’ decisions...The ability to maintain that kind of democratic façade in a deeply divided society is of great importance for guaranteeing external legitimacy in a world where “democracy” is demanded of all. For that reason, any ethnic hegemonic regime is likely to devote substantial resources for maintaining their international reputation as a genuine democracy.

Democratic institutions are not implemented to reform ethnic democracies – that is, to bring them closer to the democratic ideal. These are not “democratizing regimes.” Democratic institutions are used to further legitimate and entrench the segmented structure of the regime

rather than to increase minority participation (Yiftachel 1996, Lustick 1980).⁴¹ Over time, the exclusionary and ethnocentric practices and policies initiated by the government erode democratic institutions and reduce the perceived legitimacy of the regime among ethnic minorities (De Votta 2004).

Ultimately, whether someone “experiences” democracy within an ethno-democratic state is largely dependent on one’s ethnicity. Dominant groups enjoy the trappings of liberal democracy (e.g. Protestants in Northern Ireland, Jews in Israel, and Sinhalese in Sri Lanka), but excluded groups rarely do. Whereas dominant group members are treated as “full members of the polity”, excluded groups are treated as “outsiders” (Peleg and Waxman 2011). As outsiders, minorities lack the full political rights afforded to members of the dominant group. However, the level of rights afforded to minorities ranges from actors almost completely lacking political rights (e.g. Blacks in Apartheid South Africa) to those afforded limited civil liberties (e.g. Palestinian citizens of Israel) (Tilly and Tarrow 2007). Regardless of the level of rights afforded to them, however, excluded groups in ethnic democracies lack an institutional mechanism for becoming full members of the polity (Peleg 2007, but see Smootha 2002), making their unequal treatment a permanent fixture of these regimes.

⁴¹ Speaking to this phenomenon, Peleg (2007) explains that in ethnically divided societies with a clear-cut majority, the Westminster model with parliamentary supremacy might be preferred by the majority to any alternative constitutional design. It is a democratic system with few political limitations on the parliamentary majority, which is controlled by the government. If a constitution and a bill of rights can be avoided in a Westminster democracy and if the courts are weak and non-interventionary or even render outright support to the ethnic majority, the rule of the majority is absolute, while appearing to be entirely democratic.

It should be noted here that there is a vociferous debate within the literature about whether ethnic democracy should be conceptualized as an (admittedly imperfect) subtype of democracy or as a (admittedly imperfect) subtype of autocracy. Some have argued that ethnic democracy should be conceptualized as a subtype of democracy (Smootha 1997, 2002, 1990, Peled 1992). Sammy Smootha, the scholar most associated with this position, defines ethnic democracy as “a system, which combines the extension of civil and political rights to individuals and some collective rights to [excluded groups], with institutionalization of majority control over the state.” Ethnic democracies, according to Smootha, are “driven by ethnic nationalism, [meaning that] the state is identified with a ‘core ethnic nation’ not with its citizens...At the same time, the [excluded minorities] are allowed to conduct a democratic and peaceful struggle that yields incremental improvement in their status.”⁴² Ultimately, Smootha argues, ethnic-democracies allow excluded ethnic groups to peacefully pursue and obtain equal rights and status through institutional channels. Importantly, to qualify as an ethnic-democracy the ethnic group in control of the state must represent a majority (or at minimum a plurality) of the population, allowing it to convincingly take and hold power by democratic means.

A number of scholars have pointed out that Smootha’s notion of ethnic democracy as a sort of “democratizing” state fails to address the deeply embedded nature of ethnically segmented rule and hegemonic ideology in ethnic democracies (Yiftachel 2006, 2000, Yiftachel and Ghanem 2004, Howard 2012, Ganim, Rouhana, and Yiftachel 1998, Peleg 2007). They

⁴² A number of scholars writing about Israel have adopted Smootha’s conceptualization of Israel as an ethnic democracy (Peled 1992, Shafir and Peled 1998, Dowty 1998, 2004, Gavison 1999, 2002). For a discussion, see, Yiftachel (2006, chapter 4) and (Harel-Shalev 2010).

argue that ethnic democracy as conceptualized by Smooha suffers “from the problem of conceptual stretching because this regime type does not conform to the fundamental democratic principles: equal and inclusive citizenship, popular sovereignty and universal suffrage, protection of basic civil rights and minorities, and periodic universal and free elections” (Yiftachel 2006, 91).⁴³ Said differently, democracy "cannot be based on ‘pseudo-participation,’ there must be legitimate channels, such as political parties and elections, that can carry interests forcefully into government" (Henderson 1991, 124).

In ethnic democracies, the ability of minority groups to achieve their objectives by institutional means is severely constrained by dominant ethnic groups who are adept at designing political institutions that advantage them over non-dominant groups (Peleg 2007, 68). For this reason, majority rule in ethnically divided societies tends to turn quickly into systematic minority exclusion. As Donald Horowitz has put it, “in ethnically divided societies, majority rule is not a solution; it is a problem, because it permits domination, apparently in perpetuity” (Horowitz 1993, 29).⁴⁴ This notion of ethnic democracy as a kind of “tyranny of the majority,” leads Lijphart (1975, 94) to go so far as to refer to these regimes as “majority dictatorships.” In sum, in

⁴³ Conceptual stretching occurs when one attempts to extend conceptual categories to include additional cases that do not fully correspond to the initial category. When this occurs, concepts become “vague [and] amorphous conceptualizations” (Sartori 1970). Conceptual stretching hinders theoretical development by problematizing the assumption that cases within the category are comparable, making generalizations difficult. For a discussion of conceptual stretching and democracy see Collier and Levitsky (1997) Yiftachel (2006, 91-93).

⁴⁴ Horowitz therefore contends that purely procedural conceptions of democracy are inadequate for ethnically divided societies because the procedure can be democratic while preserving a situation of exclusion. In deeply divided societies, therefore, both minority and majority rule are problematic (Horowitz, 1993, p. 31).

ethnic democracies, democratic governance does not imply the kind of inclusivity that is a definitional pillar of western style liberal democracy.⁴⁵

My position in this debate is that ethnic-democracies may be more or less “open,” but they cannot be classified as democracies because of the deeply imbedded exclusionary nature of the regime.⁴⁶ However, it is important to note that the way one classifies a regime is partially dependent on the object of study. The conceptualization of a state like Israel as an imperfect democracy, for example, may be warranted for examinations of phenomena such as coalition formation (Goldberg 1983, Stinnett 2007). When it comes to domestic conflict, however, the assumption that ethnic democracies are democratic is empirically problematic (Alimi and Hirsch-Hoefler 2012). While ethno-democratic governments resemble democracies in their relations with dominant groups, the segmented nature of their rule means that they more closely resemble non-democracies in their relations with ethnic minorities. As such, ethnic democracies are most appropriately conceptualized as distinct from democratic regimes for the purpose of explaining domestic conflict.

In sum, ethnic democracies are characterized by a hegemonic ideology favoring the interests and desires of the dominant ethnic group, the segmented nature of their rule, and the presence of institutions generally considered democratic such as elections, party politics, and a

⁴⁵ But see, (Smootha 2001).

⁴⁶ I do not imply a normative position here as to whether liberal democracy is the ideal. Ultimately, whether one believes that liberal democracy or ethnic-democracy is preferable depends on their position as to whether civic or ethnic nationalism should fundamentally shape our political environment. This is a debate that I acknowledge and respect, but I do not attempt to negotiate here.

free or partially free press. Together, these characteristics create conditions that significantly increase the likelihood of minority dissent.

How ethnic democracies produce minority dissent:

The reason ethnic democracies are particularly prone to minority dissent is that the regime produces both grievances that motivate dissent and opportunities for minorities to mobilize against the regime.

While the notion that grievances explain collective violence is quite intuitive and has been a popular scholarly explanation for conflict since the 1960s (Gurr 1968, Davies 1962), early theories focused primarily on material asymmetries between households. They posited that as the disparity between material expectations and achievements increases, individuals are likely to become increasingly frustrated. Frustration, in turn, leads to aggression that causes individuals to participate in dissident activities.

These early grievance theories, while intuitive, were problematic for two reasons. One problem was that early formulations of grievance theory largely focused on individual level wellbeing, but were attempting to explain group level phenomena. Horowitz (1985) addressed this problem by introducing a group level perspective that overcomes the individual level argument put forward by grievance scholars, while maintaining the focus on grievances. An additional problem with early grievance theories was that they focused on economic achievement because they assumed that material conditions are the primary determinant of contentious behavior. Quickly, however, scholars noticed that “fighting for higher prices, subsidies, and wages, and for more jobs, does not necessarily generate as much passion and violence as does ethnic or nationalist mobilization.” In short, “the masses have often been much more willing to

come out on the street for ethnic issues than for economic ones” (Varshney 2003). Horowitz (1985) helped to correct the overemphasis of material conditions by highlighting the importance of group status for explanations of conflict. Horowitz’s theoretical shift away from economic conditions has given birth to a substantial literature indicating that of all forms of inequity, political exclusion on the basis of ethnicity is the most conducive to domestic conflict (Cederman, Wimmer, and Min 2010, Wimmer, Cederman, and Min 2009, Sambanis 2001, Cederman, Gleditsch, and Buhaug 2013, Goldstone et al. 2010, Bodnaruk Jazayeri 2016).⁴⁷

Conflicts between the government and excluded ethnic groups materialize once excluded groups come to view their subordinate status as illegitimate and obtain the resources they need to challenge the regime. Wimmer (2002) describes how this process has unfolded in the modern era:

As soon as an educated middle class emerges among [excluded minority] groups, sufficiently established to resist pressures for assimilation, they break the silence of subordination and begin to challenge the national bases of the state. Being excluded from the privileged seats in the theatre of society by virtue of their ethnic background, their discourse of injustice develops along national or ethnic lines as well. They thus draw on the ideal of ethnic representativity, of equality before the law, and of the state’s responsiveness towards ‘the people’, in order to demand a ‘just’ representation in government, a recognition of their cultural heritage

⁴⁷ Recent research does not discount the effects of economic inequalities on conflict occurrence (Stewart 2008b), but indicates that the positive effect of economic inequalities on conflict occurrence is largely confined to states marked by political exclusion (Cederman, Gleditsch, and Buhaug 2013). Overall, the research indicates that political conditions have a far greater impact on the likelihood of conflict than do economic conditions.

as part of the nation's treasures, a treatment as equally valuable and dignified parts of 'the people.'⁴⁸

In the modern international system most groups systematically excluded from state power view their exclusion as illegitimate (Wimmer 2002, Cederman, Gleditsch, and Buhaug 2013, Kaufmann and Haklai 2008). In these "unranked" systems - where the appropriate relative rank of ethnic groups is contested - "relative group worth is always uncertain, always at issue" (Horowitz 1985, 31). Because competing ethnic groups contest their relative status within unranked systems, ethnic groups in these societies tend to be motivated by the desire for power – generally in the form of autonomous sovereignty - and the exclusion of other groups from a share of power. They are therefore particularly attuned to the "politics of inclusion and exclusion" (Horowitz 1985, 24).⁴⁹ As such, support for violent dissent among minorities significantly increases as the level of political inequality between dominant and excluded ethnic groups increases (Hillesund 2015).

When governments in unranked systems systematically exclude relatively large and geographically concentrated minority groups from central positions of power, minority groups

⁴⁸ Similarly, Rothschild (1981, 125) notes that "a shift from disowning to affirming their own culture almost always precedes and then accompanies the ethnic subordinates' move from political acquiescence to challenge and is an essential step in their transition from irrational dependency toward a rational sense of efficacy."

⁴⁹ Unranked systems are less stable than "ranked" systems in which subordinate groups view their subordination as legitimate, but movement from a ranked to unranked system is particularly destabilizing. As Horowitz puts it, "when the cement cracks in ranked systems, the edifice usually collapses" (Horowitz, 1985, p.29). That is, when subjugated minorities no longer consider their subjugation legitimate, states may undergo fundamental transformations in the form of social revolutions aimed at overthrowing the dominant group.

are far more likely to rebel (Cederman, Gleditsch, and Buhaug 2013, Cederman, Weidmann, and Gleditsch 2011, Cederman, Wimmer, and Min 2010, Wimmer, Cederman, and Min 2009, Sambanis 2001, Goldstone et al. 2010, Bodnaruk Jazayeri 2016), dissidents are more likely to perpetrate domestic terrorism (Ghatak and Gold 2015, Ghatak, Gold, and Prins 2017), and governments are likely to systematically repress ethnic minorities in their efforts to maintain the dominance of the dominant ethnic group (Rørbæk and Knudsen 2015, Harff 2003, 62-3).⁵⁰ In sum, systematic exclusion of large and geographically concentrated ethnic groups tends to produce sustained periods of domestic instability and conflict.

Ethnic democracies are particularly prone to minority dissent not only because they produce grievances among minority populations, but also because the implementation of democratic institutions and the declaration of commitment to inclusive governance provides opportunities – in the form of resources, perceived legitimacy, organization, and recruitment – for excluded minorities to openly challenge the fundamentally undemocratic structure of the regime (Yiftachel 2006, Muller 1985). One way in which the implementation of democratic institutions increases opportunities for dissent is by fostering the conviction among all parties that the government should respond to popular choice. When this conviction is widespread and the government fails to respond to people’s concerns adequately, those who are aggrieved are likely to increasingly view the regime as illegitimate and seek to organize against it. Because some level of freedom to associate is respected by the government in semi-democratic systems, aggrieved groups are quick to form social movements and organize protests in pursuit of their interests (Goldstone 2004, 333, See also Snyder and Tilly 1972). These social movements

⁵⁰ These findings have been contested to some degree in the literature (e.g. Jones and Lupu 2018).

provide important support such as tactically useful information, money, recruits, and shelter to dissidents as they openly challenge the regime (Hillesund 2015, 79).

The implementation of democratic institutions and declaration of commitment to inclusivity also increases the ability of relatively weak dissident groups to obtain – or at a minimum believe they can obtain - significant concessions from the government by targeting the country’s civilian population (Hultman 2012).⁵¹ This is because targeted civilians can hold the government accountable for failures to provide security. In ethno-democratic systems, where dominant ethnic groups can hold governments accountable for security failures, minority dissidents can put significant pressure on the government without mobilizing the resources needed to confront it directly by targeting dominant group civilians.

Ethno-democratic regimes also create opportunities for rebellion by making divisions within the dominant group transparent. Where minorities are aware of internal divisions within the dominant group, they are more likely to perceive both an opportunity and need to challenge the regime (Rothschild 1981, 105, Alimi 2007a). Divisions within dominant groups about the legitimacy or efficacy of ethnic exclusion, which are likely to be relatively common and easily discernable in ethnic democracies given that these regimes allow for open expression and political dissent among the dominant group, are perceived to weaken the government’s ability to contend with minority challenges. In contrast, when there is consensus in favor of an

⁵¹ Eck and Hultman (2007) identify a U-shaped correlation between regime type and one-sided violence. They conclude that while autocratic governments undertake higher levels of one- sided violence than other regime types, rebels are more violent in democratic countries.

exclusionary position, excluded minorities are less likely to perceive an opportunity to rebel, while overwhelming consensus in favor of the inclusionary position eliminates the need to rebel.

Ultimately, where the government is highly accommodating – as in most western democracies – dissent is likely to remain predominantly peaceful because the use of violence is likely to be counterproductive and is less likely to be viewed as legitimate (Cederman, Gleditsch, and Buhaug 2013). However, where the system does not allow for the peaceful redress of grievances but does allow for at least a moderate level of mobilization, dissent is likely to escalate, and the conflict is likely to deepen. Ilan Peleg (2007) makes this point explicitly:

The most likely result of the collision between ethnic hegemony and the demands of democracy is violence, although violence in numerous hegemonic states may be postponed for a rather long time, especially when the ethnic dominance of the majority is absolute. Because the hegemonic state negates, a priori and by definition, the possibility of minority identification with it, and in many cases prevents even its assimilation, it invites endless conflict, political instability, and possibly even the eventual disintegration of the state. Although hiding behind the cover of democracy, sometimes with clever schemes, may postpone the demise of ethnic hegemonism, in most cases the contradictions inherent in the system are likely to deepen, evolve, and escalate.”

Overall, ethnic democracies produce dissent because of the inherent inconsistency in the regime. Exclusion of ethnic minorities motivates dissent, while democratic institutions provide minorities with the opportunity to challenge the regime. However, while this inconsistency helps to explain why dissent occurs in ethnic democracies, it does not explain why these conflicts tend to escalate and turn violent. The reason this occurs is directly linked to the strategy of conflict management ethnic democracies tend to adopt in response to minority dissent.

Why governments in ethnic-democracies employ a mixed strategy of conflict management:

Ethno-democratic governments are not ethnically neutral institutions. Rather, they are a direct extension of the dominant ethnic group and as such, they act as active agents of political exclusion (Cederman, Wimmer, and Min 2010, Wimmer 2002, Luders 2003, Maney 2016). Nonetheless, domestic instability, which is endemic to ethnic democracies, requires ethno-democratic governments to engage in constant conflict management. Their primary challenge in this regard is to help dominant ethnic groups attain their preferences without completely alienating minorities (De Votta 2004, 3). They must do so while under dueling pressures from their constituents to promote the interests of the dominant ethnic group and from international actors to accommodate excluded minorities (Maney 2016, 10, Yiftachel 2006).

Technically, the government may react to minority dissent in five analytically distinct manners: It may (1) maintain the status quo; (2) implement “cosmetic” changes toward increased democratization; (3) conduct a radical revision toward genuine democracy; (4) enact mild changes toward further ethnicization; or (5) carry out radical action toward full ethnicization (Peleg 2007, 70-1, also see Varshney 2003, 93-94).⁵² Where there is significant opposition from excluded ethnic groups, the status quo may become untenable, but the government is likely to be reluctant to implement radical changes to the regime. The government will be resistant to

⁵² Smootha and Hanf (1992) similarly argue that there are a variety of strategies governments may employ to manage interethnic conflict. In their formulation, governments may partition the country, thereby redressing the grievances of the minority; implement a system of consociationalism, which grants equal status, and veto power to the constituent groups; advance liberal democracy, which does not favor any one ethnic group; or implement a system in which the dominant ethnic group controls the others. Ethnic democracies, by definition, have opted for the implementation of a system in which the dominant ethnic group controls the others.

implementing radical revisions toward genuine democracy because of domestic pressure from the government's dominant group constituency. It will also be disinclined to carry out radical action toward full ethnicization due to international pressure and the desire to maintain the state's "democratic" character or reputation. In practice, therefore, ethno-democratic governments tend to avoid radical revisions one-way or the other, opting instead to maintain the status quo while making minor revisions toward democratization or ethnicization (Peleg 2007, 70-1). However, minor revisions toward democratization or ethnicization are problematic. On the one hand, democratization is unlikely to address the underlying grievances galvanizing resistance within the excluded group and is likely to increase grievances among the dominant group. On the other hand, ethnicization is unlikely to satisfy members of the dominant group who wish to entrench their dominant position within the polity and is likely to increase grievances among the excluded group. Ethno-democratic governments therefore attempt to maintain the regime by combining these strategies, mixing cosmetic changes toward increased democratization with policies meant to incrementally entrench the dominant group's position within the polity (Peleg and Waxman 2011, Yiftachel 2006).

Governments have two tools at their disposal when implementing their strategy of conflict management: repression and concessions (Gurr 1990, Rasler 1996, Lichbach 1987). Empirically, governments use different combinations of these tactics against opposition activists depending on the domestic and international constraints they face (Carey 2010). Democratic governments rely primarily on concessions given their strategy of accommodation. They are able to do so because they are less likely than non-democracies to face significant threats to the regime (Davenport 1995), leaders can be held accountable for their use of repression (Bueno De Mesquita et al. 2005), and they are more likely to be characterized by norms of restraint (Ron

2003). Autocratic governments, in contrast, rely primarily on repression in their strategy of suppression because they are likely to perceive any overt challenge as a threat, the populace cannot easily hold leaders accountable, and leaders tend to be less constrained by norms of restraint.

Semi-democracies in general and ethnic democracies in particular, are likely to employ a mixed strategy of conflict management. Put simply, ethno-democratic governments employ repression in order to demobilize dissidents and appease their ethnic constituency. However, their need to mollify international actors undermines their ability to rely solely on repression as a conflict management strategy. Because of their inability to employ sufficient repression to demobilize dissenting minorities, ethno-democratic governments offer concessions to minorities in order to reduce the appeal of dissent and appease international actors. However, they must limit their concessions in order to maintain the support of the dominant ethnic group, curtailing their ability to address the core grievances of minority groups.

While increased accountability and transparency help to explain why democracies tend not to rely on repression in their strategies of conflict management, these mechanisms do not function the same way in ethnic democracies where the government's constituency overwhelmingly supports the maintenance of the exclusionary regime. In this context, the government is inclined to respect human rights for those "included within the symbolic or legal boundaries of the state." However, "to the extent that populations targeted by democratic governments are 'socially distanced' or politically cut off from the government in question, they do not seem to benefit from the safeguards available to other citizens" (Ron 1997, 290). The reason is that in order to maintain public support among the dominant group, leaders must show that they are willing to protect the dominant group's interests by repressing minority challengers

(Snyder 2000, Mansfield and Snyder 2005, Lake and Rothchild 1996, Kaufman 1996, Fearon 2006). In ethnic democracies, then, constraints on severe government repression against minority groups tend to come from international rather than domestic considerations.⁵³

Current international norms that favor democratic forms of governance and strongly oppose severe forms of state repression significantly reduce the level of repression governments are willing to employ against dissenting minorities (Carey 2010, 65-69, Stanton 2016, Lake and Rothchild 1996, Harff 2003, Ron 2003, Cederman, Gleditsch, and Buhaug 2013, 40). Although governments may wish to stamp out dissent using extreme forms of repression, the decision to repress “takes place in the shadow of international law, with international human rights and humanitarian norms setting standards of appropriate conduct” (Stanton 2016, 25). Consequently, the use of severe forms of repression is likely to incur significant costs for governments (Ron 2003). As Horowitz (1985, 35) puts it, “everywhere there is a growing conviction of the illegitimacy” of severe repression to uphold an ethno-democratic system, “and powerful forces are deployed, both internally and internationally, to bring practice into line with egalitarian ideology.”

Governments, therefore, carefully weigh the costs and benefits of repressing civilian populations (Carey 2010, Lichbach 1987, Rasler 1996, Carey 2006). In terms of costs, foreign governments and international institutions may sanction governments, international actors may increase support for excluded minorities, and in extreme cases, international actors may step in to

⁵³ This does not mean that no domestic pressure exists, even from among the dominant ethnic group. Given the highly polarizing and radicalizing effects of ethnic violence, however, I contend that external pressure is required to maintain government restraint in the face of violent dissent.

defend victimized populations.⁵⁴ This is particularly true when the violence/repression takes on an ethnic character (Lake and Rothchild 1996, 66). In terms of benefits, appealing to international standards of appropriate conduct by highlighting the restrained nature of military operations and claiming to behave in accordance with international laws of war helps governments position themselves as legitimate international actors worthy of material aid and/or diplomatic assistance (Carey 2010). This assistance can take the form of direct military aid, economic benefits, international lobbying on behalf of the government, pressure on opponents to make concessions, and the proposal of favorable settlements during peace negotiations (Stanton 2016, 32).⁵⁵ Governments therefore look beyond purely coercive measures to assuage excluded groups and maintain the regime, even if there is domestic support for the use of severe repression.

Governments may implement reforms or provide other forms of concessions in response to dissent when they cannot or will not use severe repression to (re)instate quiescence and are unwilling to accommodate dissidents substantively (Carey 2006, Goldstone and Tilly 2001, Lichbach 1987, Rasler 1996). The government does so in an attempt to decrease the expected value of success. Once the government offers concessions and dissidents obtain a portion of their demands, the expected gains of victory are likely to decline. A lower expected value of success reduces the risks participants are willing to incur in pursuit of their desired outcome. In this way,

⁵⁴ International actors may be willing to overlook moderate amounts of repression, but the severe use of force is likely to provoke a response (Earl, Soule, and McCarthy 2003, 586).

⁵⁵ For a discussion of the costs of large scale political violence against civilians see (Straus 2015, 48-53).

concessions are meant to dissuade people from participating in contentious behavior against the regime (Goldstone and Tilly 2001, 185, 188-189).

There are great risks when using concessions to limit dissent, however, if those concessions are simply a pretense. This is important because in many settings, government concessions do not represent a significant restructuring of existing power relations (Alimi 2007a). That is, they do not address the core concerns of dissidents. The problem for the government is that if concessions do not sufficiently alleviate dissident concerns, they may actually increase the perception among dissidents that dissent is achieving results while at the same time failing to significantly reduce the perceived payoff of victory (Goldstone and Tilly 2001, 185, 188-189). The result is increased minority mobilization against the regime.

This is precisely where the central tension lies for ethnic democracies. On the one hand, the government's domestic constituency pressures the government to maintain the position of the dominant group. Achieving this objective requires the adoption of exclusionary policies and repression in response to dissent by excluded minorities. Both work to increase grievances among excluded populations and, in turn, increase the probability of rebellion. At the same time, the international community pressures ethno-democratic governments to accommodate their minority populations and to refrain from severe forms of repression. This creates opportunities for excluded minorities to mobilize against the regime and reduces the personal risk to those who participate in dissident activities. The result is an inherent instability that increases the likelihood of violent dissent, state repression and communal violence (Maney 2016, Alimi and Hirsch-Hoefler 2012) and renders transition to liberal democracy difficult (Howard 2012).

It is important to note that despite producing high levels of domestic strife, ethnic democracies are self-reinforcing and therefore structurally stable. The popular perception that

ethnic identity boundaries are meaningful and that there are significant “ascriptive barriers to upward mobility” produces a demand for representatives among excluded minorities that will acknowledge and amplify their grievances (Fearon 2006). In such a context, political entrepreneurs are more than happy to oblige their ethnic kin by stoking ethnic antagonisms and fostering fear and uncertainty among the public (Snyder 2000, Lake and Rothchild 1996). In this tense political context, dissident tactics easily shift toward transgressive actions that increase prejudice among the dominant group and, in turn, increase support for discriminatory policies targeting minorities (Kaufman 2001). In other words, ethno-democratic regimes reinforce themselves by creating a spiral of supply and demand for ethnic antagonism that reinforces and reifies tensions across ethnic boundaries.

Ethnic democracies are therefore internally unstable, but difficult to transform (Horowitz 1985, 499-501, Williams 1994, 69, Peleg 2007, Yiftachel 2006, Harel-Shalev 2010). As such, they tend to produce sustained periods of “severe crisis” or “turbulent stasis” in which threats of the use of force are common and the sporadic or unsystematic use of force occurs (Pfetsch and Rohloff 2000). In this context, “violence simmers just below the surface. It is an endemic condition, lacking a durable, ultimate solution” (Wilson 2013, 58, Benvenisti 1990, 118). From time to time, the severe crises escalate into full-blown civil war in which violence becomes more organized and severe.

How the government’s mixed strategy of conflict management produces dominant group violence:

Loss of power and prestige deeply affects ethnic groups in divided societies (McVeigh 2001, Peterson 2002, McVeigh 2009, Varshney 2003, Horowitz 1985). Peterson (2002), arguably today’s most prominent proponent of the argument, contends that loss of power and

privilege does not only lead to dissent, is also has a particularly strong effect on a group's proclivity for inter-group violence. He argues that when groups lose their dominant or advantaged position within the polity they are likely to experience a significant amount of resentment - that is they feel an "intense feeling that status relations are unjust combined with the belief that something can be done about it" (Peterson 2002, 51).⁵⁶ In other words, Peterson argues that power demotion produces both a strong motivation for violence and the perception that the use of violent tactics is an efficacious means of reasserting power and influence. While insightful, Peterson's theory is inadequate for explaining dominant group violence because it assumes that groups are likely to react to loss of power and does not sufficiently appreciate the degree to which ethnic groups may act to prevent the loss of power. This is to say that the deep aversion to social demotion is important not only because it may trigger ethnic violence once it has occurred, but also because it may act as a powerful motive for violently suppressing opposition before demotion occurs (Stewart 2008a, Byman 1998, 157).

Violence perpetrated in the interest of staving off the loss of power may include an emotive component, but it is also strategic; it is easier to maintain one's position of power than to reclaim it once it is lost. This logic underscores a number of explanations of ethnic violence. By the early 1960s, for example, James Davies argued that revolutions occur when people "fear that ground gained over a long period of time will be quickly lost" (Davies 1962, 8, 1974). More recently, Posen (1993) argued that those with an advantage are likely to use violence

⁵⁶ Peterson argues that ethnic groups are most likely to experience resentment when they lose their dominant status in the polity, while subordinate groups are most likely to experience resentment when members of the group develop an awareness of status inconsistencies. See also (Brass 1991, Williams 2003).

preemptively when they are uncertain about the stability of the regime, that is, when they feel threatened by real or potential ethnic rivals. In this circumstance, they elect to use force to preempt and prevent an erosion of their dominant position in the polity. A number of other scholars have echoed Posen's sentiments. Lake and Rothchild (1996), for example, contend that the strategic dilemmas highlighted by Posen lead ethnic activists and political entrepreneurs to play on the emotions and fears of the community in order to increase polarization and, in turn, the likelihood of war. The logic of dominant group violence, then, differs from the logic of rebellion. The logic of rebellion is about past grievances and the perceived opportunity to redress them. The logic of dominant group violence is about the threat of future grievances and the perceived opportunity to prevent them.

When the government is unwilling to clearly articulate and implement a position regarding the exclusion or inclusion of ethnic minorities, the level of uncertainty for the dominant group rises significantly. Uncertainty, similar to Peterson's notion of resentment, implies both the perception of a pressing threat to the group's privileged status and the belief that they have the ability to overcome that threat if they act wisely. Therefore, the relationship between dissident success and countermobilization by dominant groups tends to be curvilinear (Meyer and Staggenborg 1996, 1645). There is less incentive to incur the attendant risks and costs associated with participation in contentious activities where minorities are not successful in achieving gains, and where minorities are able to win policy reforms decisively. The more uncertain minority gains are the more likely dominant groups are to mobilize. This is because uncertainty leads dominant group members to view countermobilization, with its attendant risks and costs, as both necessary for protecting their interests and a feasible strategy for achieving their objectives. Ultimately, then, uncertainty encourages the mobilization of minorities and

dominant groups that compete both within and outside of the state's formal institutional framework (Meyer and Staggenborg 1996, 1637).

This uncertainty is endemic to ethnic democracies given their dual commitments to inclusive and exclusive governance. As I discussed previously, ethno-democratic governments openly declare their support for the maintenance of an exclusionary regime. In addition, they work to repress challenges to the regime from among excluded ethnic groups. These policies send a clear signal to the dominant group that their advantaged position within the polity is both legitimate and sustainable. At the same time, however, ethno-democratic governments declare their commitment to inclusive democracy and make concessions to excluded minorities in order to appease international actors calling for a more equitable distribution of power and resources. These concessions signal to members of the dominant group that the government is susceptible to pressure that could erode the stratified nature of the regime. Dominant groups in ethnic democracies are therefore likely to perceive threats as the government makes concessions to ethnic minorities, yet feel emboldened as the state continues to repress dissidents and articulate its commitment to dominant group hegemony.

In addition to its effect on dominant group mobilization, uncertainty also encourages radicalization among members of dominant ethnic groups (Alimi, Demetriou, and Bosi 2015, Alimi and Hirsch-Hoefler 2012, Maney 2016, McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001, 45). Speaking about the effects of uncertainty on contentious behavior, McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly (2001, 60) explain that

In a situation of relative certainty, where it is fairly clear what will happen next, subjects and some constituted challengers remain inactive. With increasing uncertainty, both types of actors move toward tolerated and forbidden forms of action. Even polity members resort to forbidden performances when uncertainty reaches its peak.

As Ross and Gurr (1989, 418) put it, uncertainty leads a “growing numbers of activists [to] become convinced that all political ends are possible...and that any means can be used in pursuit of those ends.” As a result, when members of the dominant group come to believe that the government is “ineffective in dealing with challenges to the prevailing socio-political order” (Rosenbaum and Sederberg 1976b, 7, Silke 1999, 3, Abrahams 1987, 179), but continue to receive support from political elites (Luders 2003), they are far more likely to view anti-minority violence as both a legitimate and necessary means of protecting their dominant position within the polity. Greater support for anti-minority violence among the dominant ethnic group, in turn, increases the probability that some portion of the dominant group will violently target members of those minority groups challenging the regime. Where the government is consistent in its approach to the inclusion or exclusion of ethnic minorities, in contrast, dominant group violence is far less likely to occur.

Conclusion:

In this chapter, I have argued that uncertainty causes dominant group violence. Building on the recent work by Eitan Alimi and Gregory Maney, I contended that this uncertainty is likely to be pronounced in ethnic democracies because these regimes combine political exclusion of minorities and a commitment to democratic governance (Maney 2016, Alimi and Hirsch-Hoefler 2012). I began by arguing that systematic exclusion of minorities motivates them to challenge the stratified nature of the regime, while the state’s democratic institutions provide opportunities for minority mobilization. I went on to argue that when responding to minority dissent, ethnic democracies are in a difficult position. They are unable to accommodate excluded

minorities due to the hegemonic ideology among the dominant group, while at the same time they must limit their repression of minorities in order to appease international actors. Consequently, ethnic democracies tend to adopt a mixed strategy of conflict management that intensifies minority dissent. The government's mixed strategy of conflict management also signals to the dominant group that their dominant position within the polity is under threat, while the government's maintenance of the segmented nature of rule in the polity signals the government's continued support for the exclusionary nature of the regime. Feeling at once threatened by minority mobilization and the government's mixed response and empowered by the government's continued support for the exclusionary regime, members of the dominant group engage in anti-minority violence in an effort to maintain and even extend their dominant position within the polity.

While the structural argument presented here helps to explain the conditions under which dominant group violence is likely to occur, it cannot explain the dynamic nature of this violence. As with all political violence, dominant group violence varies in frequency, severity, target choice, and level of popular participation over time. Any attempt to mitigate this type of violence, whether through policing efforts or public policy, requires an understanding of these dynamics. It is with this in mind that I now turn to a discussion of the dynamics of dominant group violence.

Chapter 2: Threat and the Dynamics of Dominant Group Violence

In March 2011, Israeli settlers perpetrated a wave of violence against Palestinians in the West Bank. On March 3, Israeli settlers held a “day of rage” in protest of the demolition of a number of structures in the Havat Gilad settlement outpost by the Israeli authorities, during which a large number of settlers rioted and blocked major roads and intersections throughout the West Bank, vandalized Palestinian property, and threw stones at Palestinian cars on the roadways. Eight days later, a young Palestinian man infiltrated the Jewish settlement of Itamar in the Northern West Bank. Armed with a knife, the assailant stabbed and killed five members of a single family before escaping. During the second two weeks of March, Israeli settlers injured at least 16 Palestinians in 12 separate incidents. The gravest two incidents occurred on March 21 in the Hebron district. In one incident, an Israeli settler opened fire at a funeral procession in the town of Beit Ummar injuring two men. In the other incident, Israeli settlers stabbed and seriously injured a 30-year-old Palestinian man close to At Tuwani village.

On July 31, 2015, the Dawabsheh family returned to their home in the Palestinian village of Duma from a visit with relatives at around 1:30 AM and sometime after, they went to bed. Between 2:00 and 4:00 AM, a masked Israeli settler by the name of Amiram Ben-Uliel smashed a bedroom window and threw a Molotov cocktail through it. Both parents emerged from their home enveloped in flames and both would succumb to their injuries within weeks. Their 18-month-old son, Ali Sa'ed Muhammad Dawabsheh, did not escape and died at the scene. Within weeks, Israeli security forces arrested Ben-Uliel and tried him for both the crime and for his membership in a Jewish terrorist network. While investigators originally believed settlement demolitions motivated the attack, Ben-Uliel eventually confessed to his interrogators that the

attack was a response to the murder of his friend, Malachi Rosenfeld, by Palestinian assailants on June 29.

Early in the morning on Tuesday October 14, 2014, a small group of Israeli settlers attempted to torch a mosque in the Palestinian village of Aqraba. They arrived at the Abu Bakr mosque compound after midnight, spray-painted graffiti using the words "price tag" and "Kahane" (referring to the late, ultra-right-wing Meir Kahane), then poured gasoline on the first floor of the mosque and set it on fire. Residents arrived at the mosque to help extinguish the flames before they could spread to the rest of the structure. Interestingly, unlike the previous incidents, the attack did not occur during a significant spike in the frequency of anti-Palestinian violence in the West Bank.

As these anecdotes suggest, dominant group violence varies in intensity and form over time as the frequency, severity, and targets of violence fluctuate. A structural explanation of dominant group violence is therefore insufficient for explaining the phenomenon.⁵⁷ While I have argued that the uncertainty produced by ethno-democratic regimes increases the likelihood that dominant group violence will occur, this explanation does not account for the dynamic nature of that violence. Why does the frequency of violence change over time? Why do dominant group members choose to use different violent tactics on different occasions? A structural argument cannot on its own answer such questions because structure tends to change slowly, but the frequency and severity of violence, as well as targeting choices, are far more variable.

Explaining the dynamics of dominant group violence, therefore, requires a theoretical shift away

⁵⁷ I use the terms "dominant group violence" and "anti-minority violence" interchangeably throughout the dissertation.

from structural conditions that act as indirect causes of dominant group violence and toward an approach that focuses on the direct causes of violence.

I have argued that dominant group violence is a product of heightened uncertainty regarding the dominant group's privileged status. This uncertainty is produced by the combination of minority dissent and the government's mixed strategy of conflict management. However, while uncertainty makes dominant group violence more likely, it does not explain *when* members of the dominant group are likely to perpetrate violence.⁵⁸ I argue that threat perception acts as a link between the structural conditions that make dominant group violence more likely and the actual perpetration of dominant group violence. In order to explain why members of the dominant group perpetrate violence against minorities, therefore, it is necessary to examine the factors that increase the perception of threat among the dominant ethnic group. To this end, I contend that certain types of events send signals to dominant group members about variation in the level of threat in their environment. In so doing, these events determine when violence is perpetrated and to what degree. This interactive approach allows me to link structural uncertainty that drives dominant group violence at the macro level with the perceptions of threat that cause dominant group violence at the meso and micro-levels.

⁵⁸ Questions of conflict intensity may take one of two forms: comparisons between conflicts and examinations of variation within conflicts. The first asks what types of conflicts are likely to be more intense and why? The second asks when are conflicts likely to become more intense and why? In this chapter, I am interested in the latter. Specifically, I am interested in when dominant ethnic are groups likely to increase or decrease the frequency of violence they perpetrate and when they are likely to use more or less severe forms of violence.

Members of the dominant group employ violence in an attempt to diminish immediate threats to their community. However, dominant groups face two distinct types of threat: *physical threat*, which is defined as a threat to the physical safety of a particular population and *social threat*, which describes a threat to the privileged position, wealth, values, or status of a group (Kaufman 2015, 45). It is not clear, however, exactly how each of these forms of threat affect dominant group violence. It is possible, theoretically, that both forms of threat have an independent and equal effect on violent behavior, that only one form of threat affects violent behavior, that both forms of threat affect violent behavior but not to the same degree, and that each form of threat elicits violence against different types of targets. The current literature on threat and political violence does not directly address these possibilities, generally ignoring the distinction between physical and social threat or conflating them theoretically. This lacuna leads me to ask, when are dominant group members likely to perceive changes to the levels of physical and social threat? How do dominant group members respond to each form of threat? Are physical and social threats likely to produce the same frequency and severity of violence? Finally, are physical and social threats likely to produce violence against different types of targets?

I argue that within an uncertain environment, dominant groups are particularly attentive to accommodative and repressive actions of the government and to the behavior of ethnic minorities. Broadly speaking, government concessions and dissident violence send signals to dominant groups about changes in the level of physical and social threat to their community. I hypothesize that members of the dominant group employ violence in an attempt to diminish both physical and social threats, but each type of threat has a distinct effect on the frequency, severity, and targets of dominant group violence.

The remainder of the chapter is organized as follows: I begin by outlining the role of threat in extant explanations of political violence. Next, I introduce the interactive approach that I rely on in developing my explanation of dominant group violence. Then, I develop my theoretical model - in which dominant group violence is triggered by physical and social threats – and develop a series of hypotheses about the unique and relative effects of physical and social threats on the frequency, severity, and target choices of dominant group violence. I conclude by briefly summarizing the argument.

Threat and political violence: dissidents, governments, and dominant ethnic groups

While the concept of threat has acted as a powerful motivator for groups across the ideological spectrum, from rightwing nationalists to communists guerrillas (Van Dyke and Soule 2002, 499), it tends to be underplayed in explanations of contention because of the disproportionate focus on dissident mobilization. As Tilly and Goldstone (2001) explain, threat is “often treated as merely the flip side of opportunity, a negative measure of the same concept, so that ‘increased threat’ simply equates with ‘reduced opportunities’.” Despite scholars’ tendency to conflate threat and opportunity, threat and opportunity are more appropriately conceptualized as distinct concepts rather than two sides of the same coin. Opportunity and threat often have independent effects on the behavior of dissident groups. Extreme threats, for example, may alter the rational calculus of potential dissidents, increasing the relative expected utility of participation in dissident activities in the absence of objective opportunities or an expectation of victory (Goldstone and Tilly 2001, 181). Similarly, Goldstone (2003, 21) posits that “opposition to a dissident movement’s goals by party politicians can invigorate movement activity by raising fears of loss of past gains or of new threats to their interests.”

For scholars of state repression, unlike those interested in dissident violence, threat has long played a central explanatory role.⁵⁹ As Davenport (2007, 7) points out,

Dating back to, at least, Kautilya in India during the fourth century (particularly Book IV in the Arthashastra), ...Niccolo Machiavelli in Italy during the late 1400s and early 1500s or Thomas Hobbes in England during the late 1500s and early 1600s, it has been commonly thought that governing authorities should respond with repression to behavior that threatens the political system, government personnel, the economy, or the lives, beliefs, and livelihoods of those within their territorial jurisdiction.

Two separate strands of literature have developed around the idea that the perception of threat causes state violence. The first examines the state as a unitary actor and contends that “in the decision to repress, the important issue is not whether dissent exists, for it almost always does at some level, but rather, whether the dissent that is present is perceived by decision makers to pose a real threat to their rule” (Davenport 2000, 30). This literature theorizes the ways in which contextual factors, group characteristics, and dissident behavior effect the level of threat to the

⁵⁹ This approach is not ubiquitous. Ethnic outbidding explanations, for example, suggest that repression may occur because the government deems it politically advantageous (Snyder 2000, Mansfield and Snyder 2005, Lake and Rothchild 1996, Kaufman 1996, Fearon 2006). Where support for repression against a minority is high among the government’s constituency, the government may perpetrate repression against minorities to grow its own support. In this context, state repression may seem irrational given the level of threat to the government, but makes perfect sense when accounting for the potential political benefits of perpetrating repression. The important point here is that while threat is not the only cause of state repression, the bulk of the repression literature points to threat perception as the primary determinant of the occurrence and intensity of state repression.

regime (Davenport 1995).⁶⁰ For example, Gartner and Regan (1996) argue that states use more violence against groups that have greater demands because these groups are considered more threatening to the regime. The government often represses minority groups more heavily because minority demands are more likely to challenge the fundamental structure of the extant regime and because minority groups tend to target the government and its agents while dominant ethnic groups tend to target minorities they deem threatening (White 1999, Wood 2007). According to Davenport (1995) when governments are faced with a higher number of dissent activities, when different forms of protest are employed, and when the activities lie outside the norms of interaction in that country, states are likely to feel threatened and therefore repression is likely to increase. In addition, a number of scholars have argued that states are more likely to use repression when facing violent dissent (Davenport 1995, 687, Regan and Henderson 2002, Carey 2010, Poe and Tate 1994). The reason is that “when faced with less threatening opposition tactics, it would be too costly to kill systematically large parts of the population, both in terms of organizing and funding the necessary killing machine, but also with respect to the international condemnation and shaming that these actions would trigger” (Carey 2010). In addition, violent dissent threatens the government by creating grievances and frustration among the general population that could erode support for the government. Incidentally, both democratic and non-

⁶⁰ It is surely true that some dictators fear losing their lives as a result of a coup, rebellion, or assassination, after all, this is not uncommon when dictators lose power in “irregular exits” (Goemans, Gleditsch, and Chiozza 2009). Nevertheless, the literature on state repression and threat overwhelmingly assumes that threat is the primary motivator of government behavior.

democratic governments are likely to resort to some level of repression when facing threatening dissident violence (Davenport 1995).

The second vein of research linking threat and state violence examines agents of the state and theorizes the ways in which threat perception affects their behavior. This literature largely focuses on the behavior of state agents involved in “protest policing,” and argues that the use of coercive tactics against dissidents is largely dependent on the perceived level of threat to security forces on the ground (Earl, Soule, and McCarthy 2003, Earl and Soule 2006, Earl 2011, Ayoub 2010). Repression is conceptualized as a two-stage process. In the first stage, state authorities decide whether security forces should attend an event. This stage largely treats the government as a unitary actor and builds on the findings from the unitary actor approach. The literature indicates that security forces are most likely to attend protests if authorities deem events to be threatening. Authorities are especially likely to perceive protests as threatening if they are large, use confrontational tactics, are highly organized, or are carried out by subordinate groups (Earl, Soule, and McCarthy 2003, 584). In the second stage, security forces must decide what actions to take once they are present at the event. Earl, Soule, and McCarthy (2003, 586) argue that authorities, once present at an event, cannot afford to ignore threatening activities, groups, or goals without appearing weak to the public. Consequently, they contend that authorities are likely to react to highly threatening events because inaction in the face of threat suggests the police are outmaneuvered or are simply overly permissive. They therefore conclude that authorities will respond to high levels of threat with high levels of repressive force no matter how strong or weak the protesters. In sum, both the “unitary actor” and “protest policing” literatures argue that threat perception has a direct effect on the probability and intensity of state repression.

The causes of dominant group violence more closely resemble the causes of government repression than the causes of dissident violence. While those enjoying sociopolitical dominance may have sufficient resources to mobilize, they are “inspired to do so when faced with a perceived threat to these resources” (Van Dyke and Soule 2002, 499). Dominant groups, like governments, tend to perpetrate violence when they feel threatened. The protest policing literature’s insight that state agents respond both to perceived threats to the regime (social threats) as well as to their own safety (physical threats) is directly applicable to dominant ethnic groups. Like state agents, dominant ethnic groups face both physical and social threats. In other words, threat, for dominant groups, is a “multidimensional concept as individuals and collectives differentiate among different domains in which they can appraise security. Thus...[threat] may refer independently to such domains as physical survival, economic welfare, or cultural well-being” (Bar-Tal, Halperin, and de Rivera 2007, 449). In order to explain why members of the dominant group perpetrate violence against members of excluded minorities, therefore, it is necessary to examine the factors that increase the perception of physical and social threat among the dominant ethnic group.

An interactive dynamic approach:

Most quantitative analyses of conflict intensity – measured in terms of both frequency and severity of violent events - have developed static theories to explain variation in violence intensity, highlighting the structural factors that contribute to or prevent violence.⁶¹ To some

⁶¹ Many scholars have focused on conflict severity in both domestic and interstate conflicts. Some of this research focuses on the overall severity of violence (Restrepo, Spagat, and Vargas 2006, Melander, Öberg, and Hall 2009, Lu

degree, this is due to the data available to scholars. The majority of these studies use cross-sectional data with country-year or conflict-episode as the unit of analysis. As such, they are limited in their ability to test dynamic explanations of conflict (Davenport 2007, 18). However, this research does help explain why some conflicts reach a higher level of intensity than others. For example, scholars have shown that non-democracy (Heger and Salehyan 2007, Bennett and Stam 1996), economic grievances (Lu and Thies 2011, Chaudoin, Peskowitz, and Stanton 2017), asymmetric warfare (Balcells and Kalyvas 2014, but see Melander, Öberg, and Hall 2009), certain forms of third party intervention (Krain 2005), sociopolitical polarization and “crosscuttingness” (Kustov 2015), and highly exclusionary ideologies (Harff and Gurr 1989) significantly increase conflict intensity.

While providing important insights about where violence is likely to be most severe, none of these explanations sufficiently explains why the intensity of violence fluctuates within conflicts over time. If we are to understand what influences conflict and violence (i.e. what takes place in a specific time, in a specific place and by specific individuals), then we must direct our

and Thies 2011, Krain 2005, Heger and Salehyan 2007, Costalli and Moro 2012, Balcells and Kalyvas 2014, Chaudoin, Peskowitz, and Stanton 2017, Bennett and Stam 1996, Harff 2003, Valentino, Huth, and Balch-Lindsay 2004, Lacina 2006, Kalyvas 2006, Downes 2008, Lujala 2009, Benson and Kugler 1998), while some looks more specifically at the severity of violence perpetrated by government personnel (Valentino, Huth, and Balch-Lindsay 2004, Davenport 1995, Carey 2010, Davenport 2012, Azam and Hoeffler 2002, Earl and Soule 2006), non-state actors supportive of the government (Petersohn 2014, Koren 2015, Cohen and Norda’s 2015, Clayton and Thomson 2016, Stanton 2015), or dissidents/rebels (Weinstein 2007, Humphreys and Weinstein 2006, Wood 2010, Stanton 2013).

attention to the actions at the level they occur, or at least move in that direction (Loyle, Sullivan, and Davenport 2014). To that end, a growing number of scholars have conducted within-case analyses using highly disaggregated national and subnational datasets (Kalyvas 2006, Maney 2005, White 1993a, Restrepo, Spagat, and Vargas 2006, Lyall 2009, Earl, Soule, and McCarthy 2003, Olzak 1992, Wilkinson 2006, Davenport and Stam 2009, Kocher, Pepinsky, and Kalyvas 2011, Straus 2013, Loyle, Sullivan, and Davenport 2014). These analyses help to explain not just *where* violence is most likely to occur, but also *when* it is likely to occur.⁶² This is important because failing to account for temporal variation can produce inaccurate and misleading findings. An edited volume by Collier and Sambanis (2005), for example, examines the findings from Collier and Hoeffler's influential quantitative study on civil wars by way of a series of case studies (Collier and Hoeffler 2004). The authors find that in many cases, the factors highlighted by Collier and Hoeffler's quantitative models do not play a significant role in conflicts they are thought to explain. Similarly, Restrepo, Spagat, and Vargas (2006) show that the most commonly used large-N datasets over aggregate their data and therefore tend to mischaracterize the dynamics of violence in the Colombian civil war. They therefore argue that conflict researchers should prioritize the construction of more national level datasets that will facilitate detailed studies of conflict intensity and its dynamics.

Most explanations of short-term variation in conflict dynamics adopt an interactive approach. The interactive approach moves away from "large structural explanations, such as the institutional characteristics of the regime, towards more micro causal explanations focusing on

⁶² Scholars have also used within-case analysis to explain regional variation in conflict intensity (see for example Kalyvas 2006, Costalli and Moro 2011, Ferguson 2017).

the contingent effects of conflict dynamics” (Loyle, Sullivan, and Davenport 2014). It imagines political contention as a “behavioral dialogue” between regimes, their supporters, and their oppositions that “unwinds across time” (Poe et al. 2000, 30). An interactive approach assumes that “actors respond to the change in others’ actions: actors increase their probability of action when others’ action rises, and decrease their probability when others’ action declines” (Oliver and Myers 2002, 11). It assumes, in short, that “interactions affect subsequent behavior” (Meyer and Staggenborg 1996, 210).

Many scholars studying ethnic conflict and contentious politics have adopted the interactive approach. A sizable literature examining the dynamics of competing movements, for example, has explicitly built on the interactive approach (Maney 2005, Zald and Useem 1987, Meyer and Staggenborg 1996, 2008, Oliver and Myers 2002, Alimi and Hirsch-Hoefler 2012). According to this literature, actions perpetrated by one movement send signals to competing movements about the changing level of threat to their physical safety and interests. When they perceive these actions as threatening, groups are likely to react in order to reduce the level of threat. Goldstone (2003, 13), agrees, but shifts the emphasis to government behavior, arguing that state actions, as much as or more than movements themselves, determine the intensity of contention between movements seeking sociopolitical inclusion and countermovements supportive of the status quo (see also Luders 2003, Meyer and Staggenborg 1996). Alimi, Demetriou, and Bosi (2015) build on this work in the development of their “arenas of interactions” approach. This approach organizes interactions into arenas such as the movement-state arena, movement-countermovement arena, and counter-movement-state arena. A number of other scholars have also adopted this type of approach in their analyses of specific conflicts. Both Cavanaugh (1997, 45) and Maney (2005), for instance, find that various interactions between

Republican dissidents, Loyalist militias, and British security forces in Northern Ireland have a direct effect on the behavior of all three actors. Alimi and Hirsch-Hoefler (2012) similarly show that interactions between Palestinians, the Jewish-Israeli settler movement, and the Israeli government help to explain the highly dynamic nature of political violence in Israel-Palestine.

Studies of state repression and protest movements have also encouraged close attention to interactions. In his discussion of the complex relationship between state repression and dissent, for instance, Moore (1995) argues that researchers should focus on the interactions between the government and its opposition. Poe et al. (2000, 30) agree, adding that scholars “need to take into account the timing and sequence of government and opposition group behaviors.” White (1999) applies an interactive framework to his analysis of government repression in Northern Ireland. He shows that security forces consistently and systematically respond far less harshly to Loyalist violence than Republican violence. Rasler (1996) adopts an interactive approach to explain variation in the level of anti-regime protest during the Iranian revolution. She shows that government repression decreases dissident mobilization in the short-term, but increases mobilization in the long-term. In sum, adopting an interactive approach assumes that in order to explain short-term variation in conflict intensity, it is necessary to analyze the interactions between conflict actors systematically.

Events act as the foundation of interactive explanations of political violence. *Events* are “contentious and potentially subversive acts that challenge normalized practices, modes of causation, or systems of authority.” They are, that is, “purposeful forms of action who’s perpetrators aim to transform rather than reproduce, to overturn or alter that which, in the absence of the event, others would take for granted” (Beissinger 2002, 14-15). The reason events are so important is that objective threat, on its own, may not cause individuals or groups to

perpetrate violence. Threat must be perceived in order to have an effect. Events send signals to conflict actors about changes in the level of threat within their environment, which, in turn, affects their perceived need to act in order to mitigate the threat.⁶³ In the current study, events may take the form of government repression, government concessions, violent and non-violent dissident actions, and incidents of dominant group violence.

In an uncertain environment, both dominant and excluded ethnic groups are likely to collectively attribute threats in response to particular types of events (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001, 95). The collective attribution of threat can produce seemingly coordinated activities even when there is no central organizational structure. Scholars have used this basic logic to explain violent collective action in the absence of direction and coordination by a central leadership. Schelling (1980, 90), for example, uses the example of mob behavior to illustrate the way in which “incidents” can play a coordinating role by signaling to a large number of people when and where to act. Horowitz (2001, 268) builds on Schelling’s argument by adding that in order to precipitate violence, an event must be “threatening or transgressive.” That is, it must be “a blatant display of what ethnic others are not to be allowed to do with impunity.” In addition, the event must be reasonably proximate in time and place to the perpetration of violence. While Schelling and Horowitz use this logic to explain geographically concentrated mob violence, the

⁶³ If, for example, ethnic group A is mobilizing against ethnic group B, but ethnic group B is not aware of this mobilization, the objective threat posed by ethnic group A’s activities will not affect the behavior of ethnic group B. This is because ethnic group B, unaware of ethnic group A’s mobilization, will not perceive a threat even though one objectively exists. Once ethnic group A actually carries out an act of violence against ethnic group B, however, ethnic group B will become aware of ethnic group A’s mobilization, perceive an increased level of threat to its security, and act against ethnic group A accordingly.

same logic may be applied to a series of contentious actions carried out simultaneously across a wider geographic space (Beissinger 2002).

When events elicit new events in rapid succession, they have an even greater effect on subsequent events. This phenomenon is what Beissinger (2002, 27) calls “thickened history.” In attempting to explain acts of dominant group violence during periods and spaces of heightened contention, it is therefore particularly important to examine how events affect future events. This is especially true when the violence is relatively diffuse because small isolated and poorly organized groups may respond to perceived threats without much calculation. In this case, violence is at least partially resorted to emotionally in a desperate effort to restore the status quo ante and to temporarily release group anxiety and tension (Sprinzak 1995). These “anxieties and tensions” are likely to be most severe for members of the dominant group, I argue, when events occur which signal an increase in the level of physical or social threat to their community.

The question, then, is what types of events are likely to signal physical and social threat? Additionally, how do these types of events affect the overall frequency of dominant group violence and how do these events affect the types of violence dominant groups perpetrate?

Threat and the dynamics of dominant group violence:

Sociopolitical structures do not collapse in a day; they crumble over time due to sustained pressure on the regime that the government and its allies cannot overcome. Dissidents carry out many actions meant to weaken or pressure the regime before the regime actually falls. As they do so, government agents and their civilian allies act in defense of the regime. States wield repression and concessions as they work to manage the conflict. Dominant ethnic groups act out against minorities, and on occasion against the state, as they attempt to maintain their position of

power and influence and increase their level of personal security. In chapter one, I argued that structural uncertainty produced by ethnic democracy creates a significant level of uncertainty for dominant groups and increases the likelihood of physical threats in the form of dissident violence. Variation in the intensity – that is, the frequency and severity – and target choices of dominant group violence, I argue, is caused by events that increase the perceived level of threat for the dominant ethnic group.

Two types of threats are important for explaining dominant group violence. As previously mentioned, I build here on Kaufman's (2015) distinction between physical and social threats. Physical threat is a perception that one's physical security is threatened. Social threat refers to feelings that the status, identity, or interests of one's own group may be threatened. Kaufman argues that both types of threat raise the saliency of group identity for the threatened group and increase hostility and prejudice by "blocking empathy, and thereby promoting selfishness or in-group bias, and by encouraging actions in "self-defense" against the other group" (Kaufman 2015, 45).

Kaufman's (2015) theory assumes that the effects of physical threat supersede the effects of social threat. He therefore does not explicitly theorize the unique effects of physical and social threats when they occur contemporaneously, a common occurrence in ethnic conflict (Tir and Singh 2015). A combination of physical and social threat is particularly likely in ethnic democracies because of the mixed repression-concessions strategy they adopt to manage minority dissent. As discussed in chapter one, in ethnic democracies, governments are likely to employ both repression and concessions in a limited fashion in order to avoid severe international backlash and to avoid major revisions to the status quo. Limited repression increases dissent by motivating potential dissidents and signaling to both excluded and dominant

groups that the government is unwilling or unable to employ more severe repression, while limited concessions work to empower the minority and increase dissent. Within this environment, dominant groups experience both physical threats in the form of dissident violence and social threats in the form of state concessions to minorities.

The acknowledgement that physical and social threats may occur independently within the same conflict episode raises a number of questions. Do both types of threat elicit a violent response? What are the relative effects of each type of threat? Does one type of threat produce more frequent or more severe acts of violence? Does each type of threat produce violence against similar types of targets? I address each of these questions in turn.

Physical threat:

In ethnic democracies with relatively strong coercive capacities such as contemporary Israel, dominant groups are likely to face significant threats to their physical security. The primary reason is that within this context the lines between dominant groups and the state tend to blur for dissidents over time.⁶⁴ Ethnic democracies are prone to civilian targeting because dominant groups are expected to lay at least a portion of the blame for their losses on the government and, given the democratic structure of the regime, the government seeks to avoid a

⁶⁴ This was the case, for example, in South Africa where Mandela and the ANC began by supporting and publically legitimizing only violence against government properties and personnel. Over time, however, the ANC stopped distinguishing between whites and the Apartheid government (Kaufman 2015).

loss of dominant group support.⁶⁵ Dissidents target civilians in democratic states because they believe doing so will erode public support for the government (Stanton 2013, Fjelde and Hultman 2013, Eck and Hultman 2007, Hultman 2012, 2007), elicit governmental concessions (Stanton 2013, Wood and Kathman 2014) and weaken the government's capacity (Fjelde and Hultman 2013).⁶⁶ In addition, democratic governance may increase the perceived legitimacy of civilian targeting for dissidents because dissidents are likely to view the government's civilian constituency as complicit – through the electoral process - in the continued prejudicial treatment of minorities. A clear power asymmetry in the government's favor compounds the effects of democracy on civilian targeting. This is because dissidents with relatively low capabilities use civilian targeting as a means to generate significant costs for the government where they lack the capacity to generate significant costs by direct confrontation alone (Pape 2003, Wood 2010, Ghatak and Prins 2016).

Scholars have indicated that dissident violence against civilians significantly increases support for retaliatory violence among the targeted community (Davenport and Inman 2012, 628,

⁶⁵ In turkey, for example, voters are highly sensitive to Kurdish terrorism and tend to blame the government for their losses (Kibris 2011).

⁶⁶ It may well be that in the long run civilian targeting will make concessions less likely by, for example, increasing support for right wing political parties (Kibris 2011). The important point, however, is that dissidents tend to believe that civilian targeting elicits government concessions in the short-term.

Civilian targeting does not imply that dissidents cease all attacks on the government. To the contrary, in many ethnic conflicts dissidents primarily target the government and its agents because they view the government as the primary source of grievances (Salehyan and Stewart 2017, Maney 2005, White 1999, 193). In many cases, then, dissidents are likely to target both state agents and civilians from the dominant ethnic group.

Maoz and McCauley 2008, Alimi, Bosi, and Demetriou 2012, Maney, McCarthy, and Yukich 2012, Gazit 2015, Abrahams 1998, Sprinzak 1995, Kaufman 2015, 46). Support for retaliatory violence is produced by a) the affective response to violence, b) the effect of violence on the perceived legitimacy of retaliatory violence, and c) strategic considerations.

One way in which dissident violence increases support for retaliatory violence among the dominant group is by increasing affective tendencies toward aggression. Ethnic violence tends to trigger negative emotions such as fear and anger which produce tendencies toward distrust, aggression, and confrontation (Kaufman 2015) and in extreme cases lead to dehumanization of out-groups (Maoz and McCauley 2008). Building on findings from “terror management theory,” Kaufman (2015) argues that physical threat “influences people to become more aggressive, nationalistic, intolerant, and indifferent to the other groups suffering...” They do so by reminding people of their own mortality and triggering a cognitive survival response.⁶⁷ The effects can be severe, leading to rapid and extreme ethnic polarization (Kaufman 2001, Fearon 2006) and long lasting attitudes of political intolerance (Tir and Singh 2015) and prejudice (Kaufman 2001).

Along with its emotive effects, dissident violence also increases the perceived legitimacy of retaliatory violence by increasing the number of people personally affected by violence and the number of people who view the states response as insufficient. Victims of violence are particularly likely to view retaliatory violence as legitimate (Abrahams 1998, Gazit 2015, McCauley and Moskalenko 2008, Della Porta 2013, White 1993b). However, even those not

⁶⁷ These effects can linger, helping to explain why violence tends to recur in the same locals over time (Balcells 2010).

directly affected by dissident violence may come to see retaliatory violence as legitimate. This is because even indirect exposure can heighten perceptions of inter-group threat (Schmid and Muldoon 2015) and because dissident violence may indicate that the state is unwilling or unable to apply the necessary level of repression needed to suppress the threat (Rosenbaum and Sederberg 1976b, 7).

Finally, dissident violence increases support for anti-minority violence among dominant group members by increasing the perceived strategic efficacy of that violence. Targets of violence often engage in reciprocal violence strategically in order to increase the cost and, in turn, reduce the frequency of violent actions carried out by their opponents (Alimi, Bosi, and Demetriou 2012, Maney, McCarthy, and Yukich 2012). As the perceived level of physical threat rises, it becomes increasingly rational for people to take up arms even if the actual probability of violence is negligible. This is because a low probability event with drastic consequences has a “high expected disutility” (Weingast 1998). In addition, by pointing to acts of ethnic violence, elites can develop and propagate myths, narratives, and frames that increase the perceived level of physical threat to the dominant ethnic group (Kaufman 2001, Brubaker and Laitin 1998, 442). Where these myths, narratives, and frames are widespread, relatively minor acts of dissident violence will likely have a significant effect on the perceived need to retaliate. Within this environment, even rumors that express an expectation of aggressive behavior can trigger significant levels of dominant group violence (Horowitz 2001). In sum, civilian targeting by dissidents significantly increases support for retaliatory violence by increasing affective tendencies toward aggression, increasing the perceived legitimacy of that violence, and increasing the perception that retaliatory violence is strategically expedient.

An increase in public support for dominant group violence increases the likelihood that dominant group violence will actually occur (Rosenbaum and Sederberg 1976b, 8). This finding is central in the study of vigilantism.⁶⁸ According to Rosenbaum and Sederberg (1976b, 8), the government is far less willing to impose severe sanctions on those who target dissidents, deviants, or criminals if the “vigilantes appear to have the support of the ‘core’ establishment groups in the country.” If community support for dominant group violence is low, “the formal institutional efforts to maintain due process will be reinforced rather than frustrated.”

The literature on ethnic entrepreneurs is also instructive here. This literature has indicated that as public support for dominant group violence grows, national and local elites competing for support from their ethnic constituency are increasingly likely to provide material or rhetorical

⁶⁸ The literature on vigilantism largely examines violence perpetrated by vigilante groups. Vigilantism, according to the traditional model, is violence directed against those believed to be committing acts proscribed by the formal legal system (Abrahams 1998, Rosenbaum and Sederberg 1976b). Such acts harm private persons or property, but the perpetrators escape justice to governmental inefficiency, corruption, pressure from external actors, or leniency of the system of due process (Rosenbaum and Sederberg 1976b). According to Ehud Sprinzak (1987), vigilantes “never see [themselves] in a state of principled conflict either with the government or with the prevailing concept of law. They are not revolutionary and do not try to bring down authority. Rather, what characterizes the vigilante state of mind is the profound conviction that the government or some of its agencies have failed to enforce their own order in an area under their jurisdiction. Backed by the fundamental norm of self-defense and speaking in the name of what they believe to be the valid law of the land, vigilantes, in effect, enforce the law and execute justice. ‘Due process of the law’ is the least of their concerns.” In ethnic democracies, where one group dominates the other(s), this form of violence may take on characteristics of “group-control” vigilantism, where violence targets a threatening group categorically (Rosenbaum and Sederberg 1976b). Transgressive activities by any members of the group, in other words, legitimate violence against all members of the group.

support to anti-minority radicals (Snyder 2000, Mansfield and Snyder 2005, Lake and Rothchild 1996, Kaufman 1996, Fearon 2006). While some elites may desire inter-ethnic accommodation and conciliation, most will accede to the demands of their constituency in order to maintain their power and influence (De Votta 2004, 12, Lake and Rothchild 1996). In addition, security forces from the dominant ethnic group are less likely to perceive members of the dominant group as a threat (Earl, Soule, and McCarthy 2003, 584, Gartner and Regan 1996) and more likely to sympathize with anti-minority radicals and either provide them support or allow them to act with relative impunity.⁶⁹ When radicals feel a sense impunity, they are far more likely to engage in violent behavior (Horowitz 2001, 102). Increased public support for dominant group violence, therefore, increases the motivation for members of the dominant group to perpetrate violence against minorities and significantly decreases the risks associated with these activities.

In sum, civilian targeting by dissidents is likely to produce anti-minority violence from dominant groups because individuals personally affected by the violence and their sympathizers tend to be more supportive of extra-legal dominant group violence. An increase in support for this type of violence increases the frequency of attacks by increasing the number of people willing to perpetrate dominant group violence and by reducing the risks of official sanctions against the perpetrators. I therefore expect that

⁶⁹ There are many examples of this phenomenon. In both Israel-Palestine and Northern Ireland, for example, security forces have on some occasions participated in unsanctioned anti-minority violence and often taken a largely hands off approach to anti-minority violence in the field (White 1999, Winslow 2007).

H1a: An increase in attacks by excluded minorities against members of the dominant group increases the frequency of dominant group violence.

Violence perpetrated against security forces, rather than civilian members of the dominant group, should not increase dominant group violence. There are two reasons for this proposition. The first reason is that violence against security forces does not represent a clear shift in the level of physical threat to the civilian community. According to the argument presented here, the violence must signal a direct increase in the level of physical threat to the dominant ethnic group in order to have an effect. Violence by minority groups, in and of itself, should not elicit significant increases in the frequency of dominant group violence. Dominant group members may support a harsh military response to dissident attacks on security forces, but there is no theoretical reason to believe that they will be motivated to perpetrate anti-minority violence themselves. The other reason violence against security forces should have a minimal effect on dominant group violence is that the government is likely to respond to violent attacks on its forces with repression of the offending community (Davenport 1995, 687, Regan and Henderson 2002, Carey 2010, Poe and Tate 1994). An increase in government repression of excluded minorities should signal to the dominant group that the government is contending with the threat (Maney 2005). In the absence of attacks on the civilian community, therefore, dissident violence against security forces should not significantly affect the level of physical threat perceived by the dominant group. Therefore, I hypothesize that

H1b: An increase in attacks by excluded minorities against security forces has no significant effect on the frequency of dominant group violence.

Social threat:

Social goods such as status and legitimacy are central to ethnic conflicts (Peterson 2002, Horowitz 1985) and numerous scholars have directly linked social threats to political violence (Brubaker and Laitin 1998, Stewart 2008b, Horowitz 2001).⁷⁰ Horowitz (2001), for example, shows that ethnic violence often occurs in response to nonviolent but symbolically charged actions such as ethnic processions, demonstrations and mass meetings, strikes with ethnic overtones, party and electoral rivalries solidifying ethnic party allegiances, and official or unofficial alterations in relative ethnic status. According to Horowitz (2001, 272),

If a demonstration commemorates a religious festival or historic event, the provocative opportunities even in an ostensibly innocuous celebration are manifold. In some cases, the extent of incitement depends on what transpires as events unfold; in others, the significance of the demonstration itself is sufficient to call forth violence or countermeasures that lead to violence.

In Northern Ireland, for example, non-violent parades have triggered oppositional violence as they encroach on space “owned” by ethnic rivals (Brubaker and Laitin 1998, 445). In India, rumors of culturally taboo activities, such as the slaughter of cows by Muslims, have triggered anti-Muslim violence (Gaborieau 1985). In Israel-Palestine, symbolic acts of resistance by Palestinians, such as raising a Palestinian flag above one’s home has triggered a violent response from Jewish settlers.⁷¹ In sum, numerous empirical examples from the literature belie the assumption that socially threatening events trigger non-violent as opposed to violent actions.

⁷⁰ Kaufman (2015) is primarily interested in explaining the occurrence of ethnic violence rather than temporal variation in violence intensity.

⁷¹ See for example, "Settler Violence in Israel." *The New York Times*, September 12, 1995.

As discussed in chapter one, losing their position of power and privilege has a particularly strong effect on a group's proclivity for violence (McVeigh 2001). Peterson (2002, 51) argues that when groups lose their dominant or advantaged position within the polity they are likely to experience a significant amount of resentment - that is they feel an "intense feeling that status relations are unjust combined with the belief that something can be done about it." Their feelings of injustice are particularly acute because dominant ethnic groups tend to perceive their advantaged position as "theirs by right" (Rothschild 1981, 115, Akenson 1992). Resentment, then, is a powerful motivator for collective action and violence, but loss of power cannot explain why members of a dominant ethnic group perpetrate violence because dominant groups are by definition *in power*.⁷²

Rather than wait until they have lost power, dominant groups often perpetrate anti-minority violence when their position of power and privilege is threatened (Horowitz 1985, 212, Sprinzak 1995, Mitchell 2000, 153, Horowitz 2001, 119-121, Luders 2003).⁷³ The sense of

⁷² This is not to say that groups in power cannot feel anger toward or frustration with the government. It is just to say that by resentment caused by power demotion as articulated by Peterson cannot explain the behavior of the dominant group because they remain in a position of relative power.

⁷³ Horowitz (1985, 180) notes that the perception of threat may actually be a projection. Projection is a psychological mechanism by which impute unacceptable impulses they feel to others, often the very targets of those impulses. If the thought is that "we want to extinguish them," people may believe that "they wish to overcome or extinguish us." Whether an accurate assessment of reality or a projection, what is important is that, the *perceived* level of threat produces violent behavior.

social threat is particularly acute when dissident movements show signs of success – that is, when the government offers concessions to them (Meyer and Staggenborg 1996). Therefore, as dissidents receive concessions the dominant group is likely to become increasingly amenable to mobilization by those opposed to the changes (Meyer and Staggenborg 1996, Zald and Useem 1987).⁷⁴ Olzak (1992), for example, shows that dominant group violence in the United States around the turn of the twentieth century occurred because of a significant economic threat posed by desegregation. The problem was that desegregation of labor markets intensified ethnic competition, which in turn raised the rate of ethnic collective action (Olzak 1992, 3). For the dominant white population, a threat to their privileged position within the socioeconomic structure of the polity motivated them to perpetrate violence against ethnic minorities in an attempt to mitigate the threat and prevent a socioeconomic demotion. Weidmann (2011) extends Olzak’s findings and shows that ethnic violence during the Yugoslav war was more intense in regions in which ethnic groups were closer to parity in the political and economic spheres. In these regions, populations were more likely to perceive a threat to their political and socioeconomic positions and were therefore more susceptible to mobilization by elites. Along similar lines, Mitchell (2000) argues that many settler movements including those in Algeria,

Sprinzak (1995, p. 26) argues that both those groups who have lost their position of power and social status and those that fear that they soon will lose it should be conceptualized as “reactive terrorists” because both of these groups react to real or perceived threats to their position of power and privilege.

⁷⁴ Rosenbaum and Sederberg (1976b, 5) explain this process by way of a “detrimental deprivation” argument. This is when “value expectations remain constant, but value capabilities decline. The government is expected to maintain the distribution. When they can’t, or won’t, maintain it in the face of challenges, establishment populations are likely to perceive a problem.”

Israel-Palestine, Northern Ireland, and South Africa have turned to anti-minority violence when they perceived their position of power and privilege to be under threat. In sum, when the sociopolitical position of dominant groups is threatened, coercion in the form of dominant group violence by ordinary citizens becomes an important mechanism of political power and “social control” (Gazit 2015, 2, Goldstone 2004, Weisburd 1988, 1989, Rosenbaum and Sederberg 1976b).⁷⁵

Changes in the perceived level of social threat to the dominant ethnic group should therefore affect the intensity of dominant group violence. Variation in the level of perceived social threat is triggered when the state makes concessions to dissenting minorities. As discussed in chapter one, governments provide concessions to excluded minorities as part of their conflict management strategy (Rasler 1996, Dugan and Chenoweth 2012, Goldstone and Tilly 2001, Lichbach 1987). They do so in order to signal their commitment to inclusive democracy, but also because accommodation works to decrease grievances (Davies 2014, 124), it reduces the scale and intensity of ethnic conflicts by channeling them into mainly nonviolent forms of contention (Goldstone and Tilly 2001, 191-192), it increases the capacity of the government to combat violent dissidents by increasing collaboration by moderates (Bueno De Mesquita et al. 2005), and it may help to undermine minority appeals to international actors.

⁷⁵ There are two possible reasons why dominant ethnic groups may not mobilize in the face of social threat. They may not mobilize either because they are unaware of the threats to the regime or because the government has made clear that it will sufficiently address the challenge. Where the government is unable or unwilling to do so, as is often the case in ethnic democracies given their need to signal inclusiveness, dominant group mobilization becomes far more likely.

The benefits of concessions, however, often take time to materialize. While concessions may decrease dissident violence in the long-term (Davenport and Inman 2012, 628), in the short-term they are likely to increase dissident violence because they signal to potential dissidents that the government is weak (Carey 2006, 3) and that dissidents have a greater probability of achieving their objectives (Rasler 1996, Kuran 1991, Lichbach 1987). Limited concessions, in particular are “an advertisement of [the regime’s] illegitimacy, but do not fully correct that illegitimacy, and thus lead to greater demands for elimination or transformation of the regime...” (Goldstone and Tilly 2001, 189). In addition, moderate dissidents tend to be the ones that accept concessions, leaving the extremists in control of the opposition movement (Bueno De Mesquita et al. 2005).

Along with their short-term positive impacts on dissent, concessions to minorities represent an additional challenge for governments. Namely, extending limited concessions to minorities is deemed threatening by dominant groups and therefore provides an opportunity for dominant group radicals to mobilize those alarmed by the concessions (Maney 2005, 2016, Meyer and Staggenborg 1996, 1638). This is a product of what Gregory Maney calls “see-saw” dynamics in ethnically divided societies. According to Maney (2005, 75),

[Government] receptivity to challenger demands is widely perceived as a threat to the interests and national sovereignty of the dominant ethnic group... In other words, the political opportunity structure in a divided society is like a seesaw, with political opportunities and openings for one ethnonationalist group being widely perceived as political threats and closure for the other.

This is to say that government concessions to minority groups signal a clear social threat to members of the dominant group. Even where concessions to minorities are objectively minor, dominant group members tend to view these concessions as certifications of the legitimacy of dissident claims (Maney 2016) and signals that the government “desires to resolve disagreement

and... [to] lay the foundation for additional cooperation..." (Mattes 2018). Dominant ethnic groups, in other words, perceive concessions as more threatening than an objective analysis may warrant because they indicate that dissident tactics are succeeding. Dominant ethnic groups, therefore, tend to be particularly sensitive to government concessions. In sum, because dominant ethnic groups believe government concessions to minority groups undermine their own privileged position within the polity, concessions increase the perceived level of social threat among the dominant ethnic group and, in turn, increase support for and the perpetration of dominant group violence aimed at preventing sociopolitical demotion within the polity. Said formally,

H2: Government concessions to excluded minorities increase the frequency of dominant group violence.

Whereas government concessions to ethnic minorities are likely to increase the dominant group's perceived level of social threat, concessions to dominant group members should have the opposite effect (Maney 2005). By signaling the government's commitment to the dominant ethnic group, these concessions signal a rejection of the central demands of the minority group. This, in turn, should reduce the perceived level of social threat among the dominant group. When this occurs, the perceived need for dominant group members to perpetrate violence in defense of their position of power and privilege should be relaxed. Therefore, I expect that

H3: Government concessions to dominant groups decrease the frequency of dominant group violence against excluded minorities.

Relative effects of physical and social threat:

In many conflicts, groups face both physical and social threats simultaneously. However, while many scholars acknowledge the combined effects of physical and social threats, the two are usually conflated theoretically. By way of example, Balcells, Daniels, and Escribà-Folch (2016, 34) argue that ethnic violence is most likely to occur in the spaces that lie between highly segregated neighborhoods because “segregation and parity introduce security concerns and increase intergroup competition, which creates incentives to exercise and protect control over territory and seek dominance.” Here, both security concerns (physical threat) and intergroup competition (social threat) incentivize violence, but there is no real attempt to understand the independent effects of these threats. Welsh (1995, 252) similarly conflates physical and social threat in his analysis of Afrikaner violence in South Africa during the 1990s. Welsh concludes that “heightened insecurity, both economic and physical, played into the hands of right-wing organizations, who could portray the government as uncaring and incapable of offering effective protection.” Again, there is acknowledgement that both types of threat are important, but Welsh does not articulate the independent effects of each.

While both physical and social threats are likely to increase inter-group conflict, Kaufman (2015) posits that each type of threat has a distinct effect on the nature of the reaction. Specifically, he argues that when groups perceive threats to their physical security they are more likely to respond violently than when they perceive threats to their sociopolitical status.⁷⁶ He

⁷⁶ Kaufman builds on terror management theory, which was developed in the field of social psychology in order to explain the need for meaning and self-esteem. It assumes that these needs “may arise in part in an effort to secure

acknowledges that both physical and social threats increase the salience of group identity for the threatened group and increase feelings of hostility and prejudice against the perceived source of threat. However, he contends that physical threat “influences people to become more aggressive, nationalistic, intolerant, and indifferent to the other groups suffering...” by reminding people of their own mortality and triggering a cognitive survival response (Kaufman 2015, 15, Greenberg et al. 1990, Cuillier, Duell, and Joireman 2010, Pyszczynski, Greenberg, and Solomon 1997).⁷⁷ Social threats, in contrast, are less likely to elicit the same level of aggression. While people surely care deeply about their social status (Horowitz 1985), threats to social status do not trigger the same type of cognitive survival response that physical threats do. Consequently, Kaufman expects physical threats to elicit violence and social threats to elicit non-violent discriminatory and intolerant behavior.⁷⁸

oneself psychologically from concerns stemming from the awareness of mortality” (Burke, Martens, and Faucher 2010).

⁷⁷ Kaufman posits that where one group feels an overwhelming physical threat, they are likely to submit, leading to a “repressive peace.” (Kaufman 2015). This is consistent with appraisal theory, which argues that when people feel overwhelming fear and a sense of powerlessness, they are likely to avoid the perceived source of threat rather than confront it (Mackie, Devos, and Smith 2000).

For a discussion of terror management theory in the context of ethnic violence see (Kaufman 2015, Tir and Singh 2015).

⁷⁸ A number of scholars have argued that popular perceptions of threat are constructed, exacerbated, and mitigated by way of ongoing processes of creation, modification, and reinterpretation of narratives, myth, rituals, commemorations, and other cultural representations (Brubaker and Laitin 1998, 442, Kaufman 2001, 2015). I do not contest the important long-term effects of narratives and myths on threat perceptions. However, I am interested here in short-term variation in threat perceptions and therefore do not engage this literature directly.

In my earlier discussion I indicated that both physical and social threats can and do spur dominant group violence. It may be, however, that one type of threat has a greater effect on the frequency of dominant group violence. I have argued that physical threats significantly increase public support for dominant group violence by producing an aggressive affective response, by increasing the perceived legitimacy of reciprocal violence, and by increasing the perceived strategic expediency of dominant group violence. All three of these factors are likely to be muted in response to social as opposed to physical threat. To begin, according to terror management theory, physical threats produce far more aggressive action tendencies than do social threats. In addition, social threats affect fewer people directly in the way that violence does, which acts as a damper on the radicalization process. Finally, social threats are not immediate and existential and therefore require different tactical choices to combat them. To deter social threats, the community must convince the government to embrace their agenda and protect the ethnocentric nature of the regime. To deter physical threats, dominant groups must deter members of the minority group from carrying out additional violence against dominant group members. The former requires negotiation with the government; the latter requires direct confrontation with the threatening community. Dominant groups are therefore likely to perceive anti-minority violence as a more expedient strategy for reducing physical rather than social threats. On the whole then, physically threatening events should produce more support for dominant group violence and, in turn, produce more violence than socially threatening events. Therefore I expect that

H4a: Physical threats have a greater positive effect on the frequency of dominant group violence than do social threats.

It is insufficient to explain the frequency of violent attacks while ignoring the severity of violence. As Clauset, Young, and Gleditsch (2007) argue in the context of terrorism studies,

In the absence of an accurate understanding of the severity statistics of [violent events], a shortsighted but rational policy would be to assume that every attack will be severe. ...That is, an adequate model of [political violence] should not only give us indications of where or when events are likely to occur, but also tell us how severe they are likely to be.

According to Kaufman (2001, 38), the perpetration of severe forms of violence such as killings, requires a belief that the targeted community tends to engage in this type of behavior and a normative view that extreme forms of violence are morally acceptable. Physical threats, in the form of dissident violence, are likely to have a greater impact on both factors than social threats such as government concessions to minorities. This is because dissident attacks reinforce the belief that dissidents engage in severe acts of violence and, as discussed previously, will have a greater impact on the perceived legitimacy of retaliatory violence. In addition, the aggressive affective response to physical threats significantly increases indifference to the other group's suffering (Kaufman 2015, 15), reducing the cognitive barriers to perpetrating severe forms of violence. I therefore expect that,

H4b: Physical threats elicit more severe forms of dominant group violence than do social threats.

Along with their unique effects on the frequency and severity of dominant group violence, physical and social threats may elicit violence against different types of targets. More specifically, I propose that while physical threats may produce more frequent and severe acts of dominant group violence, social threats may elicit violence against highly symbolic targets.

Within ethnic conflicts, groups often seek to desecrate sacred or symbolically charged spaces because these spaces are key symbols representing the rival community (Gaborieau 1985). In the case of India, for example, Hindus have long targeted Muslim places of worship because for “Muslims the main symbols are: the Qur'an, the Prophet, and his relics, mosques, tombs of saints and more generally cemeteries...” (Gaborieau 1985, 9). Additional examples of this phenomenon include the wave of black church arsons by white supremacists in the American South in the 1990s (Soule and Dyke 1999), the torching of mosques and churches by Jewish extremists in Israel-Palestine (Eiran and Krause 2016, Munayyer 2012), the torching of mosques by Buddhist mobs in Myanmar, the destruction of churches by Muslims in Indonesia, and the burning and looting of mosques by Christian militias in the Central African Republic.⁷⁹ While social threats may be less likely than physical threats to elicit a violent response, they may be more likely to elicit violence against cultural symbols of the adversarial group. This type of violence may be less severe in terms of the physical harm to the victims, but may be particularly incendiary given the culturally sensitive nature of the targets.

Territorial concessions should be particularly likely to elicit violence against targets of significant cultural value to minorities. In many cases of ethnic conflict, territory is an especially salient issue. The reason is that contested territory acts as a powerful source of identity for those

⁷⁹ See for example, Aljazeera, “Mob Burns down Mosques in Myanmar.” *Aljazeera*, July 2, 2016. “Religious Violence Flares in Indonesia as Mob Torches Aceh Church.” *The Guardian*, October 23, 2015. “Tens of Thousands of Muslims Flee Christian Militias in Central African Republic.” *The Washington Post*, February 7, 2014.

who (desire to) occupy it (Schnell and Mishal 2008, Tir and Singh 2015).⁸⁰ For this reason, “an attack on land that one perceives as rightfully belonging to one’s group is perceived as a direct threat to the epitome of one’s identity” (Tir and Singh 2015, 479). Territorial concessions, in other words, tend to trigger a significant sense of social threat among those who feel an attachment to that territory (Toft 2002).⁸¹ As the symbolic value attributed to territory increases, so too does the perceived need to maintain/gain control of that territory (Friedland and Hecht 1998). Territorial boundaries are likely to be particularly sensitive because “absolute control over a multitude of things within the [territory] is reduced to control over one thing—the boundary” (Dochartaigh and Bosi 2010, 408). This explains why dominant ethnic groups actively resist initiatives to use space in new ways that support the claims of less powerful groups as acts of

⁸⁰ This is because ethnic groups usually possess ties to a particular territory, which they call their ‘own’ (Smith 1986, 28). Anthony Smith (1991) argues that “attachment to homeland” is a central attribute of ethnic communities. Attachments to specific stretches of territory, he argues, have a “mythical and subjective quality.” Members of ethnic groups believe their homeland is “where [they] belong. It is often sacred land, the land of [their] forefathers, [their] lawgivers, [their] kings and sages, poets and priests, which makes this [their] homeland. [They] belong to it, as much as it belongs to [them]” (Smith 1991, 22-23). The conceptualization of territory as “homeland,” then, imbues physical territory with symbolic meaning and value. Therefore, any perceived threat to territorial control tends to increase the perceived level of social threat significantly. It should be noted, however, that this is not only true for “native” populations. Various settler populations such as Jews in Israel-Palestine, Boers in South Africa, and Protestants in Northern Ireland have developed ideologies of “choseness” that link their identities to the land (Akenson 1992).

⁸¹ This explains why, for example territorial conflicts have a particularly pernicious effect on attitudes of social intolerance (Tir and Singh 2015) and why territory often turns into a non-fungible resource, making territorial compromises difficult to accomplish (Toft 2003, Goddard 2010).

“territorial aggression” (Maney 2016, 6). Dominant ethnic groups, therefore tend to view even small alterations of territorial boundaries in the minority’s favor as a significant social threat. Encroachment on symbolic space, such as territorial boundaries, can therefore invoke a violent response by those who perceive a social threat to their community (Maney 2016, Dochartaigh and Bosi 2010).

When dominant groups perceive concessions as significant social threats, concessions may elicit violence against symbolically charged targets representing the minority group’s culture. I have argued that social threat triggered by government concessions are unlikely to produce the aggressive action tendencies physical threats produce. They are also unlikely to increase the level of perceived legitimacy and strategic expediency of violence to the degree that physical threats do. The result is that social threats produce less support for dominant group violence and fewer radicals willing to perpetrate violence. However, social threat has a particularly strong positive effect on social intolerance – that is, “a general tendency to see group differences as undesirable and a desire to avoid contact and interpersonal relations (e.g. being neighbors) with individuals who constitute non-mainstream social groups” (Tir and Singh 2015, 478). As such, social threats do not just trigger a perceived need to change the behavior of minority groups; they also trigger feelings of animosity toward the culture, values, and traditions of the threatening group. I therefore propose that while physical threats motivate a large number of people to perpetrate violence against those deemed responsible for the threat, social threats motivate a smaller number of intolerant radicals to perpetrate violence against targets that symbolize the culture, values, and traditions of the opposing group. Said formally,

H5: Social threats are more likely to elicit violence against symbolically charged targets belonging to ethnic minorities than are physical threats.

Conclusion:

In this chapter, I developed a framework for explaining temporal variation in the frequency, severity, and target choice of dominant group violence. I did so in order to address a gap in the literature regarding the independent effects of physical and social threats on the violent behavior of dominant ethnic groups. I built on studies of state repression, ethnic violence, and contentious politics to argue that changes in the perceived level of threat to the dominant ethnic group's physical security and sociopolitical privilege cause variation in the dynamics of dominant group violence. Events, in the form of interactions between the government, dissidents, and dominant ethnic groups send signals to dominant group members about changes in the extant threat level. I hypothesized that dissident violence against the dominant group increases the perception of physical threat and, in turn, increases dominant group violence. While I hypothesize that government concessions to minorities are also likely to increase dominant group violence by increasing the perceived level of social threat, I argue that physical threats have a greater effect on the frequency and severity of violence. Social threats, however, are more likely to elicit violence against symbolically charged targets that are highly valued by ethnic minorities. Having developed my hypotheses, I now turn to a discussion of my research design and data.

Chapter 3: Research Design

In this chapter, I present my mixed-methods research design. The research strategy is designed to assess the feasibility and utility of my arguments about the occurrence and dynamics of dominant group violence. This research strategy includes a descriptive district-level examination and quantitative time-series analysis of a unique daily subnational dataset, a focused historical case study of anti-Arab violence by Jewish civilians in Israel-Palestine, and a qualitative exploration of the mechanisms underlying the statistical results.⁸²

I concur with scholars who have argued that while valuable, “correlational analysis is by itself an inadequate mode of causal assessment” (Mahoney 2001). The reason is that simplification of events needed to model them statistically makes regression analysis prone to spurious correlations. There is a trade-off, that is, between simplifying assumptions and descriptive accuracy (Jackman 1985). That said, statistical analysis enables the simultaneous estimation of rival explanations and control variables on an outcome of interest (Lieberman 2005, 438), allowing for the establishment of probabilistic relationships that may be difficult to determine using qualitative methods alone.

⁸² The distinction between quantitative and qualitative methodology here builds on Lieberman’s (Lieberman 2005, 435) distinction between large N analysis (LNA) and small N analyses (SNA). He defines LNA as “a mode of analysis in which the primary causal inferences are derived from statistical analyses which ultimately lead to quantitative estimates of the robustness of a theoretical model.” Lieberman defines SNA as “a mode of analysis in which causal inferences about the primary unit under investigation are derived from qualitative comparisons of cases and/or process tracing of causal chains within cases across time, and in which the relationship between theory and facts is captured largely in narrative form.”

Qualitative methods allow researchers to leverage detailed data on a single case or small number of cases for the purpose of rich description and nuanced explanation. Qualitative strategies such as single case studies and small N comparisons allow analysts to identify causal mechanisms that statistical analysis has trouble specifying and testing (Gerring 2004, Levy 2007, Tarrow 2004). In this way, they help to avoid the problem of spurious correlation common in quantitative studies (Collier and Sambanis 2005). By employing strategies such as process tracing and leveraging temporal and spatial variation within a single case, single case studies can even be used for hypothesis testing (Levy 2007). However, it can be difficult to generalize from qualitative analyses given the level of nuance and contingency they include in their explanations.⁸³ In addition, there may be a tendency for scholars to focus on events that support their theoretical arguments, making it difficult to determine whether the specific events analysts choose are representative or outliers.

In order to maximize inferential leverage, I incorporate both quantitative and qualitative components into my research design. More specifically, I adopt a strategy of “triangulation” (Tarrow 2004). I build on Lieberman’s (2005) “nested analysis” approach, in which large and small N analyses are used iteratively to inform one another.⁸⁴ I begin my analysis by quantitatively testing my theoretical arguments using an original dataset (chapter four) and build

⁸³ This is the “many variables, small N problem” (Lijphart 1971).

⁸⁴ While Lieberman (2005) describes large N in cross-national terms, temporally and spatially disaggregated data from a single country may also be considered large N (King, Keohane, and Verba 1994, Kalyvas 2006, 247). I still consider the analysis to be “nested” since the qualitative analysis focuses on a relatively small subset of events captured by the statistical analysis. I do not make any claims here, however, that I am strictly adhering to Lieberman’s formulation of nested analysis.

on the results to conduct a qualitative analysis using secondary literature and original interviews conducted with Israeli settlers in the West Bank in 2016 and 2017 (chapter 5).

In order to test my argument about uncertainty and dominant group violence developed in chapter one, I begin chapter four by conducting a descriptive district-level analysis of my dataset to assess whether district-level variation in the level of ambiguity in the Israeli government's settlement policy can better explain variation in the level of settler violence than alternative explanations. Then, in chapter five, I use process tracing techniques to conduct a case study of three temporal periods in Israel-Palestine: 1929-1948, during which Jewish militias carried out a violent campaign against the local Arab population in pre-state Israel-Palestine, 1949-1967, during which no significant anti-Arab violence occurred, and 1967-1979, during which anti-Arab violence by Jewish civilians reemerged. I employ process tracing here because it is particularly well suited for testing the feasibility of the structural argument I make in chapter one about the causal link between uncertainty and dominant group violence. The reason is that process tracing allows for an analysis of "distinct historical events [that] often serve as tipping points that explain the shifts in an interrupted time-series" (Tarrow 2004, 105). An additional benefit of this approach is that by closely examining multiple periods within a single country, I am able to control for many cultural, economic, political, and historical conditions that may affect the likelihood of dominant group violence.

In order to test the hypotheses presented in chapter two about the effects of physically and socially threatening events on the dynamics of dominant group violence, I conduct a quantitative time-series analysis of anti-Arab violence in the West Bank (2010-2015) in chapter four. Then, in chapter five, I probe the results of my time-series analysis by way of a qualitative examination of the underlying mechanisms based on original interviews with Israeli settlers and

a periodization of Israeli settler violence (1967-2015). The quantitative analysis allows me to determine probabilistic relationships between my independent and dependent variables of interest, thus allowing me to disentangle the effects of various events such as specific forms of state repression and concessions and dissident violence on short-term variation in the frequency, severity, and targets of Israeli settler violence in the West Bank. The qualitative study allows me to assess the feasibility and utility of the theoretical arguments by (i) examining whether the proposed mechanisms underlying the results of the statistical analysis are functioning in the case as they are expected to and by (ii) allowing me to evaluate whether the proposed arguments can also help to explain variation in the dynamics of Israeli settler violence over the medium to long-term.

I begin this chapter with a discussion of the use of event based data analysis in the study of ethnic violence. In this section, I discuss three difficulties scholars have faced in constructing this type of data and recent approaches to overcoming these difficulties. I then introduce the dataset I have constructed to test the theoretical argument presented in chapter one and the hypotheses developed in chapter two. I include a description of the variables in the dataset including their sources, coding procedures, and basic descriptive information about regional variation in the data. Next, I discuss my model choice for the quantitative analysis of Israeli settler violence in chapter four. I then discuss the qualitative component of my analysis (chapter five). Finally, I conclude by way of a short summation.

Quantitative study of ethnic violence:

A growing number of analyses of ethnic violence rely on the “event” as the unit of analysis (Brubaker and Laitin 1998). For example, Olzak (1992) uses event history analysis to show that the breakdown of ethnic and racial segregation, by increasing economic and political competition, triggers exclusionary collective action. Examining patterns of nationalist violence in the disintegrating Soviet Union, Beissinger (1998) shows that nationalist struggles became increasingly violent late in the mobilization cycle. Braun and Koopmans (2009) use event history analysis to show that social similarity can explain the diffusion of ethnic violence in Germany in the 1990s. Koopmans and Olzak (2004) also examine right-wing violence in Germany quantitatively and find that differential public visibility, resonance, and legitimacy of right-wing violence significantly affected the rate of violence against different target groups.

Scholars relying on event based data to examine conflict dynamics have begun to respond to three deficiencies in existing datasets: over aggregation, a focus on only one type of event, and a reliance on media reports. To begin, scholars have increasingly pointed to the problem of geographical over aggregation in datasets used to explain dynamics of domestic contention (Loyle, Sullivan, and Davenport 2014). In response to these concerns, scholars have begun to construct national and subnational datasets to answer increasingly nuanced questions about domestic conflict.⁸⁵ Doing so has increased our understanding of various conflict dynamics such

⁸⁵ Davenport (2007) points out that a growing number of researchers focus on single countries (e.g., Columbia (Restrepo, Spagat, and Vargas 2003), El Salvador (Ball 2006), France (Tilly 2005a), Germany (Koopmans 1995), Greece (Kalyvas 2006), Kosovo (Ball 2006), Sri Lanka (Ball 2006), and the United States (Christian Davenport 2005, Earl et al. 2004, Gibson 1988)) and that these efforts have provided the greatest degree of disaggregation

as the relationship between protest and state repression (Rasler 1996, See also Davenport 2007, 7), patterns of ethnic violence (Ferguson 2017, Olzak 1992, Costalli and Moro 2012), the behavior of pro-government militias (Clionadh Raleigh 2016), the likelihood of ethnic rebellion (Cederman, Buhaug, and Rød 2009), and targeting strategies in civil war (Kalyvas 2006, Lyall 2009). This move has minimized the centrality of structural variables at the national level that tend to remain static and therefore have trouble explaining dynamic elements of conflict. By focusing on the national and subnational level, these datasets allow scholars "...to move away from large structural explanations, such as the institutional characteristics of the regime, towards more micro causal explanations focusing on the contingent effects of conflict dynamics" (Loyle, Sullivan, and Davenport 2014). Following these recent trends in dataset construction, my dataset is disaggregated both temporally to the daily level and geographically to the level of administrative district.

Another deficiency common in quantitative studies of ethnic violence is that scholars often focus on a single type of event in their data collection efforts. In doing so, they have tended to treat all events equally. Most relevant here are studies of ethnic violence, which have tended to focus on political killings (Maney 2005, Ferguson 2017, White 1993a), while ignoring non-lethal forms of violence. There are three problems with this approach. One problem is that limiting data collection to killings ignores a great deal of, if not most, conflict events (Balcells, Daniels, and Escribà-Folch 2016). A focus on killings may capture the occurrence of severe incidents of violence, but whether the severity of violence correlates with the frequency of violent attacks is

across both space and time. The advantage of this approach is that it allows for an analyses of who did what to whom by community, neighborhood, village, and city as well as by quarter, month, week, day, and hour.

an empirical question that requires investigation. Another problem is that a focus on killings, the most severe form of ethnic violence, does not allow for an analysis of when and how violence is likely to escalate from non-lethal to lethal violence. Mass killings, for example, do not occur suddenly. Rather, they tend to occur following a process of escalation from less severe forms of violence (Straus 2012). Finally, killings are an outcome of an event; they do not provide information about the intended effect. For example, a tepid violent tactic such as stone throwing may result in casualties even though this was not necessarily the intent of the stone-thrower.⁸⁶ Alternatively, shooting attacks intended to kill may cause injuries without killing the victim. Including a variety of violent event types, therefore, provides a fuller picture of the patterns of violence within conflict environments.

Quantitative analyses of political violence also tend to exclude non-violent events, such as protests, from their analyses (Loyle, Sullivan, and Davenport 2014). This is problematic because of the empirically varied forms of dissent, state repression, and pro-government violence within ongoing conflicts (e.g. Davenport 1995). Dissidents may substitute violent activities for non-violent protests, for instance, and governments may exchange coercive repression in the form of arrests or killings for non-violent actions such as the establishment of roadblocks and

⁸⁶ For example, stone throwing is common in Israel-Palestine. While the consequences of the vast majority of stone throwing incidents are limited to property damage, stone throwing has, on rare occasions, resulted in fatalities. One such incident occurred on September 13, 2015 when Palestinian youth threw stones at Israeli vehicles traveling through East Jerusalem. When stones hit his car, a Jewish Israeli named Alexander Levlovitz, lost control of his vehicle, drove into a ditch, and hit a pole. After sustaining serious injuries, he went into cardiac arrest and died. “Man Killed in Jerusalem Rock Throwing Attack Named as Alexander Levlovitz.” *Times of Israel*, September 14, 2015. <https://www.timesofisrael.com/man-killed-in-jerusalem-rock-throwing-attack-named-as-alexander-levlovitz/>.

curfews. Why and when actors choose to substitute violent and non-violent tactics for one another, choose to combine these approaches, or how conflict actors react differently to violent and non-violent activities of an opponent or ally are important empirical questions that one can only address if both violent and non-violent events are included in the data. Given these concerns, I collect and record a variety of violent and non-violent events in my dataset.

An additional deficiency in quantitative studies of conflict dynamics is a reliance on media reports for event based data collection. Scholars have long relied on media reports to construct their event datasets (Davenport and Ball 2002). Media reports have been particularly popular because they often offer the most complete account of events (Olzak 1992) and make collecting data convenient for researchers (Rucht and Niedhart 1998). However, media-based datasets have been shown to exhibit a number of biases. For instance, the tendency of the media to report more extensively about some conflicts as opposed to others is well documented (Caliendo, Gibney, and Payne 1999), making a reliance on media sources for cross-national comparative analysis problematic. In addition, media coverage suffers from temporal bias. For example, a study of New York Times coverage of human rights abuses showed that while political violence increased in Third World countries between 1985 and 1995, coverage of these events substantially declined (Caliendo, Gibney, and Payne 1999). Another common bias of media reports is that events exhibiting certain attributes are more likely to be covered. Specifically, events are more likely to be covered when they are large, violent, and/or bizarre in nature and when there is no other major news story occurring at the same time (Davenport and Ball 2002, McCarthy, McPhail, and Smith 1996). They are also impacted by seemingly mundane factors such as the degree to which the event produced a great deal of noise, occurred on a Monday, or occurred during a holiday (Oliver and Maney 2000). Media coverage is also likely to

be far more comprehensive in urban than rural areas, which has been particularly problematic for analyses of political violence (Eck 2012). When the security situation is sensitive and journalists either avoid dangerous areas or are prevented by security forces from accessing them, these biases may be compounded. In addition to the aforementioned biases, media coverage is likely to be biased by the characteristics of the group being covered. For example, Davenport (2010) has found that coverage of groups and state actors varies depending on the political orientation of the source and the spatial distance between the source and the events in question. Finally, media sources tend to significantly underreport the number of events that take place (Davenport and Ball 2002).

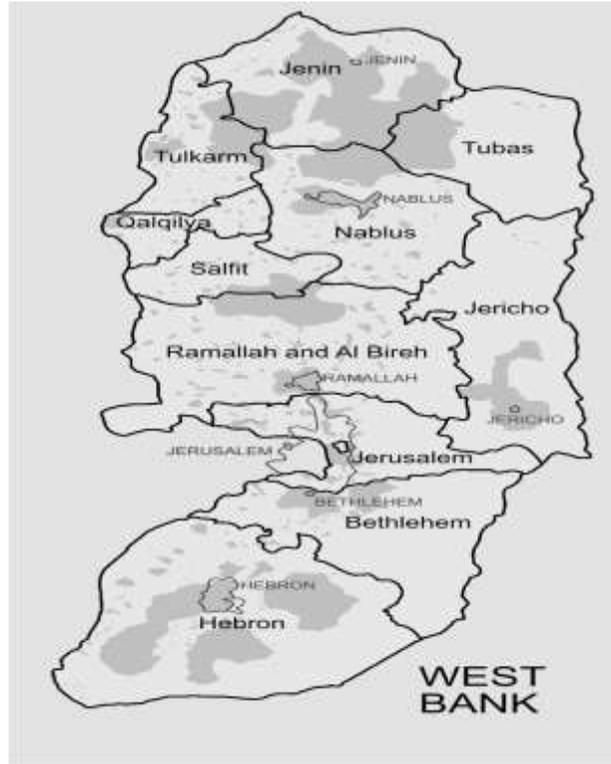
One solution to the problems of media bias is to rely on alternative sources when they are available. In the context of political violence, official government/military reports have gained traction (Kocher, Pepinsky, and Kalyvas 2011, Loyle, Sullivan, and Davenport 2014, Kalyvas and Kocher 2009, Alimi and Maney 2017). Similarly, official reports by opposition groups can serve the same purpose. Researchers must be careful, however, to address potential bias in these sources. Specifically, government or opposition sources may bias their data in order to fit their strategic objectives. For example, government sources may overreport violent attacks by opponents and opponents may overreport incidents of government repression. When possible, scholars should crosscheck government and opposition sources to account for this potential bias.

Introducing the West Bank Contentious Events Dataset (WBCED):

The data on contentious events in the West Bank and East Jerusalem analyzed in this dissertation come from an original dataset called the West Bank Contentious Events Dataset (WBCED). The dataset records a variety of violent and non-violent contentious events including incidents of Israeli settler violence, incidents of Palestinian violence against both Israeli settlers and Israeli security forces, Palestinian protests against the Israeli occupation, Israeli repression of both Palestinians and Israeli settlers, and Israeli territorial concessions to both Israeli settlers and Palestinians. The dataset was compiled using daily reports produced by the Palestinian Authority (PA), reports produced by the Israeli government, as well as three English language Israeli newspapers from across the ideological spectrum: Haaretz on the left, the Jerusalem Post on the center-right, and Arutz Sheva on the far right. The unit of analysis is the district-day. The data covers the period 2010-2015 and there are 11 administrative districts coded in the dataset.⁸⁷

⁸⁷ Each administrative district is named for the largest Palestinian city within its boundaries.

Figure 3.1 Map of Administrative districts in the West Bank



Note: Areas in dark grey fall under Palestinian administrative and security control (i.e. area A as delineated by the Oslo accords); Image publically available at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Palestinian_territories

Variables in the dataset:

The dataset records a variety of incidents of Israeli settler violence against Palestinian civilians and/or property. The events come from daily reports produced by the Negotiation Affairs Department (NAD), which operates under the auspices of the Palestinian Authority (PA).⁸⁸ These reports include information about a range of events in the West Bank beginning in

⁸⁸ The PLO Negotiations Affairs Department (NAD) was established in 1994 in Gaza in order to follow up on the implementation of the Interim Agreement signed between Israel and the PLO. The Daily Situation Reports are produced by the Palestinian Monitoring Group (PMG), an inter-agency group of Palestinian civilian ministries and

2008 and new reports are posted online on a regular basis.⁸⁹ Event descriptions are included for each event. In the case of incidents of settler violence, the description indicates the perpetrator (Israeli settlers), the target (e.g. Palestinian vehicles on the road, homes in a specific village, farmers tending to their fields, Palestinian mosques, children walking to school), tactic (e.g. stone throwing, arson, physical assault, shooting), location, and any damage caused to persons or property. The reports organize all events according to the district of the West Bank in which they occurred. Districts include East Jerusalem, Ramallah, Jenin, Tubas, Tulkarem, Qalqilya, Nablus, Salfit, Jericho, Bethlehem, and Hebron. The NAD reports conceptualize settler violence broadly, including such incidents as assaults and destruction of property, but also incidents of harassment, protest, and territorial incursions that result in no contentious interactions or lasting damage.

While the dataset records all incidents recorded in the NAD reports, I create a variable called *settler violence* as a proxy for the overall level of dominant group violence in the West Bank. *Settler violence* is a count of all events in which Jewish Israelis in the West Bank attack Palestinian civilians (including physical assaults, shootings, and stone throwing incidents) and incidents in which Israeli Jews directly target and damage Palestinian property (such as agricultural equipment and property, vehicles, shops, and homes). Incidents not meeting these criteria are not included. There are 3,245 incidents of settler violence between January 2010 and

security agencies, under the auspices of the Negotiations Affairs Department of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). Daily reports are available via the Negotiations Affairs Department of the PLO website: <http://www.nad-plo.org/index.php>

⁸⁹ The reports also include events taking place in Gaza, but these are not included in the dataset.

December 2015. During this period, Israeli settlers perpetrated approximately 10 attacks a week on average against Palestinians with a standard deviation of approximately eight attacks.

Settlers use a variety of violent tactics when targeting Palestinians and their supporters in the West Bank and east Jerusalem. Distinguishing between tactics is important for testing my arguments about the relative effects of physically and socially threatening events on the dynamics of dominant group violence. Therefore, the dataset disaggregates *settler violence* into six individual tactics: *physical assaults*, *destruction of property*, *incidents of stone throwing*, *destruction of farmland*, *shootings*, *attacks on religious sites*, and *home arsons*. *Physical assaults* refers to attacks directly targeting individuals including beatings, shootings, and stone throwing at close range. The dataset records 324 incidents of physical assault with a minimum of zero assaults and a maximum of seven assaults in a day.

Destruction of property refers to incidents in which settlers target Palestinian property, but do not directly target Palestinian persons. Examples include the destruction of agricultural equipment, the stoning of homes and storefronts, the defacing and/or burning of Palestinian vehicles, and the destruction of Palestinian water wells. The dataset records 692 incidents of destruction of property.

Destruction of farmland refers to incidents in which settlers target agricultural land for destruction. These events usually include the burning of Palestinian crops and orchards or the cutting down of Palestinian fruit bearing trees. Reports by the United Nations and NGOs have pointed to the centrality of conflict over agricultural land in the West Bank (Lein 2002, The UNESCO Chair on Human Rights & Democracy at An-Najah University 2012). I therefore code destruction of farmland separately from destruction of property in order to test whether the

specific tactic of destruction of farmland and more general destruction of property are caused by different factors. The dataset includes 609 incidents of destruction of farmland.

Stone throwing refers to incidents in which settlers stone Palestinian vehicles driving on West Bank roadways. Distinguishing between Israeli and Palestinian vehicles in the West Bank is possible given that Palestinian vehicles have green license plates and Jewish settlers have yellow license plates. The dataset records 692 incidents of *stone throwing*.

Home arsons refer to the successful or attempted burning of Palestinian homes. Security forces consider this tactic particularly severe because of the danger these attacks pose to Palestinian civilians. Most often, perpetrators carry out these attacks late at night while civilians are sleeping in their homes. As such, killing civilians either is the objective of these attacks or is, at a minimum, considered an acceptable outcome by the perpetrators.⁹⁰ Regardless of whether perpetrators intend to kill their victims, it is clear that radical settlers use this tactic to terrorize the Palestinian civilian population. The dataset records 27 incidents of home arson.

In order to test my argument about the link between social threat and symbolic targeting, I also include a variable called *attacks on religious sites*. This variable is a count of settler attacks targeting Palestinian mosques and churches. Often this type of attack includes some degree of arson and often includes the spray painting of graffiti in or on the holy site with messages aimed at the civilian population and/or the Israeli government. I consider these events as distinct from other incidents of destruction of property because of the heightened symbolic significance of the

⁹⁰ See, Levinson, Chaim. "Deadly West Bank Arson Surprised No One in Israel's Defense Establishment." *Haaretz*, August 1, 2015. <https://www.haaretz.com/.premium-deadly-west-bank-arson-surprised-no-one-in-israel-s-defense-establishment-1.5381732>

targets. Examples of messages aimed at the Palestinian civilian population include “death to Arabs,” “Mohamed is a pig,” and “greetings from [the outpost of] Ramat Migron.” Examples of messages aimed at the Israeli government include “price tag,” and direct and threatening references to members of the Israeli security services and judiciary. The dataset includes 34 attacks on religious sites by Israeli settlers.

Table 3.1 provides summary statistics for each violent tactic employed by Israeli settlers. As discussed above, physical assaults are the most common tactic used by Israeli settlers, followed by stoning of Palestinian vehicles and destruction of Palestinian property. The destruction of farmland is also common with an average of almost two such incidents a week. Attacks on churches and mosques and the torching of Palestinian homes are far less common, occurring 34 and 27 times respectively.

Table 3.1 Summary statistics for Israeli settler attacks (2010-2015)

Variable	Total Events	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Physical assaults	1,066	3.27	2.96	0	23
Destruction of Property	716	2.20	2.32	0	20
Stone throwing	983	3.02	3.45	0	31
Destruction of farm land	609	1.87	2.12	0	11
Attacks on religious sites	34	0.10	0.36	0	4
Home arson	27	0.08	0.33	0	3
Total Settler Violence	3,246	10.10	7.60	0	78

*Data is aggregated to the conflict-week

Table 3.2 breaks down incidents of Israeli settler violence by tactic and district. By far the two most violent districts, in terms of overall frequency of settler violence, are Hebron and Nablus. However, these districts differ in their distributions of tactics. Settlers engage in a greater number of direct confrontations in Hebron (attacks on persons), but fewer incidents of

attacks on property, stone throwing, and the destruction of farm land than settlers carry out in Nablus. Both districts have seen a relatively high level of attacks on religious sites, but the torching of Palestinian homes is more common in Nablus and Ramallah than in Hebron.

Table 3.2 Settler attacks by tactic and district (2010-2015)

District	Attacks on Persons	Attacks on Property	Stone Throwing	Destruction of Agricultural Land	Attacks on Religious Sites	Firebombings	Total Attacks
Jerusalem	200	58	45	18	6	4	320
Ramallah	103	79	280	80	7	8	538
Jenin	18	12	26	4	0	0	59
Tubas	11	7	0	3	0	0	20
Tulkarem	8	6	20	4	0	0	38
Qalqilya	55	59	130	61	1	1	298
Nablus	239	223	213	215	6	8	847
Salfit	52	38	80	28	5	1	194
Jericho	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bethlehem	54	42	82	73	3	1	247
Hebron	326	192	107	123	6	4	732
Total	1,066	716	983	609	34	27	3,293

Settlers in the Ramallah district carried out fewer attacks than in Hebron and Nablus, but their overall number of attacks remains relatively high. Most of these attacks have been in the form of stone throwing. Interestingly, despite the lower overall number of attacks in the Ramallah district, the district has seen the greatest number of both attacks on churches and mosques and the torching of Palestinian homes. Settlers in Jerusalem carry out fewer attacks than in Ramallah, but the attacks they do carry out are largely physical assaults. Settlers in Jerusalem have also carried out a relatively large number of attacks on churches and mosques and a relatively moderate number of home arsons. Qalqilya, Salfit, and Bethlehem have seen fewer overall attacks than Jerusalem, with a majority of these attacks coming in the form of stone throwing. Salfit and Bethlehem have experienced a relatively moderate number of attacks on

churches and mosques and all three districts have just one incident of home arson recorded from 2010 through 2015. The remaining districts have experienced low levels of settler violence.

Palestinians have carried out a range of violent and non-violent resistance actions in the West Bank against the Israeli occupation. The dataset includes seven variables that capture Palestinian violent and non-violent resistance activities.

In order to capture the overall level of contention between Palestinians and Israeli security forces, I include a variable called *clashes with security forces*. I construct the measure using the NAD daily reports. Every event for which the event description indicates a physical altercation between security forces and Palestinians is included in the measure. Most often, these events are characterized by young Palestinians throwing stones, Molotov cocktails, or fireworks in the direction of security forces and security forces responding with crowd control measures such as tear gas and rubber bullets or with live fire. The dataset records 10,113 clashes between Palestinians and security forces.

Settlers killed is a variable that records every Jewish civilian killed by Palestinian attackers in the West Bank. This measure is included as a proxy for physically threatening events for the dominant ethnic group since interviews with Israeli settlers indicate that Israeli settlers perceive fatal attacks by Palestinians as particularly threatening (see chapter 5). Casualties are only included when a Jewish civilian is killed in the West Bank. This means that if the individual is a Jewish settler, but was on active duty in the military at the time of their death, they are not included. If the individual was Jewish and visiting, volunteering, or staying in the West Bank with Israeli settlers, their death was included. Information for this variable comes from the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) website. The MFA maintains a publically available list of all Jewish fatalities at the hands of Palestinians in Israel and the Palestinian territories. The list

includes the name of the victim(s) and a description of the event in which they were killed. Palestinians killed forty-three settlers during the temporal scope of the dataset.

In chapter two, I argued that dominant group members are likely to perceive direct attacks against their community as more threatening than attacks on security forces. To test this hypothesis, I include a variable called *soldiers killed* that records every Israeli soldier killed by Palestinian attackers in the West Bank. Any soldier killed in the West Bank, whether or not they were a resident of the West Bank, was included. The information about Israeli soldiers killed in the West Bank came from the MFA website (see above).

In addition to variables measuring direct attacks by Palestinians against Jewish civilians and security forces, I include a variable called *demonstrations* in order to capture minority mobilization that dominant group members may be deem threatening. *Demonstrations* records all organized Palestinian demonstrations against any aspect of the Israeli occupation of the West Bank. The data on demonstrations comes from the NAD reports. The reports include information about marches, sit-ins, and large gatherings that take place in both Jewish and Palestinian controlled areas of the West Bank. The reports include the location of the demonstration and a description of the demonstration indicating whether clashes broke out with security forces, the types of repressive tactics used by security forces to break up the demonstration, and the number of people injured during clashes if they occurred. The description also includes information about the claims motivating the demonstration. For example, demonstrations may protest Israel's construction of the West Bank security barrier, Israeli military attacks on Gaza, Palestinian fatalities at the hands of security forces, or incidents of Israeli settler violence against Palestinians. *Demonstrations* include demonstrations in which scuffles broke out with security

forces or Israeli settlers and those that remained completely peaceful. The dataset includes 3,495 demonstrations.

In order to differentiate between demonstrations that dominant group members may perceive as physically threatening from those that do not pose a physical threat, I disaggregate *demonstrations* into peaceful demonstrations and violent demonstrations. *Peaceful demonstrations* includes only those demonstrations where no scuffles broke out with security forces. This means that demonstrators did not direct violence toward security forces and security forces did not employ crowd control measures such as tear gas or rubber coated bullets. *Violent demonstrations* includes only those demonstrations for which the event description indicated that violent clashes occurred between security forces and demonstrators. Most often, this violence followed a clear pattern in which young Palestinians would hurl stones or other objects at security forces and security forces would respond with riot control measures. I also use the counts of peaceful and violent demonstrations to construct a variable called *percent violent demonstrations* that reflects the percentage of total demonstrations in which violence occurred.

There is significant cross-district variation in the level of both violent and non-violent Palestinian resistance to the Israeli occupation. As table 3.3 indicates, levels of Palestinian violence against both security forces and the Israeli settler population differ significantly by district. Palestinians most often clash with Israeli security forces in Jerusalem, Hebron, and Ramallah, while security forces and Palestinians engage in a moderate number of clashes in Bethlehem and Nablus. In the remaining districts of the West Bank, the number of clashes between security forces and Palestinians remains relatively low. An examination of the district-level variation in the number of fatal attacks against security forces supports the finding that the level of contention is highest in Hebron, Jerusalem, and Ramallah districts. However, the data

indicates that fatal attacks are far more common in Hebron than in any other district; Palestinians killed 11 Israeli soldiers in the Hebron district (more than in the rest of the West Bank combined), four in Jerusalem, and two in the Ramallah district between 2010 and 2015. Palestinians killed a maximum of one soldiers in all other West Bank districts during this period.

Table 3.3 Palestinian violence by district (2010-2015)

District	Clashes with security forces	Settlers Killed	Soldiers Killed
Jerusalem	2,603	16	4
Ramallah	1,970	3	2
Jenin	409	0	0
Tubas	67	0	0
Tulkarem	269	0	0
Qalqilya	530	0	1
Nablus	879	8	1
Salfit	119	2	0
Jericho	72	0	0
Bethlehem	1,182	9	0
Hebron	2,030	5	11
Total	10,113	43	19

The data also indicates that the number of settlers killed by Palestinians does not always correspond with the level of violence between Palestinians and Israeli security forces in a given district. While Jerusalem, the most contentious district in terms of clashes between security forces and Palestinians, has seen the greatest number of settler casualties (16 deaths), the next most deadly districts for Israeli settlers have been Bethlehem (9 deaths) and Nablus (8 deaths). In both districts, the level of violence between security forces and Palestinians has been moderate. The number of settler casualties in Hebron and Ramallah, which have experienced a high level of violence between security forces and Palestinians, has been relatively low with five and three deaths respectively.

In addition to the considerable district-level variation in the number of Palestinian attacks, levels of Palestinian demonstrations against the occupation have varied significantly

across the West Bank (table 3.4). The data indicates that Palestinians conducted the greatest number of demonstrations in the Ramallah district. In fact, Palestinians demonstrated in Ramallah more than twice as many times as in any other district. In addition, the vast majority of these demonstrations (86 percent) included violent confrontations between demonstrators and security forces. Palestinians in Bethlehem, Hebron, Jerusalem, and Qalqilya carried out a relatively moderate number of demonstrations, while the number of demonstrations remained low in the rest of the West Bank. In districts in which the overall level of demonstrations has been moderate, approximately 50 percent of these demonstrations have turned violent with the exception of Qalqilya where 78 percent of demonstrations turned violent.

Table 3.4 Palestinian demonstrations against the Israeli occupation by district (2010-2015)

District	Non-violent demonstrations	Violent demonstrations	Percent violent demonstrations	Total demonstrations
Jerusalem	216	166	43	382
Ramallah	167	987	86	1,154
Jenin	93	6	1	99
Tubas	39	2	1	41
Tulkarem	172	15	1	187
Qalqilya	84	294	78	378
Nablus	102	78	43	180
Salfit	32	13	29	45
Jericho	61	6	1	67
Bethlehem	283	266	48	549
Hebron	182	231	56	413
Total	1,431	2,064	59	3,495

Given that Palestinians have long resisted Israel's occupation of the West Bank, the Israeli military has employed a range of repressive tactics against the Palestinian population living there. I include three variables capturing the type and level of Israeli repression against Palestinians in the West Bank in order to control for Israeli repressive activities in my regression models and to assess whether these types of activities may help to account for district level

variation in levels of Israeli settler violence.⁹¹ The first measure of Israeli state repression, *raids*, is a continuous variable that records the number of Israeli military raids into populated Palestinian areas of the West Bank. Data for this measure comes from the NAD reports. The reports provide information about the time and location of each raid and additional information such as whether security forces carried out any arrests and whether Palestinians perpetrated any violence against security forces conducting the raid. Raids that were conducted in a specific city, town, or village are considered unique raids as long as they did not occur within a two-hour period in the same location. If security forces entered a city, town, or village, left and then returned in under two hours, the event is coded as a single raid. If however, security forces raided a location, left and then returned more than two hours later, the incident is coded as two separate raids. If security forces raided a number of cities, towns, or villages simultaneously, each raid is coded as a unique event. Similarly, if security forces raided a number of locations in succession, each successive raid is coded as a unique event. The dataset records 31,715 raids.

In addition to Israeli military raids, I also include a continuous variable called *arrests*, which counts the number of Palestinians arrested by Israeli security forces. The data comes from the NAD daily reports. The reports include information about Palestinian civilians and government agents arrested by security forces. When available, the reports also include the names of those individuals arrested by security forces and information indicating whether security forces released those individuals on the same day in which they arrested them. Arrests

⁹¹ Employing multiple measures of state repression allows for the possibility that each form of state repression is unique. The more the findings across forms of state repression are similar, the more likely the results reflect a general process of state repression (White 1999, 192).

are only included in the measure if reports indicate that security forces did not release the individual on the day of the arrest. If security forces released an individual the same day they detained them, I consider the event to be a “temporary detention” and exclude it from the measure. The reason is that these types of detentions may occur when security forces hold civilians for a short time as they check their identity papers and determine whether they are wanted by the intelligence agencies. Security forces arrested 23, 548 Palestinians during the temporal scope of the dataset.

While military raids and arrests represent moderate forms of Israeli state repression, I also include a measure called *Palestinians killed* to proxy for more severe forms of state repression. *Palestinians killed* is a count of the number of Palestinians killed by Israeli security forces. This measure follows convention regarding quantitative analyses of ethnic violence (see previous section). The data on Palestinians killed by Israeli security forces comes from the NAD daily reports. The event descriptions include information about the name and age of every casualty (or at a minimum whether they were under the age of 18) and the location of the incident. The event descriptions also include information about the circumstances of each victim’s death including the method by which security forces killed the individual, whether the individual was involved in protest activities at the time of their death, and whether security forces killed the individual while they were perpetrating an attack against security forces or Israeli settlers. If a Palestinian died in a car accident with an Israeli military vehicle, the event was not included in the measure. Israeli security forces in the West Bank killed 263 Palestinians from 2010 through 2015.

The level of state repression of the Palestinian population has varied significantly across the West Bank (Table 3.5). The lack of district level overlap between the various repressive

tactics used by the Israeli military, points to the need to differentiate between them when assessing the relative levels of government repression in the West Bank. For example, the number of military raids is highest in Hebron, Qalqilya, and Nablus, whereas the largest number of arrests and killings of Palestinians take place in Jerusalem and Hebron.

Table 3.5 State repression by district (2010-2015)

District	Raids	Arrests	Palestinians killed
Jerusalem	825	5,377	71
Ramallah	2,944	2,369	35
Jenin	1,209	1,455	18
Tubas	374	419	1
Tulkarem	1,325	894	8
Qalqilya	5,305	1,481	3
Nablus	5,072	2,589	22
Salfit	1,820	782	9
Jericho	3,314	775	4
Bethlehem	3,239	2,283	19
Hebron	6,299	5,152	73
Total	31,715	23,548	263

As discussed in chapters one and two, I expect government concessions to have a significant effect on patterns of dominant group violence. The dataset therefore includes variables that capture government concessions to both the Palestinian and Jewish settler communities. In chapter two, I argued that members of the dominant group are likely to view territorial concessions to ethnic minorities as a significant social threat. I therefore construct a variable called *settlement evacuations* in order to capture Israeli territorial concessions to the Palestinian population. This is a measure of forceful evacuations of Jewish settlements or outposts in the West Bank by Israeli security forces. I collected the information on settlement/outpost evacuations by searching the online databases of three Israeli English language media sources: Haaretz, The Jerusalem Post, and Arutz 7. The three sources span the

ideological spectrum on the issue of Jewish settlement in the West Bank: Haaretz on the left, Jerusalem Post on the center-right, and Arutz Sheva on the far right. I conducted searches in the online databases of all three sources using the search terms “evacuation,” “dismantle,” “outpost + destruction,” and “settlement + destruction.” I then searched the results for incidents of the forceful evacuation and/or destruction of part or all of a Jewish settlement or outpost in the West Bank. There are 39 settlement/outpost evacuations recorded in the dataset.

In chapter two, I also argued that territorial concessions to the dominant group should reduce their perception of social threat because these concessions signal an affirmation of their elevated status. In order to test this proposition, I create a continuous variable called *housing approvals* as a proxy for government territorial concessions to Israeli settlers. This is a continuous measure of the number of housing units in West Bank settlements publicly approved by the Israeli government. The dataset records each incident in which the Israeli government makes a public declaration approving new housing units in the West Bank, including the number of new housing units approved. Data for the measure comes from the NAD reports. According the NAD reports, the Israeli government approved 68,952 new housing units in the West Bank during the temporal scope of the dataset.

While the Israeli government may provide concessions to Israeli settlers in the form of official approval for additional Israeli housing units in the West Bank on some occasions, it may also approve Israeli settlement expansion implicitly by allowing settlers to expand their footprint in the West Bank without official approval. Controlling for this possibility is important when assessing the relative clarity of the government’s stance on the long-term maintenance of Jewish dominance across districts of the West Bank. Where settlers establish a relatively large number of new outposts while the government carries out a relatively small number of evacuations, it is

likely that the government is signaling its support for settlement expansion implicitly.

Governments may choose to adopt this approach in particularly sensitive areas where official housing approvals may elicit a backlash from the local minority population or from the international community.

In order to control for implicit government approval of Israeli settlement expansion, therefore, I include a variable called *outpost foundings*, which is a continuous measure of new outposts founded by Israeli settlers without official approval of the Israeli government. The data for this variable comes from the NAD reports. The reports include information on a range of “settlement activities” in which Israeli settlers lay claim to unoccupied territory in the West Bank. All incidents in which settlers set up housing units such as mobile homes on previously unoccupied territory are included in the measure. The dataset records 134 new outpost foundings.

The number of territorial concession made by the Israeli government to Palestinians and Jews differs significantly across the West Bank (Table 3.6). During the temporal scope of the dataset, Israeli security forces have carried out 39 forceful evacuations of Israeli settlements and outposts and Israeli settlers in the West Bank have founded 134 new outposts without official approval from the Israeli government. Israeli security forces have carried out the largest number of evacuations in Ramallah (16 evacuations) and Nablus (11 evacuations) districts. Unsurprisingly, therefore, Israeli settlers have focused their settlement expansion efforts on these districts, founding 26 new outposts in Nablus and 23 new outposts in Ramallah. Settlers have also concentrated their efforts on the Bethlehem (26 new outposts) and Hebron (22 new outposts) districts, where only three and six settlement evacuations were carried out by Israeli security forces respectively. In addition, Israeli settlers in the Qalqilya district, where Israeli security

forces have not carried out any evacuations, founded 12 new outposts. The Israeli government issued the vast majority of new housing approvals in Jerusalem district (58,769). Bethlehem, just south of Jerusalem, received the second highest number of approvals (3,560), followed by Ramallah (2,382), Nablus (1,713) and Salfit (1,692).

Table 3.6 Settlement evacuations and expansion by district (2010-2015)

District	Settlement evacuations	Illegal Outpost founding	New housing starts
Jerusalem	0	7	58,769
Ramallah	16	23	2,382
Jenin	0	7	0
Tubas	0	4	170
Tulkarem	2	1	0
Qalqilya	0	12	27
Nablus	11	26	1,713
Salfit	0	6	1,692
Jericho	1	0	0
Bethlehem	3	26	3,560
Hebron	6	22	639
Total	39	134	68,952

A number of studies of ethnic conflict have highlighted the importance of demographic factors such as ethnic diversity and group size (see Toft 2012) as well as the presence of relatively large populations living in socially isolated communities (Pedahzur and Perliger 2009). To account for the possible effects of group size and concentration on patterns of violence, I include variables measuring the overall size of the settler population (*settler population*), the size of the Palestinian population (*Palestinian population*), and the settler population as a percentage of the total population (*percent settler population*). To account for the presence of socially isolated communities I include a measures of the number of Israeli settlers living in the Israeli settlements recognized as legal by the Israeli government (*settlement population*) and the number

of Israeli settlers living in outposts not recognized as legal by the Israeli government (*outpost population*). I differentiate between sanctioned settlements and unsanctioned outposts because outposts tend to be more isolated both socially and geographically than officially sanctioned settlements. The demographic data for Israeli settlers comes from *Shalom Achshav* (Peace Now), the largest and longest-standing Israeli NGO advocating for peace through public pressure on the Israeli government.⁹² Palestinian population data used to calculate *percent settler population* comes from statistics published by the State of Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics.

As table 3.7 indicates, demographic characteristics differ significantly across the West Bank. In terms of population parity, settlers represent a significant proportion of the total population (approximately 30 percent) in Jerusalem, Ramallah, and Bethlehem districts. In contrast, settlers represent just two and four percent of the total population in Hebron and Nablus respectively, the districts in which settlers perpetrate the greatest number of total attacks against the Palestinian population.

⁹² According to Peace Now's website, "In the early 1990s, after identifying settlements as one of the largest obstacles to the two state solution, Peace Now established Settlement Watch, taking upon itself to track and analyze developments in the settlements. Through research, analysis, and exposure of settlement developments, Peace Now works to prevent settlement expansion and stop illegal settlement activity." The Settlement Watch team, led by Hagit Ofra, is internationally acclaimed for its credibility and reliability and is regularly cited by Israeli and international media, governments, and NGOs. <http://peacenow.org.il/en/about-us/who-are-we>

In interviews with Israeli settlers, who often express disdain for Peace Now and its mission, respondents repeatedly told me that Peace Now's data on Jewish population figures in the West Bank is the most reliable source available. Consensus across the political spectrum in Israel about the reliability of the data increases my confidence in the source.

Table 3.7 Settler population by district (2010-2015)

District	Settlement population	Outpost population	Settler population	Palestinian Population	% of total population*
Jerusalem	183,478	0	183,478	389,298	32
Ramallah	123,505	3,322	126,827	310,218	29
Jenin	2,193	430	2,623	281,156	0
Tubas	0	0	0	56,642	0
Tulkarem	66,656	1,450	68,106	336,851	20
Qalqilya	-	-	-	-	-
Nablus	11,051	1,783	12,834	348,023	4
Salfit	-	-	-	-	-
Jericho	7,756	340	8,096	46,718	17
Bethlehem	99,355	1,508	100,863	194,095	34
Hebron	14,936	856	15,792	620,418	2
Total	508,930	9,689	518,619	2,583,419	17

Note: District level settler population numbers are based on 2011 estimates published by Peace Now, the year for which data is available. Palestinian population numbers are based on the statistics published by the State of Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics. Peace Now collapses demographic data for Qalqilya and Salfit districts into Tulkarem district. Tulkarem district is therefore an aggregate of Tulkarem, Qalqilya, and Salfit districts. *Number rounded to the nearest integer.

The number of settlers living in illegal outposts also varies across districts. By far the largest outpost population resides in Ramallah district (3,322 residents). Nablus, Bethlehem, and Tulkarem districts have relatively moderate outpost populations, while the outpost populations in the remaining districts are noticeably smaller. It is also important to note that Jerusalem and Tubas districts have no Jewish residents living in outposts. In Jerusalem district, this is because Israel has annexed the entire city and its environs; in Tubas district, this is due to the absence of Jewish settlement. The proportion of Israeli settlers living in illegal outposts (as opposed to officially recognized settlements) also varies significantly across the west Bank. While settlers have established illegal outposts in nearly all districts in which they have settled, the proportion of Israeli settlers living in illegal outposts is by far the greatest in Nablus where over 16 percent of the settler population lives in outposts. In contrast, the next greatest proportion of settlers

living in illegal outposts is in the Hebron district, where five percent of settlers live in illegal outposts.⁹³

A rough test of data reliability:

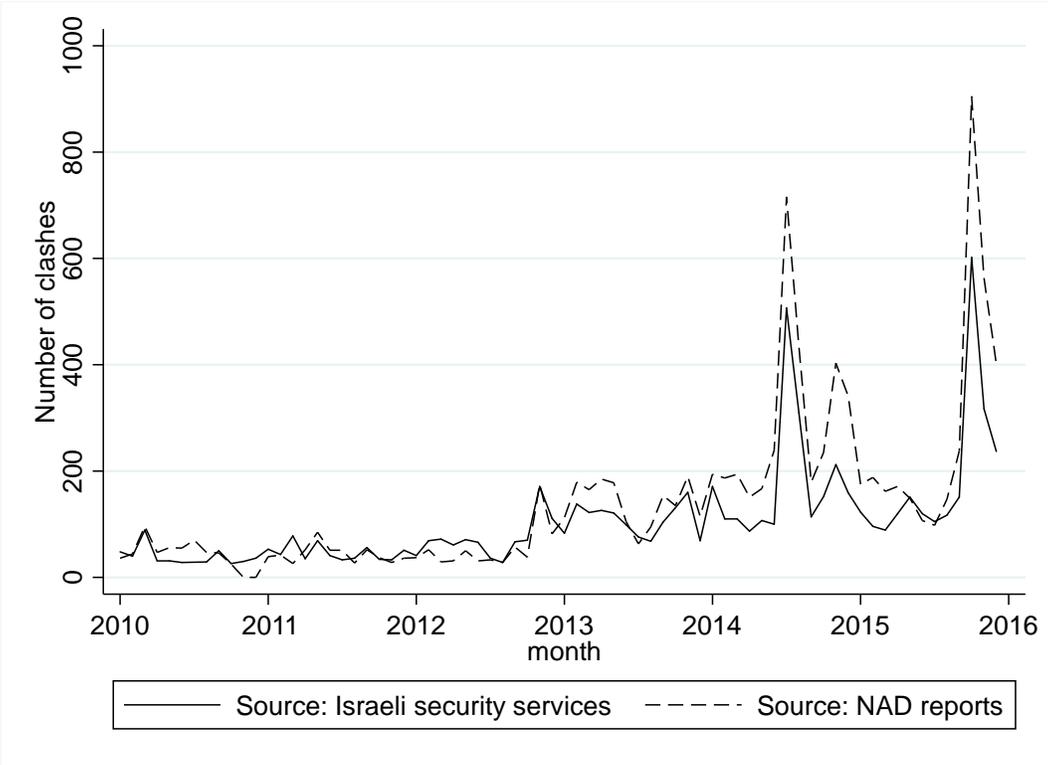
As I mentioned earlier, analysts should crosscheck government and opposition data sources when possible in order to increase confidence in the reliability of the sources. The reason is that official agencies may have incentives to misrepresent the level of contentious actions to suit their strategic agendas. Ideally, analysts would collect data from both opposition and government sources and this data would be compared to determine whether systematic bias exists. If both opposition and government data match up closely, confidence in the data is increased. Unfortunately, the Israeli government does not make available data on the majority of event types in the Palestinian NAD reports. However, the Israeli internal security services (*shabak*) do publicly publish monthly statistics on clashes between Israeli security forces and Palestinians in the West Bank.

Figure 2 represents a monthly time-series of clashes between Israeli security forces and Palestinians in the West Bank as reported by the Israeli internal security services and the Palestinian NAD reports. I produce the NAD report monthly measure by aggregating the *clashes with security forces* variable to the monthly level. The two variables produce a correlation coefficient of 0.97. Figure 3.2 does indicate that the NAD reports tend to report a greater number

⁹³ Approximately 19 percent of the settler population in Jenin district live in illegal outposts, but are excluded from this discussion because settlers in Jenin represent less than 1 percent of the total population in the district.

of clashes, but overall, the close correlation between the two sources provides increased confidence in the validity of the data in the NAD reports.

Figure 3.2 Number of clashes between Israeli security forces and Palestinians as reported by official Israeli and Palestinian sources (2010-2015)



Model choice:

The quantitative analysis in chapter six includes a series of single-equation error correction models (ECMs) to examine the causes of variation in the level and forms of violence perpetrated by Israeli settlers against Palestinian civilians over time. ECMs are time-series models that directly estimate the rate at which the dependent variable changes and then returns to equilibrium as a result of changes on the independent variable(s) (De Boef and Keele 2008). In addition, I

examine the dependent variables using ARIMA modeling techniques in order to assess the autoregressive structure of the measures.

Utilizing an ECM approach is appropriate for three reasons. First, as with cross-sectional regression models, an ECM allows for the estimation of the causal impact of each independent variable on the dependent variable. Second, the model is dynamic and accounts for past influences on future values. The model assumes an autoregression in the data generating process. This is to say that the values at time $t-1$ are related to the values at time t , which are then related to the values at time $t+1$. This assumption of dependence between the values of the variables and their lagged values allows for testing the effects of the explanatory variables on the dependent variable over time. Furthermore, an ECM enables one to estimate both the immediate and persisting effects of the explanatory variables on the dependent variable. The immediate or short-term effect refers to the impact of X_t on Y_t at time t . The long-term effect refers to the continuous impact of an independent variable over a subsequent number of time periods. In other words, the effect of X on Y persists into the future but decays over time. The ability to assess the contemporaneous and persisting influences of the independent variables on the dependent variable allows for a more nuanced analysis of the influence of actions perpetrated by Israeli government agents and Palestinians on Israeli settler violence. Finally, an ECM can be used with either stationary or non-stationary data. Even though analysts have traditionally used ECMs for estimating statistical relationships between two series, which are non-stationary and cointegrated, De Boef and Keele (2008) show that ECMs may be used with stationary data as well.

Qualitative analysis:

As discussed previously, in order to test the feasibility of the structural argument developed in chapter one, I use process tracing to conduct a historical case study of anti-Arab Jewish violence in Israel-Palestine (chapter five). The historical case study probes the plausibility of my structural argument regarding the link between ethnocracy and dominant group violence. I examine three periods in Israeli history, namely 1929-1949, 1949-1967, and 1967-1979. I argue that my theoretical model can explain both the absence of non-state anti-Arab violence from 1949 to shortly after 1967 and the reemergence of anti-Arab violence by Jewish civilians in the 1970s. The chapter illustrates the feasibility and utility of my theoretical argument by showing that, unlike extant explanations of Israeli settler violence, it can help to explain both why violence has occurred in some periods and in some locations *and* why it has not occurred in others. In addition to the historical case study, I build on original interviews with Israeli settlers to argue that Israeli settlers perceive a great deal of uncertainty in their environment and that this uncertainty has a direct impact on their behavior.

In order to assess whether the mechanisms I propose in chapter two actually explain the the statistical results of my regression analysis in chapter four, I construct a focused case study of Israeli settler violence in the West Bank (chapter five). The discussion is organized around critical junctures in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that have altered the types of threats Israeli settlers percieve in their environment and the severity of those threats. The case study uses these critical junctures to create a periodization of threat regimes in the West Bank and assesses whether these threat regimes significantly alter the dynamics of Israeli settler violence. These dynamics are assessed in light of the statistical results presented in chapter four in order to

determine whether the theoretical arguments presented in chapter two can help to explain both short and medium-term variation in the dynamics of Israeli settler violence.

Both qualitative sections build on secondary literature including academic scholarship, NGO reports, and media sources as well as approximately 50 original interviews conducted with Jewish settlers in the West Bank in the summers of 2016 and 2017. Interviews were conducted with a variety of Jewish respondents in the West Bank. Some respondents were introduced to the author by personal contacts in the West Bank, while others were obtained via the snowball method – meaning that respondents provided additional contacts following their interviews. While the respondent pool was not a random sample, it does include a wide range of respondents; religious and secular, male and female, from across the socioeconomic spectrum, and ranging in age from nineteen to mid-seventies. The respondent pool includes local government officials, members of sanctioned militias, unsanctioned vigilantes (including some who have spent time in prison for their activities), victims of Palestinian violence, local psychologists and social workers, immigrants, and others. Respondents also came from various districts of the West Bank, mostly from the Bethlehem (Gush Etzion), Hebron, and Nablus (Shomron) districts.

Interviews were conducted in a semi-structured format using mostly open-ended questions and were conducted in Hebrew or English depending on the preference of the respondent. I began every interview by introducing myself and the general contours of the project. I explained to respondents that their identities would remain confidential, but that the information they provided could be quoted or paraphrased in my work. Respondents were then asked to consent to participating in the project. While I used a list of topics and questions to guide my conversation, the precise topics emphasized and questions asked in the interview

depended to some degree on the respondent. For example, a psychologist tasked with assisting members of the community affected by the conflict was asked some different questions than a member of a settlement security team tasked with responding to Palestinian violence in coordination with Israeli authorities. Each had important information to offer based on their own personal and/or professional experience in the West Bank.

Conclusion:

In this chapter, I have introduced my research design and data. In order to assess my theoretical arguments, I adopt a mixed methods research design. In chapter four, I test my theoretical argument about the link between uncertainty and dominant group violence by comparing district-level variation in levels of Israeli settler violence, the level of ambiguity of Israel's settlement policy, Palestinian dissent, state repression and concessions, and demographic characteristics. I then conduct a time-series regression analysis to test the hypotheses about threat and the dynamics of dominant group violence introduced in chapter two. In chapter five, I build on the results of my quantitative analysis to test my structural arguments about uncertainty and the occurrence of dominant group violence by way of a historical case study. I examine the case of Israel-Palestine using process tracing techniques to show that structural uncertainty explains why dominant group violence occurs in some places and times, but not in others. Next, I build on my statistical results in chapter four to construct a periodization of Israeli settler violence (1967-2015). I do so to probe whether the causal mechanisms I propose in chapter two are operating in my case as expected and to assess whether my theoretical arguments can explain both short and medium-term variation in the dynamics of Israeli settler violence. I now turn to an examination

of my original sub-national dataset to test the feasibility of my theoretical arguments regarding the occurrence and dynamics of dominant group violence.

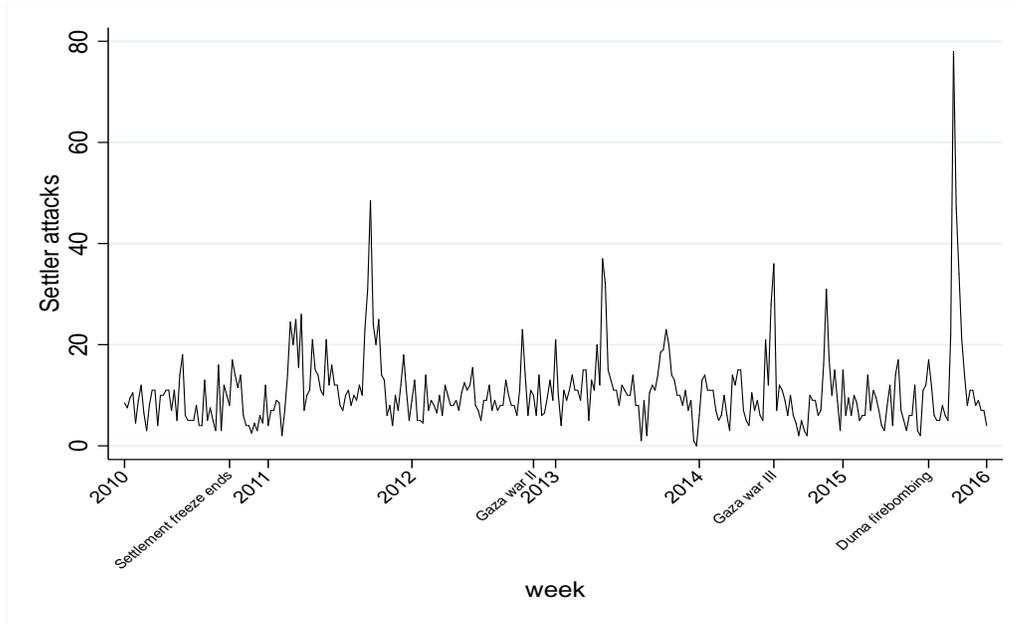
Chapter 4: Data Analysis

In this chapter, I use the West Bank Contentious Interactions Dataset (WBCED) to test my arguments about the effects of physical and social threat on the frequency, severity, and target choices of dominant group violence. I begin the chapter with a descriptive discussion of the patterns of contention during the temporal scope of the data (2010-2015). I then analyze district level variation in the data in order to show that uncertainty about sociopolitical dominance provides a better explanation of spatial variation in the level of Israeli settler violence than alternative explanations of dominant group violence. The results provide support for the central argument proposed in chapter one. Then, following a presentation of my regression equations, I report the results of my error correction models (ECMs) and discuss their implications for my theoretical arguments in chapter two. I also assess the autoregressive properties in the settler violence variables using ARIMA modeling techniques to expose the univariate temporal processes in the dependent variables. Overall, I find that the data largely supports my theoretical arguments, while providing additional nuance to the hypothesized relationships.

Figure 4.1 represents a weekly time series of Israeli settler attacks. The variance in the data is immediately apparent. Neither structural factors (e.g. economic conditions and foreign support) nor ideological orientation can explain this short-term variation. The reason is that both ideologies and structural conditions tend to change slowly and therefore cannot explain the high levels of variation in the level of violence from day to day, week to week, or even year to year. Instead, consistent with my argument in this dissertation, the short-term variance seems to indicate that settlers perpetrate violence in response to factors endogenous to the conflict. Before

analyzing statistical patterns in the data, it is therefore important to examine the context within which this violence occurred.

Figure 4.1 Time-series of incidents of Israeli settler violence (2010-2015)



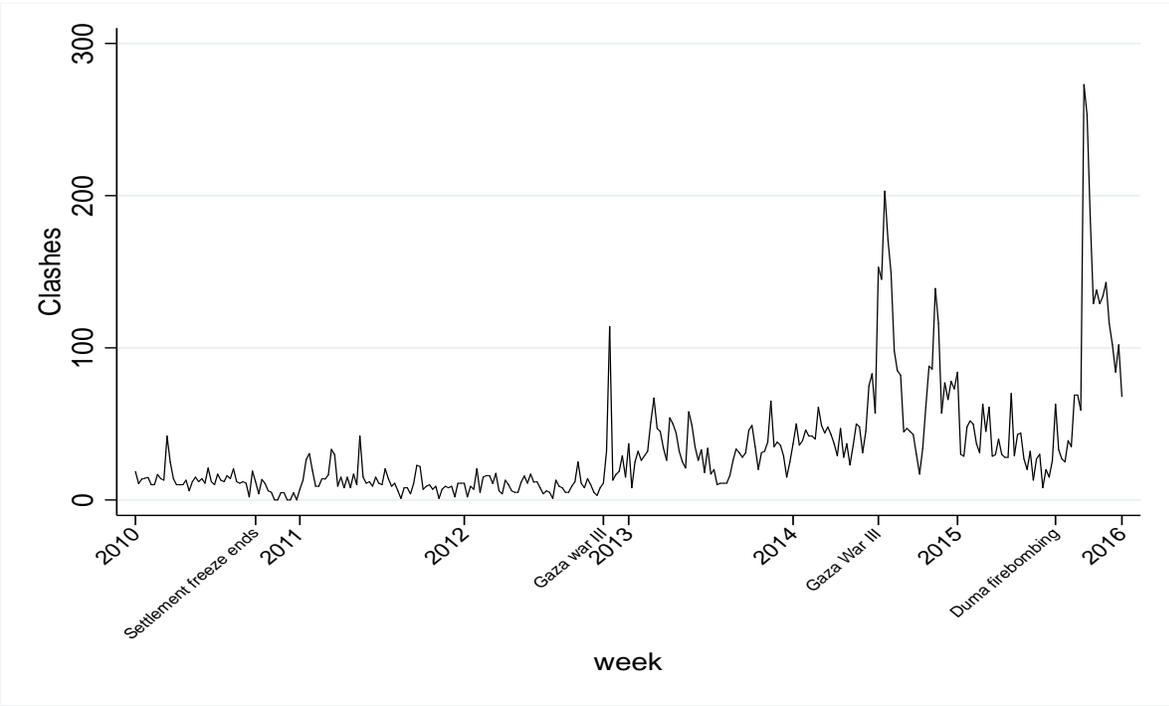
The post-second Intifada period:

The data analyzed here spans the years 2010 through 2015, a subset of the post-second intifada period (2005 to present). In order to contextualize the data on Israeli settler violence, I briefly discuss the context in the West Bank from 2010 through 2015 by using the dataset to examine the general patterns of contention between security forces, Palestinians, and Israeli settlers.

I begin in November 2009 when, under pressure from the Obama administration, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu announced a partial 10-month freeze on Israeli settlement construction in the West Bank. During this time, construction and new housing starts went

forward in East Jerusalem and some construction did continue in the rest of the West Bank, but the government did not approve any new housing units outside of Jerusalem. The overall frequency of contention in the West Bank during this period was relatively low (figure 4.2), and remained so through the end of the settlement freeze and the complete disintegration of the peace process in late 2010.

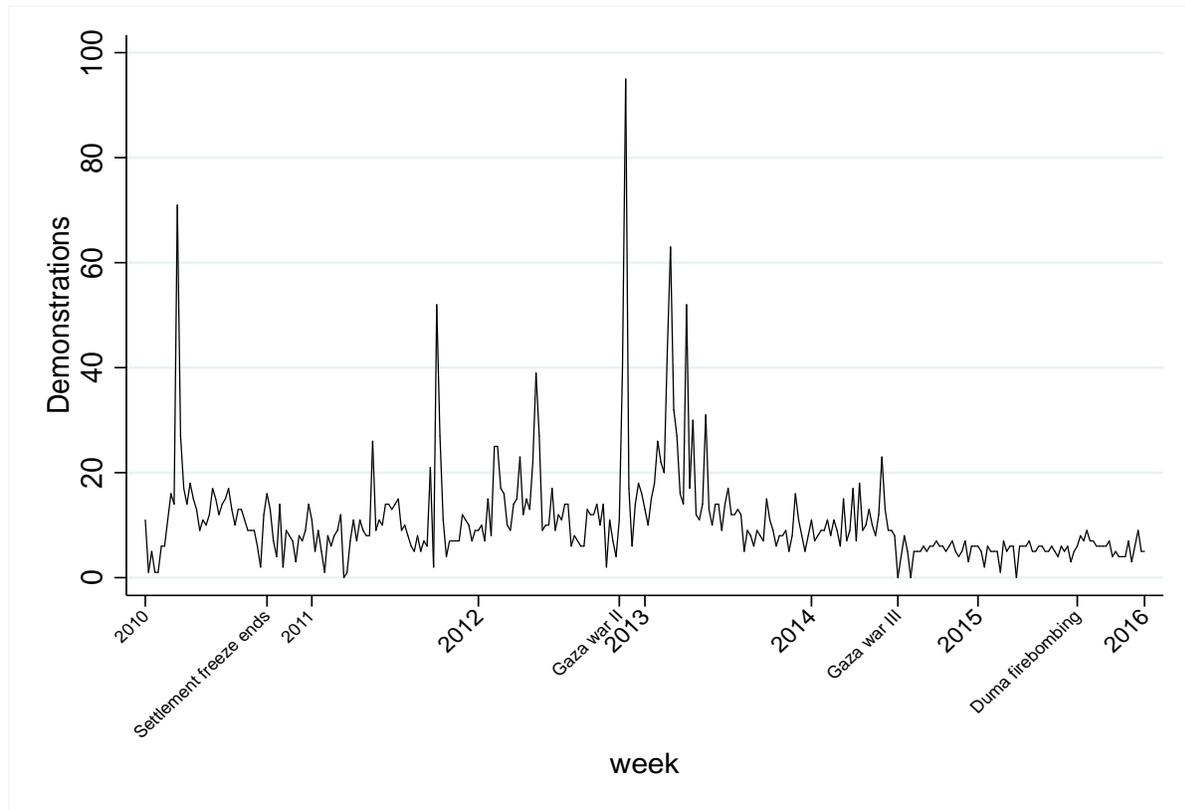
Figure 4.2 Time-series of clashes between Palestinians and Israeli security forces in the West Bank (2010-2015)



The frequency of violence between security forces and Palestinians changed significantly following the outbreak of the Israel-Hamas war in Gaza on November 14, 2012. As Figure 4.3 indicates, the war also caused a wave of both peaceful and violent organized Palestinian protests

against the regime in the West Bank. While the protest wave dissipated within months, the heightened frequency of clashes persisted into 2014 (figure 4.2).⁹⁴

Figure 4.3 Time-series of organized Palestinian demonstrations and Israeli security forces in the West Bank (2010-2015)



⁹⁴ While the Israeli-Palestinian peace process had been frozen since the end of the partial Israeli settlement freeze in 2010, both the Israeli government and the Palestinians agreed to renew talks under heavy American pressure in 2013. During this time, U.S. representatives met with their Israeli and Palestinian counterparts dozens of times in an attempt to fashion a compromise agreement. Despite the flurry of activity, the negotiations did not produce any significant progress. The moribund peace process was officially halted when Israel refused to accept a reconciliation agreement between Fatah and Hamas on April 23, 2014.

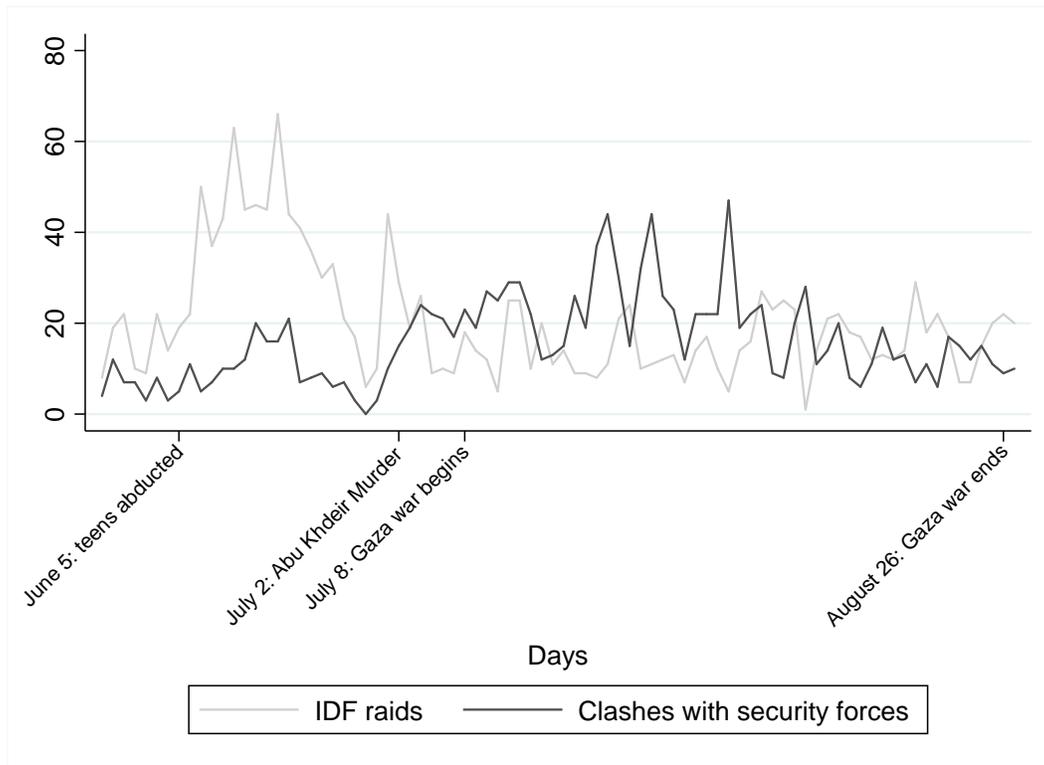
The frequency of *clashes with security forces* remaining high in the West Bank during the summer of 2014 and the freezing of the peace process heightened tensions considerably. At the same time, tensions between Israel and Hamas continued to simmer on the Gaza border as Israel maintained its blockade of the territory and the two sides engaged in a spiral of Palestinian rocket fire and Israeli airstrikes, artillery fire, and tank shelling. This tenuous status quo continued until June 12, 2014, when Palestinians abducted three Jewish-Israeli teenagers while they were hitchhiking in the West Bank. Though the Israeli government believed that those who had carried out the attack were members of Hamas, it is unlikely that the organization's top leadership directly ordered the attack. While the attackers quickly killed the teenagers and dumped their bodies close to the scene of the crime, Israeli authorities suppressed this information in order to justify Operation Brother's Keeper, a massive crackdown on Hamas's personnel and infrastructure in the West Bank.

Figure 4.4 shows the spike in Israeli military raids in the West Bank beginning on June 14. The operation resulted in a small spike in clashes between Israeli security forces and Palestinians, mostly as Palestinians clashed with Israeli forces conducting raids in Palestinian population centers, but the response remained relatively temperate given the scale of the Israeli operation.

On July 1, Israeli security forces located the bodies of the abducted Israeli teenagers near the site of their abduction, which triggered a daylong spike in the level of raids and arrests by the Israeli military. The next day, in retaliation for the attack, three radical Jews, two of them minors, abducted a 16-year-old Palestinian named Abu Khedeir from his neighborhood in East Jerusalem, took him to a wooded area outside of the city, killed him, and burned his body. The incident, which became public shortly thereafter, led to a wave of clashes in the West Bank. This

time Palestinians confronted Israeli security forces rather than simply reacting to Israeli raids into their villages, towns, and cities. As Palestinian casualties in the West Bank mounted, Hamas seized the opportunity to increase its shelling of Israeli communities from the Gaza Strip, quickly leading to an Israeli ground invasion. In other words, violence in the West Bank was not a response to the fighting in Gaza. Rather, tensions in the West Bank helped to spark the Gaza war.⁹⁵ By perpetrating one severe act of violence during a period of heightened tensions, three Jewish radicals helped to trigger a conflagration.

Figure 4.4 Time-series of clashes between Palestinians and Israeli security forces in the West Bank and Israeli military raids (June 1, 2014 – August 27, 2014)



⁹⁵ It should be noted that once casualties began to mount in Gaza, the situation in Gaza did exacerbate the situation in the West Bank.

The Palestinian response to the 2014 Gaza war differed from their response to the war in 2012. Rather than engaging in a wave of organized protest, the frequency of Palestinian demonstrations significantly declined (figure 4.3). As they did so, young Palestinians continued to engage Israeli security forces violently. While Israel succeeded in reducing the frequency of clashes over the next year, a firebombing of two family homes in the Palestinian village of Duma by a young Israeli settler on July 31, 2015, reignited Palestinian violence. Ali Sa'ad Dawabsheh, an eight-year-old child, was burned to death in the attack. Within weeks, both of Ali's parents succumbed to their wounds as well. The attack sparked a wave of Palestinian violence in the West Bank and significantly heightened tensions between the Palestinian and Jewish communities in the region. Noticeably, however, the frequency of organized Palestinian protests did not significantly increase following the attack. Instead, young Palestinians increasingly confronted Israeli security forces outside of organized demonstrations, creating a diffuse and uncoordinated wave of violence.

On September 9, with tensions high, the Israeli government took steps to outlaw two grassroots Islamist movements called "*Mourabitoon*" and "*Murabitat*" that had been involved in protests at the Temple Mount in Jerusalem against visits by Jewish groups calling for Jewish sovereignty over the site. This decision further exacerbated tensions as some Palestinian elites claimed that Israel was attempting to weaken Palestinian control of the Temple Mount compound. In mid-September, significant clashes ensued on the Temple Mount between Palestinian dissidents and Israeli security forces when Palestinian protesters began to gather in order to block visits by Jews to the site. With tensions high and the frequency of organized demonstrations low, uncoordinated violence quickly spread to other parts of the West Bank.

On October 1, a Hamas cell in the West Bank ambushed a vehicle driving between the settlements of Itamar and Elon Moreh in the northern West Bank and killed a Jewish couple living in the area. The shooters spared their four children, who witnessed the murders from the back seat. Jewish and Palestinian responses to the attack, as expected, were diametrically opposed. Many Palestinians viewed the attack as a justified response to the Duma murders two months earlier. To settlers, it was an indefensible act of terrorism. The attack triggered a spate of settler violence, a sharp spike in clashes between Palestinians and security forces, and a sharp increase in the number of lethal Palestinian attacks against both Israeli security forces and Jewish civilians. This wave of violence, later dubbed the “knife intifada” was the most severe in the West Bank since the conclusion of the second intifada in 2005.⁹⁶ As with the Abu Khdeir murder in 2014, a properly timed attack against Palestinian civilians in Duma contributed to a severe escalation in the overall level of dissident violence and state repression.

Uncertainty and spatial variation in the level of Israeli settler violence:

I argued in chapter one that dominant group violence is most likely to occur where the level of uncertainty for members of the dominant group is high. That is, where their privileged sociopolitical position is threatened while they continue to receive support from public officials. If this proposition is correct, Israeli settler violence should be most common in administrative districts in which the government adopts an ambiguous position regarding the expansion of Jewish settlement. Where the government both approves significant numbers of new housing

⁹⁶ This wave of violence was later labeled the “knife intifada” given that the majority of deadly attacks were carried out by Palestinian youth using knives, though vehicular attacks were also utilized.

units in settlements or allows for the founding of a significant number of new outposts *and* carries out a relatively high number of forceful evacuations of Israeli settlements or outposts, Israeli settlers should view the government’s settlement policy as ambiguous. Consequently, they should feel a high level of uncertainty about their ability to maintain their privileged status and, as a result, carry out a relatively large number of attacks against Palestinians. The district level data provide some support for this proposition. Settler violence is most common in the Hebron, Nablus, and Ramallah districts, where there is a particularly high level of inconsistency between the government’s support for Jewish settlement, whether explicit (i.e. approvals of new housing units) or implicit (i.e. outpost foundings), and the government’s opposition to Jewish settlement (i.e. settlement evacuations).

Table 4.1 District level variation in settlement activities and Israeli settler violence in the West Bank (2010-2015)

District	Settlement evacuations	Outpost foundings	New housing unit approvals	Total settler attacks
Jerusalem	0	7	58,769	320
Ramallah	16	23	2,382	538
Jenin	0	7	0	59
Tubas	0	4	170	20
Tulkarem	2	1	0	38
Qalqilya	0	12	27	298
Nablus	11	26	1,713	847
Salfit	0	6	1,692	194
Jericho	1	0	0	0
Bethlehem	3	26	3,560	247
Hebron	6	22	639	732
Total	39	134	68,952	3,293

Table 4.1 shows that the construction of illegal outposts by Israeli settlers in the Nablus district is relatively high, with 26 new outposts established from 2010 through 2015. The number

of new housing units approved in the Nablus district during the period was moderate (1,713 units), while the number of settlement evacuations in the district was relatively high (11 evacuations). A similar pattern is apparent in the Ramallah district, where Israeli settlers founded 23 new outposts, the government approved 2,382 new housing units, and security forces conducted 16 settlement evacuations. In both districts, uncertainty remains high as the government professes its support for Jewish settlement and approves moderate levels of new housing units, while it accedes to Palestinian demands that the Israeli government evacuate Jewish settlers living on land they claim as their own.

In Hebron, uncertainty is also high, but not for the same reason. While the 22 illegal outposts founded in Hebron is commensurate with 23 in Ramallah and 26 in Nablus, the six evacuations carried out in the Hebron district is considerably lower than the 16 evacuations in the Ramallah district and 11 evacuations in the Nablus district. At the same time, the 639 new housing units approved in Hebron district is far lower than the 2,382 in Ramallah district and 1,713 in Nablus district. This suggests that the government is allowing settlers more freedom to expand their settlement illegally in Hebron district than in Ramallah and Nablus districts, while withholding formal support in the form of construction approvals it has provided both to Ramallah and Nablus districts. The lack of this formal commitment to settlement expansion in the Hebron district creates a context in which settlers perceive a moderate level of settlement evacuations as a significant threat to the continued Jewish presence there. Further, like Nablus and Ramallah, Hebron is marked by a sense of threat, of being “outside of the consensus” - meaning that the belief that the territory is inseparable from the Israeli state is not hegemonic among Jewish Israelis - while at the same time enjoying considerable formal and or informal

government support.⁹⁷ In Ramallah and Nablus, the government formalized its support by publically authorizing settlement expansion, while in Hebron government support remained largely informal, with the government often allowing settlers greater leeway to conduct their settlement activities outside of the legal framework. Despite this variation in the governments approach, inconsistent government policy produces a volatile combination of both threat and confidence among Israeli settlers in all three districts.⁹⁸

Where these discrepancies between government support for and opposition to Jewish settlement expansion do not exist, the level of violence tends to be lower. In Jerusalem, for

⁹⁷ If a particular territory “within the consensus,” then there is by definition a hegemonic belief among Israeli Jews that the territory is inseparable from the Israeli state. This terminology is common among Israeli settlers in the West Bank when they refer to specific portions of the territory. For instance, the western portion of the Gush Etzion settlement block (Bethlehem district) just south of Jerusalem is considered “within the consensus” in the sense that there is overwhelming support among Israeli Jews for maintaining control of the territory in any final peace agreement. The far smaller eastern portion of the settlement block, however, which reaches further into the West Bank, is “outside of the consensus.” The residents of the eastern portion of Gush Etzion strongly support the annexation of their communities by the Israeli government, but at the same time acknowledge that the likelihood this will happen is smaller than it is in the western portion of the settlement block. Nevertheless, they also recognize that their own districts have a greater chance of being fully incorporated into Israel than do more peripheral districts, such as Hebron and Nablus. For a theoretical discussion see (Lustick 1993).

⁹⁸ It should be noted that while both districts were marked by a relatively large number of settler attacks, per capita attacks is far higher in Nablus than in Ramallah. In Ramallah, Israeli settlers carried out approximately four attacks per 1,000 Jewish residents, while in Nablus settlers carried out about 66 attacks per 1,000 Jewish residents. It is not discernable from the data whether this violence is attributable to a small group of hardcore radicals carrying out a greater number of attacks in Nablus district or whether settlers in Nablus are more violent in general.

example, the government has not carried out any settlement evacuations, having formally recognized East Jerusalem as part of Israel's permanent capital, and has approved 58,769 new housing units for Jewish settlers during the reporting period (approximately 85 percent of the total housing units approved). This manifestation of Israel's explicit intention to maintain its sovereignty over the entire city of Jerusalem drastically reduces the level of uncertainty for Jews living in the eastern portions of the city and the settlements on its periphery. It makes sense, then, that the overall level of settler violence is low in Jerusalem. Another example is the Bethlehem district where settlers founded 26 new outposts, while the Israeli government only carried out three minor evacuations from 2010 through 2015. Unlike Hebron where the government approved only 639 housing units, however, the government has approved 3,560 new housing units in the Bethlehem district, over five times the number allotted to the Hebron district. This formal support from the government has decreased the level of uncertainty in the Bethlehem district for the Jewish population living there. For this reason, Israeli settlers often describe Bethlehem district (*Gush Etzion*) as being "within the consensus." As my argument predicts, the level of settler violence in Bethlehem has been significantly lower than in Hebron, Nablus, and Ramallah districts.

In sum, where the government refused to grant new housing units altogether or refrained from carrying out settlement evacuations, the overall level of settler violence has been relatively low. In contrast, where the government's support for settlement has been more ambiguous, the level of settler violence has been relatively high. These results support the argument that dominant group violence in the West Bank is most likely to occur where the level of uncertainty for members of the dominant group is highest.

Testing rival hypotheses for dominant group violence:

In order to assess the viability of competing hypotheses, I examine whether spatial variation in the level of Israeli settler violence is consistent with demographic polarization, social isolation, and vigilantism arguments. This analysis concludes that uncertainty produced by inconsistent government policy relating to Jewish settlement provides a better explanation of district level variation in the level of Israeli settler violence than competing explanations.

Demographic polarization argument:

Demographic polarization arguments predict that ethnic violence will be most severe in districts marked by relative parity in the size and power of competing ethnic groups (e.g. Olzak 1992, Costalli and Moro 2012, Balcells, Daniels, and Escribà-Folch 2016). The reason is that violence is most likely where ethnic competition is greatest. Table 4.2, however, indicates that demographic parity does not correlate with the level of violence in West Bank districts. The overall level of Israeli settler violence is highest in the Nablus, Hebron, Ramallah, and T/Q/S districts.⁹⁹ While settlers represent a relatively large segment of the population in Ramallah and T/Q/S (29 percent and 20 percent respectively), they represent a very small proportion of the population in the Nablus and Hebron districts (two and four percent respectively). Demographic polarization arguments would therefore expect that violence should be more common in Ramallah and T/Q/S districts than in Nablus and Hebron districts. Contrary to these expectations,

⁹⁹ Peace now, the source of the settler demographic data, combines Tulkarem, Qalqilya, and Salfit districts in its coding of settlement and outpost population size. I have therefore aggregated the Palestinian population data to match. I include a district called T/Q/S, which aggregates Tulkarem, Qalqilya, and Salfit districts.

violent attacks are more frequent in Nablus and Hebron districts than in Ramallah and T/Q/S districts. In addition, per capita attacks is far higher in Nablus (66 attacks per 1,000 Jewish residents) and Hebron (46 attacks per 1,000 Jewish residents) than in Ramallah (two attacks per 1,000 Jewish residents) and T/Q/S (eight attacks per 1,000 Jewish residents). If competition were driving the violence, violence would be more frequent where the demographic composition was closer to parity. Here, the opposite is true.

Social isolation argument:

A “counter-culture” argument that combines elements of ideology and sociopolitical context has been advanced by Pedahzur and Perliger (2009). They contend that counter-culture groups tend to radicalize when they live in isolation from the rest of society. Once radicalized, group members face fewer cognitive barriers to perpetrating acts of violence when community leaders frame threatening events as “catastrophic.” In their discussion of Israeli settler violence, Pedahzur and Perliger (2009) rightfully highlight the distinction between Israeli settlements and outposts; the settlements are formally recognized by the Israeli judicial system, while outposts are not. Overall, outposts tend to be smaller, less developed, and relatively geographically and socially isolated.

If social isolation explains Israeli settler violence, violence should be highest where the outpost population is the largest. This is because a greater number of radicals living in a socially isolated environment should increase the number of people with suppressed cognitive barriers to violence and, in turn, increase the level of violence. The district level data do not support this assertion. As table 4.2 indicates, Ramallah district has by far the largest population living in illegal outposts (3,322 residents), yet it does not experience the greatest number of settler attacks.

While Nablus district, which has the second largest outpost population (1,783 residents), has had the largest number of settler attacks, Hebron, the second most violent district, has a relatively small outpost population (856 residents). In addition, while a relatively large proportion of the population in Nablus district lives in illegal outposts (16 percent), only two percent of Israeli settlers in Hebron district live in illegal outposts. Yet, both districts are marked by high levels of Israeli settler violence. Counter-culture arguments, it would seem, struggle to explain district level variation in the overall level of Israeli settler violence.

Table 4.2 District level variation in demographic characteristics and Israeli settler violence in the West Bank (2010-2015)

District	Demographics			Settler violence	
	Total Jewish population	Outpost population	Jews as % of total population	Total settler attacks	Attacks per capita
Jerusalem	183,478	0	32	320	2
Ramallah	126,827	3,344	29	538	4
Jenin	2,623	430	<1	59	23
Tubas	0	0	<1	20	n/a
Tulkarem*	-	-	-	38	-
Qalqilya*	-	-	-	298	-
Nablus	12,834	1,783	4	847	66
Salfit*	-	-	-	194	-
Jericho	8,096	340	17	0	6
Bethlehem	100,863	1,508	34	247	2
Hebron	15,792	856	2	732	46
T/Q/S*	68,106	1,450	20	530	8
Total	518,619	9,689	17	3,293	6

*Available demographic data from Peace Now aggregates Tulkarem, Qalqilya, and Salfit into a single district (T/Q/S).

Vigilantism argument:

In contrast to traditional vigilante arguments, the level of Israeli settler violence does not map nicely onto the overall level of contention in a given district. Traditional vigilante models would predict that Israeli settler violence would be highest where the challenge to the existing

order is the most severe and/or where the government is least able or willing to suppress the threat (Rosenbaum and Sederberg 1976a). Contrary to these expectations, the data indicates that neither the level of Palestinian dissent nor the level of state repression explain spatial variation in the level of Israeli settler violence.

Table 4.3 District level variation in Palestinian dissent, state repression of Palestinians, and Israeli settler violence in the West Bank (2010-2015)

District	Palestinian dissent					State repression			Settler violence
	Clashes	Settlers Killed	Total settler attacks	Attacks per capita	Total demo.	Arrests	Raids	Palestinians killed	Total settler attacks
Jerusalem	2,603	16	4	43	382	5,377	825	71	320
Ramallah	1,970	3	2	86	1,154	2,369	2,944	35	538
Jenin	409	0	0	1	99	1,455	1,209	18	59
Tubas	67	0	0	1	41	419	374	1	20
Tulkarem	269	0	0	1	187	894	1,325	8	38
Qalqilya	530	0	1	78	378	1,481	5,305	3	298
Nablus	879	8	1	43	180	2,589	5,072	22	847
Salfit	119	2	0	29	45	782	1,820	9	194
Jericho	72	0	0	1	67	775	3,314	4	0
Bethlehem	1,182	9	0	48	549	2,283	3,239	19	247
Hebron	2,030	5	11	56	413	5,152	6,299	73	732
Total	10,113	43	19	59	3,495	23,548	31,715	263	3,293

To begin, while vigilante models would predict that Israeli settler violence would correlate positively with levels of Palestinian violence and protest, table 4.3 suggests that Palestinian violence and protest do not correlate with levels of Israeli settler violence. For instance, settlers have only carried out moderate levels of violence in Jerusalem and Bethlehem districts, where the largest numbers of settlers have been killed (16 and 9 fatalities respectively).

The districts characterized by the greatest number of Israeli settler attacks – Nablus and Hebron – had only eight and five settler fatalities respectively. Similarly, the number of soldiers killed in a given district and the frequency and violent nature of Palestinian protests do not seem to correlate with higher levels of Israeli settler violence. These results suggest that Israeli settlers do not necessarily carry out a greater number of attacks in regions marked by higher levels of threat.

Table 4.3 also suggests that dominant group violence does not correlate with levels of government repression. For example, the largest number of Palestinian arrests have occurred in the Jerusalem (5,377 arrests) and Hebron (5,152 arrests) districts, while the number of settler attacks is significantly higher in Hebron than in Jerusalem. Similarly, Israeli security forces have carried out a moderate number of arrests in Ramallah district (2,369 arrests), Nablus district (2,589 arrests), and Bethlehem district (2,283 arrests), but the level of Israeli settler violence has been significantly higher in Ramallah and Nablus districts than in Bethlehem district.

Other measures of state repression such as Israeli military raids (*IDF raids*) and killing of Palestinians by security forces (*Palestinians killed*) produce similar results. While Israeli security forces have killed a similar number of Palestinians in Hebron (73 Palestinians killed) and Jerusalem (71 Palestinians killed), settlers have carried out a far greater number of attacks in Hebron (732 attacks) than in Jerusalem (320 attacks). In addition, while Israeli settlers have carried out high levels of violence in Hebron and Nablus districts, security forces have killed far fewer Palestinians in Nablus (22 Palestinians killed) than in Hebron district (73 Palestinians killed).

In terms of military raids, Israeli security forces conducted the largest number of raids in Hebron district (6,299 raids), which is characterized by a high level of Israeli settler violence. Table 4.3 also indicates, however, that settlers carried out 847 attacks in Nablus district and only

298 attacks in Qalqilya district even though the Israeli military conducted close to the same number of raids in Nablus (5,072 raids) and Qalqilya (5,305 raids). Even if Qalqilya was dropped from the analysis as an outlier, the findings that high levels of military raids correlate with a large number of settler attacks contradicts vigilantism arguments which contend that civilians are more likely to perpetrate violence when the government is unable or unwilling to sufficiently respond to threats. A large number of military raids should indicate a forceful government response and, in turn, reduce rather than increase the level of violence perpetrated by vigilantes. The descriptive statistics presented here therefore suggest that the vigilante model does a poor job of explaining district level variation in the level of Israeli settler violence.

In sum, the data indicates that uncertainty about the government's commitment to maintain Jewish hegemony seems to be a better predictor of spatial variation in the level of Israeli settler violence than alternative explanations of dominant group violence based on demographic indicators, the isolation of counter-culture groups, and the intensity of dissent. These findings provide support for the theoretical argument advanced in chapter one.

Temporal variation in Israeli settler violence:

I now turn to testing my hypotheses from chapter two about the causes of temporal variation in the frequency, severity, and target choices of dominant group violence in the West Bank. I begin by way of an explanation of my regression equations. I then present my regression results and discuss the implication of those results for my hypotheses. I also model the temporal processes within the settler violence variables in order to clarify the internal temporal processes in the data.

Regression Models:

As discussed in chapter three, the regression analysis estimates a series of single-equation error correction models (ECMs) to examine how events that trigger physical and social threats cause variation in the frequency, severity, and targets of Israeli settler violence. ECMs directly estimate the rate at which the dependent variable changes and then returns to equilibrium because of changes on the independent variable(s) (De Boef and Keele 2008).¹⁰⁰ For a more detailed discussion of ECMs see chapter three.

Table 4.4 Event types in the regression models and their corresponding measures by arena of interaction

Arena of interaction	Interaction type	Variable*
Arena 1: Government ↔ Excluded group	- State repression	- <i>IDF raids</i>
	- State concessions	- <i>Settlement evacuations**</i>
	- Violent dissent	- <i>Clashes with security forces</i>
	- Peaceful dissent	- <i>Soldiers killed**</i>
		- <i>Peaceful protests</i>

¹⁰⁰ To test for stationary in the variables included in the model, I conduct four augmented dickey-fuller (DF) tests for each variable. The first suppresses the constant term in the regression, the second is a simple augmented DF test, the third includes one lagged difference, and the fourth includes a trend term in the regression. The results indicate that the test statistic in all four models exceeds the critical values at the 1 and 5 percent confidence levels, suggesting that the null hypothesis - that the variable contains a unit root - can be rejected at the 99 percent confidence level, and therefore supports the alternative - that the variable was generated by a stationary process. Therefore, I conclude that an ECM is suitable to test the immediate and lasting dynamics of Israeli settler violence in the post-second intifada period.

Arena 2: Government ↔ Dominant group	- State repression - State concessions	- <i>Settler arrests</i> *** - <i>Housing starts</i>
Arena 3: Dominant group ↔ Excluded group	- Dissident violence - Dominant group violence - Tactics	- <i>Settlers killed</i> ** - <i>Total settler violence</i> - <i>Physical assaults</i> - <i>Destruction of property</i> - <i>Destruction of farmland</i> - <i>Stone throwing</i> - <i>Firebombings</i> - <i>Attacks on religious sites</i>

Note: Variable descriptions can be found in chapter three.

** Due to lack of variation at the daily level in this variable, the daily model includes a binary version of the measure while the variable is coded as continuous in the weekly models.

*** *settler arrests* is excluded from the regression analysis because a Granger causality Wald test conducted during diagnostic testing convincingly indicated that the causal arrow runs from settler violence to *settler arrests*, but not the other way around (see appendix).

In building my models, I draw on the “arenas of interaction” approach developed by Eitan Alimi and his co-authors (Alimi 2015, Alimi, Bosi, and Demetriou 2012). This approach allows for a systematic examination of the ways in which various conflict interactions affect the behavior of conflict actors. I account for three arenas of interaction: state - excluded group, state – dominant group, and excluded group – dominant group. I assume a discrete number of interaction types in each arena and include only the interaction types relevant for the outcome of interest (i.e. Israeli settler violence). Table 4.4 organizes event types included in the analysis according to the arena of interaction within which they occur.

In Arena 1, governments may target dissidents with repression and concessions. I use *IDF raids* as a measure of state repression of Palestinians and *settlement evacuations* as a

measure of state concessions to Palestinians.¹⁰¹ Whereas the government may repress or provide concessions, dissidents may use violent tactics or conduct non-violent demonstrations (e.g. peaceful sit-ins and marches). In order to capture Palestinian violence against the government, I include a measure of lethal attacks against security forces (*soldiers killed*). The variable *peaceful demonstrations* is included as a measure of non-violent dissident activities. In order to capture the overall frequency of violent interactions in the West Bank at given time, I include a count of clashes between Palestinians and Israeli security forces (*clashes with security forces*).

In Arena 2, the government may repress members of the dominant group or offer them concessions. I use *settler arrests* as a measure of government repression against members of the Jewish community in the West Bank and *housing approvals* as a measure of state concessions to Israeli settlers.

In Arena 3, minorities may target members of the dominant group directly. I use *settlers killed* to capture the most severe Palestinian attacks against Israeli settlers. Finally, members of the dominant group may perpetrate dominant group violence. This is of course the outcome of interest. In order to capture the effects of the independent variables on the frequency, severity, and target choices of Israeli settler violence, I employ seven separate measures of Israeli settler

¹⁰¹I use *IDF raids* as opposed to *Palestinian arrests* because the latter is closely correlated with *clashes with security forces*, which is included in the model to account for changes in the frequency of violent dissident-state interactions. Using *IDF raids*, therefore, avoids the problem of collinearity in the model.

I also run a version of all models in which *IDF raids* is replaced with a continuous measure of Palestinians killed by the IDF in the West Bank and East Jerusalem. The regression results indicate that replacing *IDF raids* with *Palestinian killings* does not substantively change the results.

violence: *settler attacks, physical assaults, destruction of property, destruction of farmland, stone throwing, firebombings, and attacks on religious sites.*

In order to test my hypotheses about the effects of physical and social threats on the overall frequency of dominant group violence, I estimate the following series of ECMs at the daily and weekly levels of aggregation:¹⁰²

Equation 1:

$$\Delta \text{settler attacks}_t = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 \text{settler attacks}_{t-1} + \beta_0 \Delta \text{clashes}_t + \beta_1 \text{clashes}_{t-1} + \beta_2 \Delta \text{settlers killed}_t + \beta_3 \text{settlers killed}_{t-1} + \beta_4 \Delta \text{soldiers killed}_t + \beta_5 \text{soldiers killed}_{t-1} + \beta_6 \Delta \text{settlement evacuation}_t + \beta_7 \text{settlement evacuation}_{t-1} + \beta_8 \Delta \text{housing approvals}_t + \beta_9 \text{housing approvals}_{t-1} + \beta_{10} \Delta \text{IDF raids}_t + \beta_{11} \text{IDF raids}_{t-1} + \beta_{12} \Delta \text{peaceful demonstration}_t + \beta_{13} \text{peaceful demonstration}_{t-1} + \varepsilon_t$$

Δ indicates that the variable is differenced – that is, the measure reflects the numerical variation in the number of events from time t-1 to time t. The rate at which the system returns to equilibrium after a change in the independent variables is represented by the ECM adjustment coefficient, α_1 . The coefficients $\beta_0, \beta_2, \beta_4, \beta_6,$ and β_8 refer to the immediate effects of any change in the respective variables at time t on the dependent variable. The coefficients $\beta_0, \beta_4, \beta_6, \beta_8, \beta_{10},$ and $\beta_{12}, \beta_{14},$ and β_{15} refer to the immediate effects of the presence of any of the respective

¹⁰² A number of variations of this model as well as additional robustness checks were tested. First, all models are run with log transformed continuous variables to reduce skewness. Second, all models were run with dichotomous critical event controls for the 2012 Gaza war and the 2014 Gaza war, a dichotomous control for the Palestinian olive harvest coded as 1 for the month of October and 0 otherwise, and a dichotomous measure of the “knife intifada” coded as 1 for October 2015 and 0 otherwise. Diagnostic tests indicated that the latter event might have undue influence on the regression line as an extreme outlier. Third, All models are run with the lag length specified by the ARIMA modeling (table 6). The results of these robustness checks do not substantively alter the findings in the general models.

independent variables at time t on the dependent variable. Finally, the coefficients $\beta_1, \beta_3, \beta_5, \beta_7, \beta_9, \beta_{11},$ and β_{13} refer to the effects of the respective variables at time t-1 on the dependent variable at time t. The long run multiplier (LRM) for each represents the total effects of government repression of the disadvantaged group, government concessions to the disadvantaged group, and the level of violence perpetrated against the advantaged ethnic group over time. LRMs are calculated by dividing the coefficient of a lagged independent variable by the ECM adjustment coefficient (De Boef and Keele 2008).

In equations 2 through 7, I replace settler attacks in equation 1 with one of the disaggregated measures of Israeli settler violence. I also drop *clashes with security forces* and rely instead on *settlers killed* and *soldiers killed* to assess the effects of dissident violence targeting civilians and security forces respectively on the severity of Israeli settler violence. As with equation 1, equations 2 through 7 are applied to the daily and weekly levels of analysis.

Equation 2:

$$\Delta physical\ assaults = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 physical\ assaults_{t-1} + \beta_0 \Delta settlers\ killed_t + \beta_1 settlers\ killed_{t-1} + \beta_2 \Delta soldiers\ killed_t + \beta_3 soldiers\ killed_{t-1} + \beta_4 \Delta settlement\ evacuation_t + \beta_5 settlement\ evacuation_{t-1} + \beta_6 \Delta housing\ approvals_t + \beta_7 housing\ approvals_{t-1} + \beta_8 \Delta IDF\ raids_t + \beta_9 IDF\ raids_{t-1} + \beta_{10} \Delta peaceful\ demonstration_t + \beta_{11} peaceful\ demonstrations_{t-1} + \varepsilon_t$$

Equation 3:

$$\Delta destruction\ of\ property = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 destruction\ of\ property_{t-1} + \beta_0 \Delta settlers\ killed_t + \beta_1 settlers\ killed_{t-1} + \beta_2 \Delta soldiers\ killed_t + \beta_3 soldiers\ killed_{t-1} + \beta_4 \Delta settlement\ evacuation_t + \beta_5 settlement\ evacuation_{t-1} + \beta_6 \Delta housing\ approvals_t + \beta_7 housing\ approvals_{t-1} + \beta_8 \Delta IDF\ raids_t + \beta_9 IDF\ raids_{t-1} + \beta_{10} \Delta peaceful\ demonstration_t + \beta_{11} peaceful\ demonstrations_{t-1} + \varepsilon_t$$

Equation 4:

$$\Delta destruction\ of\ farmland = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 destruction\ of\ farmland_{t-1} + \beta_0 \Delta settlers\ killed_t + \beta_1 settlers\ killed_{t-1} + \beta_2 \Delta soldiers\ killed_t + \beta_3 soldiers\ killed_{t-1} + \beta_4 \Delta settlement\ evacuation_t + \beta_5 settlement\ evacuation_{t-1} + \beta_6 \Delta housing\ approvals_t + \beta_7 housing\ approvals_{t-1} + \varepsilon_t$$

$$\text{approvals}_{t-1} + \beta_8 \Delta \text{IDF raids}_t + \beta_9 \text{IDF raids}_{t-1} + \beta_{10} \Delta \text{peaceful demonstration}_t + \beta_{11} \text{peaceful demonstrations}_{t-1} + \varepsilon_t$$

Equation 5:

$$\Delta \text{stone throwing} = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 \text{stone throwing}_{t-1} + \beta_0 \Delta \text{settlers killed}_t + \beta_1 \text{settlers killed}_{t-1} + \beta_2 \Delta \text{soldiers killed}_t + \beta_3 \text{soldiers killed}_{t-1} + \beta_4 \Delta \text{settlement evacuation}_t + \beta_5 \text{settlement evacuation}_{t-1} + \beta_6 \Delta \text{housing approvals}_t + \beta_7 \text{housing approvals}_{t-1} + \beta_8 \Delta \text{IDF raids}_t + \beta_9 \text{IDF raids}_{t-1} + \beta_{10} \Delta \text{peaceful demonstration}_t + \beta_{11} \text{peaceful demonstrations}_{t-1} + \varepsilon_t$$

Equation 6:¹⁰³

$$\Delta \text{firebombings} = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 \text{firebombings}_{t-1} + \beta_0 \Delta \text{settlers killed}_t + \beta_1 \text{settlers killed}_{t-1} + \beta_2 \Delta \text{soldiers killed}_t + \beta_3 \text{soldiers killed}_{t-1} + \beta_4 \Delta \text{settlement evacuation}_t + \beta_5 \text{settlement evacuation}_{t-1} + \beta_6 \Delta \text{housing approvals}_t + \beta_7 \text{housing approvals}_{t-1} + \beta_8 \Delta \text{IDF raids}_t + \beta_9 \text{IDF raids}_{t-1} + \beta_{10} \Delta \text{peaceful demonstration}_t + \beta_{11} \text{peaceful demonstrations}_{t-1} + \varepsilon_t$$

Equation 7:¹⁰⁴

$$\Delta \text{attacks on religious sites} = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 \text{attacks on religious sites}_{t-1} + \beta_0 \Delta \text{settlers killed}_t + \beta_1 \text{settlers killed}_{t-1} + \beta_2 \Delta \text{soldiers killed}_t + \beta_3 \text{soldiers killed}_{t-1} + \beta_4 \Delta \text{settlement evacuation}_t + \beta_5 \text{settlement evacuation}_{t-1} + \beta_6 \Delta \text{housing approvals}_t + \beta_7 \text{housing approvals}_{t-1} + \beta_8 \Delta \text{IDF raids}_t + \beta_9 \text{IDF raids}_{t-1} + \beta_{10} \Delta \text{peaceful demonstration}_t + \beta_{11} \text{peaceful demonstrations}_{t-1} + \varepsilon_t$$

In equations 2-7, the coefficients β_0 , β_2 , β_4 , β_6 , and β_8 refer to the immediate effects of any change in the respective variables. The coefficients β_1 , β_3 , β_5 , β_7 , β_9 , and β_{11} refer to the effects of the respective variables at time $t-1$ on the dependent variable at time t .

¹⁰³ Due to the low level of variation in *firebombings*, I also run firth logit models at the daily and weekly levels of aggregation (not shown). The results from the logit model do not substantively differ from those of the ECM.

¹⁰⁴ Due to the low level of variation in *attacks on religious sites*, I also run logit models (not shown) at the daily and weekly levels of aggregation. The results from the logit model do not substantively differ from those of the ECM.

*Dependent variables:*¹⁰⁵

The dependent variable for hypotheses 1-3 is *settler attacks* (equation 1). In order to test whether physical threats elicit more severe forms of dominant group violence (H4), I disaggregate *settler attacks* by the type of target (equations 2-8). I include a continuous variable for the number of settler attacks against Palestinian civilians (*physical assaults*) and two continuous measures of settler attacks against Palestinian property, *destruction of property* and *destruction of farmland*. A number of reports by nongovernmental organizations have indicated that destruction of farmland is particularly pernicious because of the long-term costs these attacks produce (e.g. Lein 2002). The reason is that these types of attacks generally involve the destruction of irreplaceable fruit bearing trees, most notably olive trees, which are at the center of the Palestinian economy and identity. These trees often take generations to mature and represent a tangible Palestinian link to the land. While the affected parties can repair or replace most forms of property, fruit trees are irreplaceable in the short-term. I remain *a priori* agnostic as to whether these types of attacks differ in their causal logic from attacks on other types of property such as vehicles, homes, or farming equipment. I therefore include separate models for *destruction of farmland* and attacks against all other types of property (*destruction of property*). If the causal logic is the same for both types of attacks, the correlational relationships within the regression output should mirror one another. If they do not, it is necessary to consider why this may be so. In the analysis, I conceptualize *physical assaults* to be more severe than *destruction of property* and *destruction of farmland*, but I do not differentiate between the latter two measures in terms of the severity of the attack.

¹⁰⁵ A detailed description of the variables may be found in chapter three.

I also include models for two types of attacks that do not fit neatly into the person versus property categorization scheme, but differ significantly in terms of their level of severity. A continuous measure of incidents of stone throwing on the roadways (*stone throwing*) is included to proxy low-severity violence by Israeli settlers. Both Jewish settlers and Palestinian youth within the West Bank often employ this tactic. While stone throwing has caused physical harm to persons by causing car accidents, both residents and security forces consider it a relatively temperate form of violence.¹⁰⁶ Firebombing of Palestinian homes (*firebombing*) is included to proxy severe attacks by Israeli settlers. These attacks tend to occur in the middle of the night while Palestinian civilians are sleeping in their homes. They generally involve the use of Molotov cocktails, which perpetrators throw through a window in order to set the house alight and thereby create the greatest amount of damage possible.¹⁰⁷ This tactic has received significant attention in Israel/Palestine and both the public and the government consider this type of violence to be particularly severe. While it is impossible to determine with certainty whether perpetrators intended to kill their targets, it is clear that this is a distinct possibility. Firebombings are therefore considered more severe than incidents of stone throwing.

Finally, according to hypothesis 5, social threats are more likely than physical threats to elicit violence against symbolically significant targets such as places of worship. In order to test

¹⁰⁶ Numerous Israeli settlers and security personnel confirmed this point during interviews conducted in the West Bank in the summer 2017.

¹⁰⁷ A particularly well known incident occurred in July 2015 in the West Bank village of Duma. The attack resulted in the death of three members of a single Palestinian family, including an 18-month-old child who was burned alive in the fire.

this proposition, I include a model that measures the effects of the independent variables on the frequency of Israeli settler attacks against Palestinian places of worship (*attacks on religious sites*).

Independent variables:

In the daily models, *clashes with security forces* is a count of the number of clashes between Palestinian dissidents and security forces.¹⁰⁸ *Settlers killed* is a binary variable indicating whether a minimum of one Jewish civilian was killed on a given day or in a given week. *Soldiers killed* is a binary variable indicating whether a minimum of one member of the Israeli security forces was killed on a given day or in a given week. In the weekly model, these measures are continuous rather than dichotomous given the increased level of variation across observations. All three variables are included to assess the effect of physical threat on dominant group violence. *Clashes with security forces* is included as a proxy for the overall level of contention in the territory.¹⁰⁹ *Settlers killed* and *soldiers killed* are included to differentiate between direct physical threats to the settler community (H1a) and threats against security forces (H1b).

Settlement evacuations is a variable that indicates whether the Israeli government carried out a full or partial settlement or outpost evacuation on a given day or in a given week. As with *settlers killed* and *soldiers killed*, *settlement evacuations* is measured dichotomously in the daily

¹⁰⁸ For more information about the measures listed in this section, see chapter three.

¹⁰⁹ Granger causality Wald tests (not shown) indicate that clashes increase the likelihood of deadly attacks against Israeli settlers, but settler casualties do not significantly increase the frequency of clashes.

models and continuously in the weekly models. *Housing approvals* is a count of the number of housing units approved by the government for construction by Jewish civilians in the West Bank on a given day or in a given week. *Settlement evacuations* represent government concessions to Palestinians (H2), while *housing approvals* is a measure of government concessions to Israeli settlers (H3).

A count of *IDF raids* is included to control for the level of government repression targeting Palestinians and a count of *peaceful demonstrations* is included to control for non-violent dissident activities that may affect the behavior of Israeli settlers.

Results:

Table 4.5 Effects of conflict events on the frequency of Israeli settler violence

	Model 1 (Day)	Model 2 (Week)
Settler attacks _{t-1}	-0.679*** (0.041)	-0.505*** (0.077)
Δ Clashes with Palestinians [†]	2.280 (0.012)	12.600** (0.057)
Clashes with Palestinians _{t-1} [†]	4.220*** (0.009)	1.520 (0.015)
Δ Settlers killed	2.787** (1.092)	1.629** (0.812)
Settler killed _{t-1}	2.855*** (1.184)	2.383** (1.166)
Δ Soldiers killed	0.961 (0.903)	1.197 (0.982)
Soldiers killed _{t-1}	1.620 (1.166)	0.821 (1.469)
Δ Settlement evacuations	1.024*** (0.290)	1.566* (0.829)
Settlement evacuations _{t-1}	0.867** (0.378)	0.404 (1.039)
Δ Housing approvals ^{††}	-0.052 (0.000)	-0.690* (0.000)

Housing approvals _{t-1} ^{††}	-0.205 (0.000)	-0.474 (0.000)
Δ IDF raids ^{†††}	1.030* (0.006)	1.100 (0.014)
IDF raids _{t-1} ^{†††}	0.868 (0.005)	1.600 (0.015)
Δ Peaceful demonstrations ^{††††}	0.297 (0.026)	0.0173 (0.076)
Peaceful demonstrations _{t-1} ^{††††}	0.862*** (0.030)	0.898 (0.060)
Constant	0.588*** (0.110)	2.345 (1.715)
Observations	2190	312
Adjusted R ²	0.370	0.412

Standard errors in parentheses; * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Δ indicates that the variable has been differenced. That is, the variable represents the difference between the value at time t and t-1.

† Coefficients shown are per 100 clashes (model 1 standard deviation = 6.2; model 2 standard deviation = 38.0); †† Coefficients shown are per 1,000 approved housing units (model 1 standard deviation = 240.6; model 2 standard deviation = 661.2).; ††† Coefficients shown are per 100 raids (model 1 standard deviation = 7.1; model 2 standard deviation = 31.3).; †††† Coefficients shown are per 10 peaceful demonstrations (model 1 standard deviation = 1.3; model 2 standard deviation = 5.6)

Table 4.5 presents the effects of the independent variables on the frequency of Israeli settler violence. Model 1 uses the day as the unit of analysis, while model 2 aggregates the data by week.

Physical threats and the frequency of dominant group violence:

Hypothesis 1a posits that the frequency of dominant group violence should increase when the level of physical threat to the dominant group increases. It should be noted here that this point has been contested in the literature on Israeli settler violence, with some scholars claiming that Israeli settlers perpetrate violence when the level of dissident violence is high (e.g. Pedahzur and Perliger 2003) and others claiming they perpetrate violence during lulls in the conflict (e.g. Nakhleh 1991). A positive and significant effect of *clashes with security forces* would support

the argument that settler violence is positively correlated with the level of dissident violence, while a negative effect would support the view that settlers increase attacks when the overall level of contention is low.

The results of both models in table 4.5 indicate that the frequency of Israeli settler violence and clashes between Palestinians and Israeli security forces are positively and significantly correlated. Model 1 indicates that one standard deviation increase in *clashes with security forces* (approximately 6.2 clashes), increases the number of settler attacks at day t+1 by an average of about 26 attacks. This effect declines by 67 percent a day thereafter. The significance of the overall level of threat in the environment becomes even clearer when the data is analyzed at the weekly level of aggregation. Model 2 indicate that one standard deviation increase in *clashes with security forces* (approximately 38 clashes) increases the number of Israeli settler attacks by just under five attacks in the same week. The effects do not persist past week t. Overall, the results support the argument that Israeli settlers tend to increase the frequency of attacks against Palestinians when the level of physical threat in their environment increases, providing support for hypothesis 1a.

Hypothesis 1b posits that civilian casualties should have a greater effect on dominant group violence than military casualties because civilian casualties are more likely to signal a direct physical threat to the civilian community. In order to distinguish between the effects of dissident violence against the dominant group and dissident violence targeting the government, I include variables that capture lethal attacks by Palestinian dissidents against security forces (*soldiers killed*) and against Jewish civilians (*settlers killed*). All models indicate that *settlers killed* significantly increases the frequency of Israeli settler attacks. The effects are both immediate and lasting. The killing of a minimum of one Jewish civilian increases the frequency

of settler attacks on the same and following day by approximately three attacks. The effect declines to approximately one attack at time $t+2$ and then declines by approximately 68 percent on each subsequent day. When the data is aggregated to the week, the results remain consistent. They indicate that for every Jewish civilian casualty, the number of settler attacks increases by approximately two attacks in the same week. Model 2 also indicates that this effect not only persists into the following weeks, but also grows slightly larger at week $t+2$. For every settler killed, settlers increase the frequency of their attacks by an average of 1.6 attacks in the same week and by another 2.4 attacks the following week on average. The effect declines to about one attack at time $t+2$, and continues to decline by about 50 percent every week thereafter.

Both the differenced and lagged soldiers killed variables fail to reach conventional levels of significance in models 1 and 2. This finding provides further support for hypothesis 1b. It should be noted here, however, that contrary to the expectations of hypothesis 1b, table 4.7 (presented in the following section) indicates that *soldiers killed* does significantly increase some forms of settler violence. On days in which Palestinians kill an Israeli soldier, there is likely to be an average increase of approximately 0.307 incidents of *destruction of property* and 0.618 incident of *stone throwing*. On day $t+2$, there is likely to be an average additional increase of approximately one physical assault and 0.709 incidents of stone throwing. The size of the effect is negligible by $t+2$. Aggregating to the week (table 4.8) indicates that for every soldier killed in a given week, Israeli settlers carry out an average of one additional incident of stone throwing in the same week. *Soldiers killed* fails to reach conventional levels of significance in all other models, and the lagged measure in the model is insignificant. The short-term positive effects of *soldiers killed*, then, is not large enough or significant enough to maintain the relationship at higher levels of aggregation. These findings are consistent with the proposition that dominant

group behavior differs depending on whether dissident violence targets members of their own community or members of the security forces. While both types of attacks may be deemed threatening and are therefore likely to generate a backlash from the dominant group, attacks on civilians are deemed more threatening than attacks on security forces, and they are therefore likely to generate larger spikes in the frequency of dominant group violence.

Overall, the results in table 4.5 provide support for the argument that dominant group violence is likely to increase in frequency when the perception of direct physical threat to the community increases (H1a). In addition, the results suggest that direct attacks against the civilian community are likely to elicit a greater violent response from the dominant ethnic group than dissident attacks on security forces because the perceived level of physical threat to their community, rather than to the state, is likely to be higher (H1a).

Social threats and the frequency of dominant group violence:

Hypothesis 2 posits that government concessions to excluded minorities should result in an increase in the frequency of dominant group violence against minorities. This is because concessions signal to dominant group members that their dominant position within the polity is under threat. By carrying out violence against the excluded ethnic group, radical members of the dominant group aim to deter future concessions. The results of both models 1 and 2 support this proposition. The contemporaneous effect of *settlement evacuations* reaches significance at the 99 percent confidence level in model 1 and at the 90 percent confidence level in model 2. The lagged *settler violence* variable is significant in the daily model ($p < .05$), but fails to reach significance in the weekly model. These results indicate that the occurrence of at least one settlement evacuation increases the number of settler attacks by approximately one attack on the

same day. This effect increases by approximately one additional attack the following day and then declines by about 67 percent a day after that. The size of the effect (0.087) becomes negligible by t+2. Overall, the data indicates that slightly less than half of the total effect of settlement evacuations occurs on the day of the evacuation (1.02), while slightly more than half of the effect (1.28) occurs over the next few days, with a majority of that effect (0.867) occurring on day t+1.¹¹⁰ At the weekly level of aggregation, settlement evacuations have a significant effect on the frequency of settler attacks, though the coefficient becomes less significant (p<0.1). For every evacuation in a given week, settlers carry out an additional 1.6 attacks on average. These results suggest that events that trigger the perception of social threat increase the frequency of dominant group violence, providing support for Hypothesis 2.

Model 1 also suggests that an increase in the frequency of peaceful Palestinian demonstrations is significantly correlated with increased settler violence. The effects *peaceful demonstrations* are quite small, with a standard deviation increase in peaceful demonstrations on day t (approximately 1.3 demonstrations) increasing the number of settler attacks on day t+1 by 0.1 attacks on average. *Peaceful demonstrations* fails to reach conventional levels of significance in model 2, suggesting that while peaceful demonstrations may increase the frequency of settler violence on average, demonstrations account for a very small proportion of overall attacks. That said, this result is also consistent with hypothesis 2 since threat produced by peaceful demonstrations is likely to be social rather than physical.

¹¹⁰ The long run effects of *settlement evacuation* are calculated by $\frac{\beta_{\text{settlement evacuation}_{t-1}}}{\alpha_{\text{settler violence}_{t-1}}}$, is $\frac{0.867}{0.679} = 1.27$ (De Boef and Keele 2008)

Hypothesis 3 posits that government concessions to the dominant group decrease the frequency of dominant group violence by decreasing the perceived level of social threat. Government concessions to the Israeli settler community in the form of *housing approvals* only reach conventional levels of significance when the data is aggregated to the week. Model 2 indicates that one standard deviation increase in the number of housing units approved by the government (approximately 240 units) decreases the number of settler attacks in the same week by approximate 0.17 attacks on average ($p < 0.1$). While also negative, the lagged *housing approvals* measure does not reach conventional levels of significance. This suggests that while concessions to settlers may work to reduce the level of settler violence to some degree, Israeli settlers are far more likely to respond to government concessions to Palestinians with violence than they are to reduce their level of violence in response to government concessions toward their own community. In other words, the data indicates that events that increase the perceived level of social threat have a greater impact on the level of dominant group violence than events that signal a decrease in the level of social threat. These results provide support for hypothesis 3, but add nuance to the relationship between government concessions and dominant group violence.

Relative effects of physical and social threats on the frequency of dominant group violence:

Hypothesis 4a posits that physical threats have a greater impact on the frequency of dominant group violence than do social threats. The results support this proposition in the case of Israel-Palestine. While the effect of both the differenced and lagged *settlement evacuations* measures are significant in both the daily and weekly models, the differenced variable is only significant at the 90 percent confidence level in model 2 and the lagged variable becomes

insignificant at the weekly level of aggregation. This indicates that while settlement evacuations do increase the level of Israeli settler violence in the very short-term, they do not have a large enough or sustained enough effect to alter the level of Israeli settler violence over a period of weeks. The lagged *settlers killed* measure, in contrast, is statistically significant at the daily and weekly levels of aggregation.

In addition, the relative size of the effect of *settlement evacuations* and *settlers killed* supports the argument that the perception of increased physical threat produces more frequent incidents of dominant group violence than does the perception of increased social threat. The overall effects of each variable can be determined by calculating the long run multiplier (LRM) for each (De Boef and Keele 2008). The LRM represents the total lasting effect of the respective independent variables on the dependent variable over time and is calculated by $\frac{\beta_0 + \beta_1}{1 - \alpha_1}$. The LRM for *settlement evacuations* is equal to $\frac{1.024 + 0.867}{1.679} = 1.12$, while the LRM for *settlers killed* is $\frac{2.787 + 2.855}{1.679} = 3.36$.¹¹¹ Adding the respective LRMs to the contemporaneous effect of each variable indicates that settlement evacuations increase the number of settler attacks by approximately 2.14 attacks on average, while settler fatalities increase the number of settler attacks by approximately 6.15 attacks on average. On average then, the total effect of *settlers killed* is about three times larger than that of *settlement evacuations*.

¹¹¹ Standard errors of the LRMs computed by Bewley transformation (De Boef and Keele 2008) indicate that the LRMs are significant (p<0.05) for *settlers killed*, *clashes with security forces*, and *non-violent demonstrations*, but failed to reach conventional levels of significance for *settlement evacuations*. This provides further evidence that the effect of *settlement evacuations* is primarily centered on the triggering event and that the effects of physical threats on the frequency of settler violence are significantly larger than the effects of social threats.

Overall, these results indicate that while both events that increase the perception of physical threat *and* those that increase the perceived level of social threat increase the frequency of dominant group violence, the effects of physically threatening events are larger, more significant, and more robust to data aggregation than the effects of socially threatening events. These findings provide support for hypotheses 4a.

Relative effects of physical and social threats on the severity of dominant group violence:

Hypothesis 4b posits that physical threats increase the severity of dominant group violence more than do social threats. While to this point I have analyzed the causes of the overall frequency of Israeli settler violence, Israeli settlers use a variety of violent tactics against Palestinian targets. By disaggregating settler violence I am able to test not only how the independent variables affect the frequency of violence, but also their relative impacts on the types of attacks Israeli settlers perpetrate. As discussed in chapter three, the WBCED includes measures of six distinct tactics of Israeli settler violence including *physical assaults, destruction of property, destruction of farmland, stone throwing, firebombings, and attacks on religious sites*.

Table 4.6, based on ARIMA modeling of the seven settler violence measures, captures the temporal processes of each of the variables.¹¹² It indicates that physical attacks at the daily level exhibit an AR (10) process. This means that the frequency of physical attacks on day t affects the frequency of attacks on days $t+1$ through $t+10$. *Destruction property, stone throwing, and destruction of farmland* exhibit a ten-day autoregressive dependency, eight-day autoregressive dependency, and six-day autoregressive dependency respectively. Two variables

¹¹² The ARIMA data generating process for Table 4.6 can be found in the appendix.

exhibit moving average (MA) processes. *Firebombings* exhibits an MA (7) process, indicating that these attacks decrease the frequency of firebombings for the following seven days. In other words, while *firebombings* does exhibit autocorrelation, it is negative rather than positive. In addition, *attacks on religious sites* exhibits an MA (1) process, though the results are admittedly somewhat inconclusive. They may conceivably be interpreted as an AR (1) or an ARIMA (0, 0, 0) process. However one interprets the diagnostic tests, the results indicate that if any autocorrelation exists in attacks on religious sites, it is of a low order relative to the other measures included in the models.

Table 4.6 Temporal processes for settler attacks by type of attack

Variable	Daily level temporal process	Weekly level temporal process
Physical assaults	10 day dependence (AR10)	2 week dependence (AR2)
Destruction of Property	8 day dependency (AR8)	1 week dependence (AR1)
Stone throwing	6 day dependency (AR6)	1 week dependence (AR1)
Destruction of farm land	10 day dependency (AR10)	3 week dependence (AR3)
Attacks on religious sites**	1 day dependency (MA1)	None
firebombings	6 day dependency (MA6)	1 week dependence (MA1)
Total Settler Violence	9 day dependence (AR9)	1 week dependence (AR1)

*Based on the results I run additional models that control for the number of lags indicated in each measure's autoregressive or moving average process. These models do not substantively alter the results of interest.

**AIC statistic indicates that an AR (1) model is very slightly preferable to an MA (1) model. However, the ACF and PCF for *attacks on religious sites* are indicative of an MA rather than an AR process. I therefore choose an MA (1) process while acknowledging that the results may be interpreted as being an AR (1), an MA (1), or an ARIMA (0, 0, 0) process.

The most striking finding here is that while *physical assaults*, *destruction of property*, *stone throwing*, and *destruction of farmland* tend to cluster temporally, attacks on religious sites and *firebombings* tend to occur in relative temporal isolation. These types of events are therefore not just rare they are also temporally diffuse. The relatively small number of events is consistent with the argument that a relatively small number of hardcore Jewish radicals in the West Bank perpetrate these attacks. However, the fact that settlers carry out these attacks across the West Bank (table 3.2, chapter three) indicates that these hardcore radicals are likely spread across the

region. While the number of hardcore radicals may be relatively small, these patterns suggest that they are not a cohesive unit. In addition, these findings suggest that these hardcore radicals understand that authorities consider these types of attacks to be particularly severe.¹¹³ As such, they tend to refrain from these types of activities following their perpetration for fear of government retaliation. When it comes to other types of attacks, where the risk of government retaliation is not as high, violence tends to beget violence.

Tables 4.7 and 4.8 replace the dependent variable (*settler attacks*) with the tactical settler violence variables: *physical assaults* (model 3 & 9), *destruction of property* (models 4 & 10), *destruction of farmland* (models 5 & 11), *stone throwing* (models 6 & 12), and *firebombings* (models 7 & 13). As discussed earlier, I conceptualize physical assaults as being more severe than attacks on property and the destruction of farmland and I consider firebombings to be more severe than incidents of stone throwing.

According to the results in table 4.7, incidents of fatal violence against Israeli settlers tend to elicit both severe and temperate forms of violence. More specifically, *settler killed* significantly increase the number of *physical assaults*, incidents of *destruction of property*, incidents of *stone throwing*, and *firebombings* on the same day and on the following day. The coefficients for all variables increase in size at t+1, indicating that the increase in the frequency of violence grows the day after an attack. The effects of *settlers killed* on *physical assaults*, *stone throwing*, and *firebombings* remain significant at the weekly level of aggregation (table 4.8).

¹¹³ Multiple respondents who had been involved in acts of violence against Palestinian also expressed this to me during interviews in the summers of 2016 and 2017.

Table 4.7 Effects of independent variables on violent tactics (day)

	Model 3 Physical assaults	Model 4 Destruction of property	Model 5 Destruction of farmland	Model 6 Stone throwing	Model 7 Firebombings	Model 8 Attacks on religious sites
Physical assaults _{t-1}	-0.835*** (0.021)					
Destruction of property _{t-1}		-0.820*** (0.021)				
Destruction of farmland _{t-1}			-0.865*** (0.021)			
Stone throwing _{t-1}				-0.769*** (0.021)		
Firebombing _{t-1}					-0.939*** (0.021)	
Attacks on religious sites _{t-1}						-0.957*** (0.021)
Δ Settlers killed	0.586*** (0.157)	0.618*** (0.123)	0.016 (0.115)	1.800*** (0.175)	0.107*** (0.022)	-0.0151 (0.025)
Settlers killed _{t-1}	1.144*** (0.226)	0.697*** (0.177)	0.007 (0.164)	1.888*** (0.254)	0.127*** (0.031)	0.014 (0.036)
Δ Soldiers killed	-0.041 (0.227)	0.307* (0.178)	0.0706 (0.166)	0.618** (0.252)	-0.035 (0.031)	-0.0204 (0.037)
Soldiers killed _{t-1}	0.908*** (0.310)	0.058 (0.242)	0.122 (0.226)	0.709** (0.344)	0.028 (0.043)	-0.031 (0.050)
Δ Settlement evacuations	0.322** (0.129)	0.063 (0.101)	-0.030 (0.094)	0.474*** (0.143)	0.015 (0.018)	0.008 (0.021)
Settlement evacuations _{t-1}	0.263 (0.181)	0.0727 (0.142)	-0.129 (0.132)	0.466** (0.201)	0.003 (0.025)	0.020 (0.029)
Δ Housing approvals [†]	0.0445 (0.000)	-0.038 (0.000)	-0.028 (0.000)	-0.066 (0.000)	0.002 (0.000)	-0.002 (0.000)
Housing approvals _{t-1} [†]	-0.050 (0.000)	-0.066 (0.000)	-0.037 (0.000)	-0.138 (0.000)	0.012 (0.000)	0.011 (0.000)
Δ IDF raids ^{††}	0.112 (0.003)	0.665*** (0.002)	0.123 (0.002)	0.167 (0.003)	0.002 (0.000)	0.167*** (0.000)
IDF raids _{t-1} ^{††}	0.018 (0.003)	0.491** (0.002)	0.323 (0.002)	0.338 (0.003)	0.009 (0.000)	0.121*** (0.000)
Δ Peaceful demonstrations ^{†††}	-0.162 (0.014)	0.156 (0.011)	0.174* (0.010)	0.118 (0.015)	-0.0212 (0.002)	0.008 (0.002)
Peaceful demonstrations _{t-1} ^{†††}	0.108 (0.015)	0.077 (0.012)	0.381*** (0.011)	0.330 (0.017)	-0.018 (0.002)	-0.002 (0.003)
Constant	0.345*** (0.049)	0.149*** (0.038)	0.163*** (0.035)	0.235*** (0.054)	0.009 (0.007)	-0.005 (0.008)
Observations	2190	2190	2190	2190	2190	2190
Adjusted R ²	0.433	0.422	0.434	0.418	0.477	0.480

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Δ indicates that the variable has been differenced. That is, the variable represents the difference between the value at time t and $t-1$

[†] Coefficients shown are per 1,000 approved housing units (standard deviation = 240.6).

^{††} Coefficients shown are per 100 raids (standard deviation = 7.1).

^{†††} Coefficients shown are per 10 peaceful demonstrations (standard deviation = 1.3).

Note: due to the low level of variation in the frequency of *firebombings* and *attacks on religious sites*, I have transformed both measures into dichotomous variables and run logit models instead of ECMs. The results remained substantively consistent.

Table 4.8 Effects of independent variables on violent tactics (week)

	Model 9 Physical assaults	Model 10 Destruction of property	Model 11 Destruction of farmland	Model 12 Stone throwing	Model 13 Firebombings	Model 14 Attacks on religious sites
Physical assaults _{t-1}	-0.631*** (0.053)					
Destruction of property _{t-1}		-0.596*** (0.054)				
Destruction of farmland _{t-1}			-0.676*** (0.056)			
Stone throwing _{t-1}				-0.646*** (0.056)		
Firebombing _{t-1}					-0.805*** (0.057)	
Attacks on religious sites _{t-1}						-0.981*** (0.057)
Δ Settlers killed	1.302*** (0.259)	0.403* (0.212)	-0.080 (0.198)	0.844** (0.329)	0.196*** (0.031)	-0.007 (0.037)
Settlers killed _{t-1}	1.927*** (0.356)	0.544* (0.282)	-0.080 (0.258)	1.020** (0.442)	0.159*** (0.042)	-0.003 (0.048)
Δ Soldiers killed	0.439 (0.423)	0.127 (0.344)	-0.083 (0.325)	1.121** (0.526)	-0.045 (0.050)	-0.048 (0.061)
Soldiers killed _{t-1}	0.313 (0.560)	0.277 (0.456)	-0.335 (0.432)	0.910 (0.693)	-0.059 (0.067)	-0.070 (0.080)
Δ Settlement evacuations	0.593* (0.358)	0.360 (0.290)	-0.410 (0.277)	0.943* (0.444)	-0.024 (0.043)	0.149** (0.051)
Settlement evacuations _{t-1}	0.329 (0.449)	0.105 (0.364)	-0.235 (0.346)	-0.129 (0.555)	-0.053 (0.054)	0.239*** (0.065)
Δ Housing approvals [†]	-0.017 (0.000)	-0.138 (0.000)	-0.146 (0.000)	-0.0130 (0.000)	0.014 (0.000)	-0.011 (0.000)
Housing approvals _{t-1} [†]	-0.0023 (0.000)	-0.224 (0.000)	-0.200 (0.000)	-0.020 (0.000)	0.005 (0.000)	0.048 (0.000)
Δ IDF raids ^{††}	0.232 (0.005)	0.699 (0.004)	0.633 (0.004)	0.592 (0.007)	0.076 (0.001)	0.227*** (0.001)
IDF raids _{t-1} ^{††}	0.283 (0.005)	0.371 (0.004)	0.634 (0.004)	0.685 (0.006)	-0.014 (0.001)	-0.006 (0.001)
Δ Peaceful demonstrations ^{†††}	0.273 (0.031)	0.096 (0.025)	0.494** (0.024)	0.0620 (0.038)	-0.003 (0.004)	0.005 (0.004)
Peaceful demonstrations _{t-1} ^{†††}	0.304 (0.029)	-0.091 (0.024)	0.650*** (0.023)	0.255 (0.037)	-0.022 (0.004)	0.018 (0.004)
Constant	1.347** (0.634)	0.803 (0.508)	0.386 (0.486)	0.981 (0.772)	0.0797 (0.074)	0.068 (0.089)
Observations	312	312	312	312	312	312
Adjusted R ²	0.338	0.284	0.339	0.333	0.455	0.510

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Δ indicates that the variable has been differenced. That is, the variable represents the difference between the value at time t and $t-1$

Standard errors in parentheses

[†] Coefficients shown are per 1,000 approved housing units (standard deviation=661.2).

^{††} Coefficients shown are per 100 raids (standard deviation =31.3).

^{†††} Coefficients shown are per 10 peaceful demonstrations (standard deviation=5.6).

Note: due to the low level of variation in the frequency of *firebombings* and *attacks on religious sites*, I have transformed

both measures into dichotomous variables and run logit models instead of ECMs. The results remained substantively consistent.

Settlement evacuations increases the frequency of *physical assaults* and *stone throwing* on day t and $t+1$, but does not significantly affect the frequency of *destruction of property* or *firebombings*. The finding that *settlers killed* increases *firebombings* while *settlement evacuations* do not provides support for hypothesis 4b. However, the finding that both settlement evacuations and settlers killed increase the frequency of physical assaults is counter to expectations. The daily models therefore provide only partial support for hypothesis 4b; physical threats are more likely than social threats to elicit arguably the most severe form of violence (i.e. *firebombings*), but both types of threat elicit moderately severe forms of violence (i.e. *physical assaults*) and some forms of relatively tepid violence such as *stone throwing*. However, the results do indicate that the overall effect of *settlers killed* is significantly larger than that of *settlement evacuations*. The LRM for *settlers killed* in model 3 is 1.37 and the immediate effect is 0.59. Overall, then, the total effect of *settlers killed* in model 3 is 1.96 on average. The total effect of *settlement evacuations* in model 3 is 0.32 on average, with the entire effect occurring the week of the evacuation. This indicates that the effect of *settlers killed* on the frequency of *physical assaults* is about six times larger than the effect of *settlement evacuations*. When it comes to *stone throwing*, the pattern is similar, but the disparity in the size of the effect is smaller. In model 6, *settlers killed* increases the number of stone throwing incidents by a total of 4.2 incidents on average, while *settlement evacuations* increase the number of stone throwing incidents by a total of 1.1 incidents on average. This indicates that the effect of *settlers killed* on *stone throwing* is approximately four times larger than the effect of *settlement evacuations*.

When aggregated to the week, the results are far more consistent with the expectation that

physical threats elicit more severe forms of violence than do social threats (table 4.8). At the weekly level of aggregation, *settlers killed* continues to correlate positively with *physical assaults*, *destruction of property*, *stone throwing*, and *firebombings*. The effects are both immediate and lasting. In contrast, the immediate relationship between settlement evacuations and both *physical assaults* and *stone throwing* becomes considerably less significant ($p > 0.1$) in model 2 and the lagged *settlement evacuations* variable becomes insignificant in all models. This indicates that the effects of settlement evacuations are largely confined to the week during which the evacuation occurred. Overall these results suggest that direct attacks against the settler community elicit more violence meant to injure or kill (i.e. *physical assaults* and *firebombings*) than do government concessions to Palestinians (i.e. *settlement evacuations*). That is, consistent with the expectations of hypothesis 4b, physical threats tend to elicit more severe forms of violence than do social threats.

Physical threats, social threats, and target choice:

In order to test whether social threats are more likely to elicit attacks against symbolically charged targets (hypothesis 5), I include a model which tests the effects of the independent variables on Israeli settler attacks against Palestinian religious sites (models 8 & 14). The results support hypothesis 5, but indicate that these types of attacks take time to materialize. Israeli settlers carry out an average of 0.149 more attacks against Palestinian religious sites during weeks in which at least one Israeli settlement or outpost evacuation occurs; this effect grows by another 0.239 the following week ($p > .01$) and then declines by just over 98 percent every week thereafter. The long run effects (about 0.243 attacks) are almost all experienced at $t+1$ (about

0.24 attacks).¹¹⁴

Also consistent with the argument presented in chapter three, settler casualties do not have any significant contemporaneous or lasting effects on *attacks on religious sites* despite their large and robust effects on other forms of violence. These results therefore support the argument that while severe forms of violence such as *physical assaults* and *firebombings* are more likely in response to physically threatening events, the targeting of symbolically charged targets are more likely in response to socially threatening events.

While these results support hypothesis 5, my theoretical argument in chapter two went beyond an expected correlation between social threats and violence against symbolically charged targets. I argued that physical threat elicits more frequent and severe forms of violence by a greater number of people, while social threat produces fewer attacks against symbolically charged targets by a smaller and more intolerant subsection of the population. If this is true, those acts of violence most often perpetrated in response to physical threats, (i.e. *physical assaults, destruction of property, stone throwing, and firebombings*) should tend to correlate with the overall frequency of settler violence. This is because large spikes in Israeli settler violence indicate widespread participation in these activities.¹¹⁵ In contrast, those attacks primarily triggered by social threats (i.e. *attacks on religious sites*) should not be any more likely to occur when a relatively large proportion of the population is supportive of and participating in violent

¹¹⁴ These results remain consistent when the data is aggregated to the month.

¹¹⁵ A top ranking civilian security representative in the Israeli settlement of Kiryat Arba, which is situated within the West Bank city of Hebron, made this point during an interview with the author in 2017. A number of other Israeli settlers interviewed during 2016 and 2017 expressed the same sentiment.

activities – that is, in response to physical threats. Consistent with this argument, table 4.9 indicates that most violent tactics occur during periods in which the overall frequency of Israeli settler violence is high. The frequency of physical assaults, destruction of property, and stone throwing are highly correlated with the overall frequency of Israeli settler violence ($\rho = 0.77$, 0.69 , and 0.83 respectively). *Destruction of farmland* and the *firebombings* also tend to occur more often when the level of Israeli settler violence is high, but the strength of the relationship is more modest ($\rho = 0.46$ and 0.48 respectively).

Table 4.9 Correlation matrix for violent tactics and overall frequency of Israeli settler violence

	Settler attacks	Physical assaults	Destruction of property	Destruction of farm land	Stone throwing	Firebombings	Attack on religious sites
Settler attacks	1						
Physical assaults	0.7701	1					
Destruction of property	0.6904	0.4629	1				
Destruction of farm land	0.4645	0.1605	0.0989	1			
Stone throwing	0.8316	0.4831	0.4289	0.2611	1		
Firebombings	0.4784	0.3837	0.2209	0.1428	0.4751	1	
Attacks on religious sites	0.0724	-0.0183	0.0217	0.0813	0.0235	-0.0745	1

Note: Unit of analysis = week.

The one tactic that does not correlate with the overall frequency of violence is *attacks on religious sites* ($\rho = 0.07$). This indicates that unlike other tactics, attacks on religious sites do not tend to occur when the overall frequency of settler violence is high, that is, when the level of physical threat is high. Despite indications from table 4.6 that both firebombings and attacks on religious sites are carried out by hardcore radicals, the results in table 4.9 suggest that this violence tends to occur for different reasons and under different circumstances. Overall, then, these findings are consistent with the proposition that social threats produce fewer attacks against symbolically charged targets by a relatively small and intolerant portion of the population, while

physical threats tend to elicit more frequent attacks by a larger proportion of the affected community.

Conclusion:

In this chapter, I used the West Bank Contentious Interactions Dataset (WBCED) to test my arguments about the effects of physical and social threat on the frequency, severity, and targets of dominant group violence. I began the chapter with a descriptive discussion of the patterns of contention during the temporal scope of the data (2010-2015). I then analyzed descriptive statistics in order to show that uncertainty about sociopolitical dominance provides a better explanation of district level variation in the frequency of Israeli settler violence in the West Bank than alternative explanations. The results provided support for the central argument proposed in chapter one. Then, following a presentation of the Error Correction Models (ECMs), I reported the results of my regressions and discussed their implications for my theoretical arguments. I also examine the autoregressive properties in the settler violence variables using ARIMA modeling techniques in order to clarify the univariate temporal processes in the data.

Overall, the results provided support for the theoretical framework proposed in chapter two. In the West Bank, Israeli settlers tend to increase the level of violence they perpetrate in response to physically threatening events (H1a), and these effects are greatest when dissidents target civilians rather than security forces (H1b). Israeli settlers also increase the frequency of attacks in response to socially threatening events (H2), but the effects of physical threats are

likely to be more intense in terms of both the frequency of violence (H4a) and the severity of violence (H4b). While government concessions to Israeli settlers may help to temper the frequency of violence (H3), events that signal increased social threat seem to have a far greater effect on violent behavior than do those that signal decreased social threat. Finally, while physical threats increase the overall frequency and severity of violence more than do social threats, social threats do tend to elicit attacks against highly symbolic targets while physical threats do not (H5).

Having tested my theoretical arguments quantitatively, I now turn to a qualitative examination of Israeli settler violence in order to test the validity of my claim that the theoretical arguments presented in chapters one and two underlie the statistical results presented here.

Chapter 5: Qualitative Analysis

I have argued that uncertainty – that is, a combination of threat and elite support – significantly increases the likelihood of dominant group violence (chapter one). I have gone on to argue that within an uncertain environment, events that signal physical threat to the dominant ethnic group increase the frequency and severity of violence by a relatively large segment of the dominant ethnic group. In contrast, events that signal an increase in the level of social threat tend to increase violence against symbolically charged targets by a relatively small and intolerant group of extremists (chapter two). While the results of the statistical analysis in chapter four are supportive of the hypotheses derived from my theoretical arguments, they do not specifically speak to the causal mechanisms I proposed in chapters two and three. In order to explore these underlying mechanisms further, I build on secondary literature and original interviews with Israeli settlers conducted in 2016 and 2017 to make two arguments. The first is that consistent with the findings in chapter four, uncertainty can explain both the occurrence and cessation of anti-Arab violence by Jews in Israel-Palestine. The second is that events that signal physical threat to Israeli settlers increase the frequency and severity of violence by a relatively large segment of the population, while events that signal an increase in the level of social threat increase violence against symbolically charged targets by a relatively small and intolerant group of extremists.

How uncertainty helps to explain both the occurrence and absence of dominant group violence in Israel-Palestine:

Uncertainty and the 1949-1967 “interregnum”: A Puzzle

Jews perpetrated a sustained violent campaign against Palestinian civilians before the founding of the state in 1948 and again after Israel’s acquisition of the West Bank and Gaza in 1967, but 1949-1967 was devoid of any systematic anti-Arab Jewish violence (Pedahzur and Perliger 2009). This presents a significant puzzle: why did anti-Arab Jewish violence in Israel-Palestine largely cease between 1949 and 1967? In order to address this question, I begin my discussion in the early 20th century Palestine.

Tensions had been high in Mandate Palestine following Arab attacks against Jews in 1920 and 1921. However, the situation reached a breaking point in 1929 when Arab nationalists in Palestine perpetrated a series of anti-Jewish riots and programs that killed 133 Jews and resulted in the deaths of 116 Arabs. The events culminated in the massacre of 64 Jews in the city of Hebron (Bell 1976), an event still etched in the collective memory of the Jewish population there.¹¹⁶ The British-appointed Shaw Commission report, released in 1930, found that the fundamental cause of the violence was the Arab feeling of animosity and hostility towards Jews caused by the disappointment of Arab political and national aspirations and fear for their economic future. It also attributed causal significance to Arab fears of Jewish immigrants "not

¹¹⁶ Local Arabs wounded another 54 Jews in Hebron during the pogrom. Police killed eight Arabs during the event, and wounded 10. For a detailed list of casualties and violent events in 1929, see (Cohen 2015).

only as a menace to their livelihood but also as a possible overlord of the future." It was, that is, a sense of social threat that motivated Arabs to engage the Jewish community violently.¹¹⁷

Jews attributed much of the blame for the events in Hebron to the British, sighting their insufficient response to the Arab rioting. There was a growing sense that while the British were publicly committed to Zionist aspirations, they were demonstrably pursuing "other policies for other purposes." These events also heightened skepticism among the more militant Jews in Palestine toward the traditional Zionist policy of self-defense (*havlagah*). There was a growing sense that only a heavy hand would deter future violence against the Jewish community. The combination of a loss of faith in the British and increased radicalization gave rise to the radical armed wing of the revisionist movement, the Irgun Zvai Leumi (Irgun) (Bell 1976, 6, 35).

These same factors, remaining largely unaddressed, led to another spike in anti-Jewish violence beginning in 1936.¹¹⁸ This round of violence came to be known as the Arab revolt. The revolt began as sporadic acts of violence and a countrywide general strike, which the Arab community directed both at the British and at the Jewish population in Palestine. The revolt spread from the towns to the countryside, becoming increasingly violent as it moved to the periphery. In response to the outbreak of violence in 1936, the Irgun shed their commitment to restrained self-defense and began attacking Palestinians indiscriminately as a form of collective punishment for Palestinian attacks against Jews (Lustick 1995, 525). By 1937, this developed

¹¹⁷ See also (Loeterman 2014).

¹¹⁸ The uprising occurred as similar uprisings against the colonial powers were occurring in neighboring Egypt and Syria. The British crushed the revolt by 1939 through a combination of elite cooptation, which was possible given high levels of internal Palestinian disunity, and repression of the Palestinian population.

into a large-scale campaign against the Palestinian civilian population including machine-gun attacks on Palestinian trains, grenades thrown at buses, and milk can bombs placed in Palestinian markets. In one three-week period in July 1938, Irgun attacks killed 76 Arab civilians (Bell 1976, 39-54).

In 1939, with tensions in Europe rising, Ze'ev Jabotinsky, the leader of the revisionist movement, pledged the Irgun's assistance to England. With the Arab revolt quelled and the threat to European Jewry rising precipitously, the Irgun largely turned its attention to smuggling European Jews into Palestine and assisting the British militarily in the field (Bell 1976, 39-55). However, some Irgun radicals and members of Lehi, a radical group that split from the Irgun due to the perceived moderation of the organization, refused to collaborate with the British and instead remained committed to their violent struggle. The British forcefully suppressed these radicals with the assistance of David Ben-Gurion and the Haganah, which arrested and transferred 1,000 Lehi and Irgun activists to the British. Although this angered many local Jews, it temporarily destroyed both groups' operational capabilities as activists were imprisoned, captured, and killed (Byman 1998, 163). This effect was only temporary, however. When the Haganah later turned against the British and refused to cooperate in the suppression of Jewish radicals, violence against Palestinians significantly increased. As a result, these activities continued until the outbreak of the Arab-Israeli War in 1948 when members of the Irgun and Lehi primarily focused their attention on military threats against the Jewish community in Israel-Palestine coming from the neighboring Arab armies.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁹ Some violence against civilians did occur during the war, most notably the Deir Yassin massacre in April 1948.

Following Israel's victory in its War of Independence (1948-1949), the Israeli government controlled a territory significantly larger than that assigned to the Jews by the British partition plan. The Israeli government did not equivocate in regards to its territorial acquisitions. Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion provided an early clue to his attitude toward unilateral land acquisitions in an address to the Mapai Council on February 7, 1949. He spoke of the need for a substantial Jewish presence in the Jerusalem corridor. Someone interjected: "We have no [Jewish-owned] land there." Ben-Gurion: "The war will give us the land. The concepts of 'ours' and 'not ours' are only concepts for peacetime, and during war they lose their meaning" (Morris 2004). Ben-Gurion outlined two major characteristics of the settlement drive of the following months: Settlement of the abandoned villages and settlement in areas thinly populated by Jews (Western Galilee, Upper Galilee, the Jerusalem corridor) (Morris 2004, 71). He laid out his demographic-settlement strategy clearly and explicitly:

Security [considerations] require a different [demographic] distribution of the Yishuv ...We shall move tens of thousands of people northward and southward ... [and] settle them...The Negev must be strengthened with people, arms, fortifications . . . We shall enter the empty villages and settle in them. The war will also bring with it favorable internal changes in the internal constitution of the Yishuv; tens of thousands will move to less populated centers [i.e., districts] – to the Negev, the Galilee and the area of Jerusalem. We shall cure the Jewish body. In peacetime we would not have been able to do this (Morris 2004, 70).

Within months of its military victory, Israel began a legal process to formalize and legalize the acquisition of "abandoned" Palestinian land by the Jewish government and Jewish communities in Israel (Morris 2004, 365). About 135 new settlements were established between the start of the hostilities in November 1947 and the end of August 1949; 112 of them had been

founded by June – 51 in the north (between Ijzim and the Lebanese border), 27 in the south and 34 in the coastal plain and Jerusalem corridor. Most were established on Arab-owned land and dozens were established on territory earmarked by the UN partition resolution for the Palestine Arab State (Morris 2004, 369). In 1950, the government took a decisive step, officially declaring West Jerusalem the capital of Israel (Dumper 2005, 35-36).

Settlement during this period took the form of official government policy. Israel's political leadership was united around the need to populate conquered lands with Jews quickly and decisively in order to make their return to Israel's Arab neighbors infeasible.¹²⁰ The government also implemented this policy in order to increase Jewish ownership of land and simultaneously reduce the proportion of Israel's territory owned and or settled by Israel's Arab population. Speaking about the post-war period in Jerusalem, Morris (2004, 393) continues,

By the end of May [1949], it appears that all of west Jerusalem's former Arab neighborhoods had been at least partially settled by Jews, most of them 'olim [(Jewish immigrants)]. An Interior Ministry official reported that the Musrara (later Morasha) neighborhood was being settled with 'olim from Muslim countries, and that Abu Tor also had to be settled 'if Israel wanted to hold onto it'...The settlement of olim in the abandoned villages began in the last months of 1948, as the momentum of settlement by pioneers

¹²⁰ While, as Morris (2004, 373) points out there was some dissent on this issue from within Israel's left-wing Mapam (Precursor to today's Meretz), Israel's ruling Mapai (the precursor to today's Labor party) and revisionist Herut (precursor to today's Likud party) were united around the new settlement policy. Even Mapam, the most critical voice on the issue, was deeply divided. While the party officially supported peaceful coexistence with its Arab neighbors and the return of Palestinian refugees, many of its supporters from Israel's agricultural communes pressed for increased Jewish settlement and an expansion of their existing communities. At the end, Mapam would adopt a moderate position in which strategically important land would be appropriated by Jews, while some land would be set aside for possible refugee return (Morris 2004, 375).

began to run out and after most of the housing potential of the towns was exhausted...No less pressing than the new immigrants' need for housing was the state's need to fill the newly conquered territories, lest the absence of a civilian population undermine Israel's territorial claims in future negotiations.

While some radical elements from the Irgun and Lehi expressed a desire to continue their violent activities against Israel's Arab population, the government made a concerted push to monopolize violence in the territory. Following the cessation of hostilities, the Irgun and the Lehi began a process of incorporation into Israel's newly formed Israel Defense Forces (IDF) under pressure from the Israeli government. An important clause in the agreement between these groups and the IDF was that these organizations would cease all independent acquisitions of arms. When the Irgun attempted to test the government's resolve by smuggling a ship called the *Altalena* full of weapons and approximately 940 Irgun recruits from Europe into Israel, the Israeli government took a hard line (Bell 1976). Speaking about Menachem Begin, then head of the Irgun and future Prime Minister of Israel, Ben-Gurion declared that "We must decide whether to hand over power to Begin or to order him to cease his separate activities. If he does not do so, we will open fire! Otherwise, we must decide to disperse our own army" (Heydemann 2006).

Despite the government's threats, the Irgun attempted to unload the weapons and fighters without acceding to the government's demand that both be handed over to the Israeli military. The ensuing confrontation between the Irgun and the IDF off the coast of Tel-Aviv resulted in 14 Irgun members killed and 69 wounded and two IDF soldiers killed and six wounded (Bell 1976, 326). In the weeks following the clash, the government acted decisively to dismantle the Irgun. Security forces carried out mass arrests of Irgun fighters and the IDF disbanded Irgun units within its ranks, dispersing Irgun fighters among other units. In all, the Israeli security forces

arrested more than 200 Irgun members, though Israel released most of those arrested several weeks later, with the exception of five senior commanders, who were detained for more than two months, until growing public pressure led to their release.¹²¹

The Irgun could not maintain a united front against the government following the *Altalena* affair. The primary objective of the Irgun had been the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine. That objective had been achieved, even if the particular contours of the state were less than ideal. Most members of the Irgun, including the leadership, were not interested in a Jewish civil war. Begin expressed this position publically,

The [Irgun] is leaving the underground within the boundaries of the Hebrew independent state. We went down into the underground, we arouse in the underground under the rule of oppression. Now...we have Hebrew rule in part of our homeland. In this part, there is no need for a Hebrew underground. In the state of Israel, we shall be soldiers and builders. We shall respect its government, for it is our government (Bell 1976, 319).

Given that they had achieved their primary objective, there was little benefit in engaging in a militarized contest with Israel's government. Instead, the Irgun demobilized, with the rank and file assimilating into the IDF and its leadership going on to challenge Israel's establishment in the political arena. Of course, the Irgun was able to assimilate into the IDF and Israel's political institutions because its members were Jewish. While ideologically at odds, often acerbically so, members of the Irgun, the security forces, and political establishment all viewed each other as brothers in the Zionist cause. Without this ethnic link, the Israeli government would have

¹²¹ <http://www.etzel.org.il/english/ac20.htm>

The military also arrested and court-martialed eight IDF soldiers who refused to fire on the *Altalena* for insubordination.

certainly excluded members of the Irgun from the state's security and political institutions and the situation would have likely escalated into a more serious conflagration.

Following the demobilization of the Irgun and Lehi and the incorporation of their membership into Israel's formal defense establishment, Jewish violence against Palestinians went largely dormant (Pedahzur and Perliger 2009). While minor localized incidents of violence may have occurred, there was a near complete absence of severe or systematic attacks.¹²² This cessation of violence occurred despite clear opportunity on the part of Jews, many of whom had easy access to weapons and lived in close proximity to Arabs, to perpetrate attacks against Arabs.

I argue that it was not a lack of opportunity or motivation that decreased anti-Arab violence; it was an absence of uncertainty on the part of Jewish Israelis. Despite the desire for territorial expansion on the part of many members of the Irgun, their revisionist supporters, and other territorial maximalists, the possibility of further expansion seemed remote. The government had made an unambiguous commitment to hold those territories already under its control and maintained the capacity to defend the state against standing domestic threats. Israel's success in coopting elites within the Israeli Arab population further reduced the level of threat to the Jewish population (Lustick 1980) and security forces were able to repress those threats that did arise with relative ease. Though Jews maintained the ability to target the Israeli Arab population, anti-Arab Jewish violence largely disappeared without a high level of structural

¹²² This period was not completely devoid of Jewish violence. In fact, anti-state violence by Jewish religious extremists increased during this period (Pedahzur and Perliger 2009). There was, however, a near total cessation of non-state Jewish violence targeting Israel's Arab population.

uncertainty to propel it. Even when Arab attacks on the Jewish population in Israel did occur, the Jewish civilian population largely left the prerogative to respond to the government.

Traditional explanations of ethnic violence, such as arguments based on economic competition (Olzak 1992, 1990), state collapse (Posen 1993), ideological extremism (Ravitzky 1996), and elite manipulation (Kaufman 2001), fail to explain this “interregnum” of anti-Arab Jewish violence in Israel-Palestine (1948-1967). None of these factors significantly changed after 1948 and again after 1967. What did change in both 1949 and 1967 is the level of certainty felt by Israeli Jews in regards to those territories Israel acquired in the 1967 war. The answer, I am suggesting, to the question of why anti-Arab Jewish violence ceased in 1949 and reemerged after 1967 is that 1949-1967 represented a period of relative certainty for the Jewish population in Israel. While there were surely grievances associated with support for expansionist policies among Israel’s Jewish elites and population at large, there was little belief that further territorial expansion was attainable by extra-institutional means. The Israeli government undermined the perceived feasibility of territorial expansion by making clear its intention to keep those territories under its control and to maintain its existing territorial boundaries. In addition, the government took a clear position on the political status of Palestinians within its boundaries; the government extended full citizenship to these Palestinians, though they continued to repress dissent heavily. A significant number of Israeli Jews, that is, supported expansion and even greater ethnic exclusion, but did not perceive the opportunity to achieve these objectives outside of the state’s formal political institutions given the government’s clear and explicit policies.

The emergence of uncertainty in the West Bank:

Following Israel's acquisition of the West Bank, Gaza, and the Sinai Peninsula in 1967 and the ensuing Jewish settlement in the territory, a sense of threat and considerable elite support for the settlement enterprise came together to produce a persistent sense of uncertainty for the Israeli settler community. Consequently, non-state Jewish violence against Palestinian civilians began to occur in the West Bank shortly after Israel took control of the territory and has continued to the present day.

Following the Arab-Israeli War in 1967, Jewish Israelis were euphoric. Within six days, they had gone from a perceived existential crisis to a resounding defeat of their enemies. Suddenly, Israel found itself in possession of the Golan Heights to the north, the Sinai Peninsula and Gaza to the west, and the West Bank to the east. Palestinians were devastated and bewildered. For Israeli supporters of a greater Israel, the acquisition of the territories, especially the West Bank, was a manifestation of the Jews' legitimate moral claim to the land of Israel. For Palestinians, it was a disaster almost beyond comprehension. For Jews, the war was part of an ongoing mission to reestablish Jewish sovereignty over the land of Israel. It represented the manifestation of millennia of Jewish yearning for their homeland. For Palestinians, the war was part of an ongoing process of land theft and an erosion of their sovereignty at the hands of Jewish colonizers. These positions were (and still are) so pervasive amongst the respective populations that it is possible to conceptualize them as being hegemonic. Though intra-ethnic dissent did (and does) exist at the margins, the majority of each population holds their respective "truth" to be self-evident.

The vast majority of Israelis, including the political and military elite, claimed that Israel had a moral right to settle lands conquered in 1967. This was particularly true of East Jerusalem

and the West Bank given the territories' significance in the Jewish tradition. The overwhelming consensus regarding these particular territories is not surprising. Ethnic groups almost always possess ties to a particular territory, which they call their 'own' (Smith 1986, 28).¹²³ The conceptualization of territory as "homeland" imbues physical territory with symbolic meaning and value. In the case of Jerusalem and the West Bank, the overwhelming consensus centered on the symbolic place this territory has occupied in Jewish history and the development of modern Jewish nationalism, rather than the strategic value of the territory.

While Israel's political elite were united in their desire to cement Israel's control over portions of the West Bank, motivations for doing so varied. In Jewish Israeli parlance, Judea and Samaria (West Bank) had been "liberated" rather than "conquered." The majority of Israel's political elite on both the left and right viewed some level of Jewish settlement in these territories as both legitimate and strategically expedient. Security hawks argued that "peace would only be saved if Israel consolidated its positions of strength, and the 'Arabs' were compelled to realize that Israel could not be defeated" (Aronson 1990, 11). Religious Zionists argued that settling the territory was essential to the unfolding process of spiritual redemption (Lustick 1988, chapter 3,

¹²³ Anthony Smith (1991) argues that "attachment to homeland" is a central attribute of ethnic communities. Attachments to specific stretches of territory, he argues, have a "mythical and subjective quality." Members of ethnic groups believe their homeland is "where [they] belong. It is often sacred land, the land of [their] forefathers, [their] lawgivers, [their] kings and sages, poets and priests, which makes this [their] homeland. [They] belong to it, as much as it belongs to [them]" (Smith 1991, 22-23). The conceptualization of territory as "homeland," then, imbues physical territory with symbolic meaning and value.

Ravitzky 1996). Some relative “doves” also supported settlement, arguing that settlements could be used as bargaining chips in a future peace agreement with Jordan (Aronson 1990, 15).¹²⁴

Israel’s political system is a classic example of ethnic-democracy wherein democratic institutions are legitimate only as long as they maintain the ability to support the political hegemony of the majority ethnic group.¹²⁵ For this reason, as early as the mid-1970s, Israeli scholars such as sociologist Yonatan Shapiro claimed that Israel's democracy was more a matter of procedure than of essence (Pedahzur and Perliger 2003). On the right, this idea has long been propagated explicitly in Israel, with the spiritual leader of the settlement enterprise, Rabbi Zvi Yehuda Kook, describing “ a government requiring Arab minority support as subversive of the state’s Jewish character” and therefore illegitimate (Hellinger, Hershkowitz, and Susser 2018,

¹²⁴ These positions were not mutually exclusive. For example, many religious Zionists argued that settlement was both essential for Israel’s security and for the process of spiritual redemption (Hellinger, Hershkowitz, and Susser 2018).

¹²⁵ Israel’s uneven distribution of political rights stems directly from the Zionist imperative to construct a Jewish and democratic state in Palestine. This tension is readily apparent in Israel’s declaration of independence. According to the declaration,

The state of Israel will be open for Jewish immigration and for the Ingathering of the Exiles; it will foster the development of the country for the benefit of all its inhabitants; it will be based on freedom, justice and peace as envisaged by the prophets of Israel; it will ensure complete equality of social and political rights to all its inhabitants irrespective of religion, race or sex; it will guarantee freedom of religion, conscience, language, education and culture...

In the declaration, Israel commits to ensuring “complete equality” for all citizens irrespective of ethnic and religious background, while simultaneously committing to Jewish preference in immigration. It speaks to the Jewish symbols such as “exile” and the “prophets of Israel,” while ignoring completely the symbols of Israel’s large Muslim minority. Israel’s declaration of independence is, in other words, a declaration of ethnic-democracy.

67). Even left-wing governments have acceded to the notion that government decisions are only legitimate when they enjoy a “Jewish majority.” When Yitzhak Rabin sought parliamentary support for the Oslo Agreement, for instance, he worked judiciously to obtain the support of a majority of Jewish Knesset members. Despite his ability to pass the agreement through parliament with only a minority of Jewish legislators and Israeli Arab lawmakers, he feared that without sufficient Jewish support in the Knesset, the Jewish public would view the vote as illegitimate (Hellinger, Hershkowitz, and Susser 2018, 103).

As long as Israel maintained a clear demographic majority in the territory under its control, the government could avoid the full tension between its Jewish and democratic character. Movement toward demographic parity between Israel’s Jewish and non-Jewish populations, however, would force Israel to privilege one defining characteristic over the other.¹²⁶ This tension came into stark relief after Israel captured the West Bank and Gaza, including their large Palestinian populations, in the Six-Day War. In dealing with the Palestinian population in the West Bank, the government had three options: to include Palestinians as full citizens of Israel, to expel the Palestinian population from the territories, or to maintain a system in which Palestinians remain in the territory but without political rights. The difficulty surrounding this choice stemmed directly from Israel’s dual commitment to both its Jewish and

¹²⁶ Israel, promoting itself as a liberal and Jewish state was not only open to criticism from those who opposed the regime on ideological grounds, but also by those who took issue with Israel’s unwillingness to openly defend their exclusionary policies within their own states. In 1961, for example, dismissing an Israeli vote against South African apartheid at the United Nations, then Prime Minister of South Africa Hendrik Verwoerd publicly declared, “Israel is not consistent in its new anti-apartheid attitude ... they took Israel away from the Arabs after the Arabs lived there for a thousand years. In that, I agree with them. Israel, like South Africa, is an apartheid state” (Clarno 2009).

democratic character. Those who supported the annexation of the West Bank were faced with an “internal contradiction” whereby “one patriotic imperative, to possess the sacred land, contradicted the other patriotic imperative, to ensure a massive Jewish [demographic] majority on the land” (Kimmerling 2003, 18). Palestinians could not be included as full members of the Israeli polity because of the ethnocratic nature of the regime. Inclusion of Palestinians would threaten Israel’s demographic majority. Without a demographic majority, Israel would lose its ability to maintain its Jewish *and* democratic character. If Israel were to remain a democracy, all Palestinians would need to do to alter Israel’s Jewish character would be to vote.

Israel’s democratic character made the expulsion option untenable. In this regard, the government was far more hampered by international pressure than it was by domestic public opinion. While support for expulsion was by no means unanimous, it was widespread across the Jewish political spectrum. This is not surprising given the tradition of expulsion in Israel’s early history (Pappe 2007, Morris 2004).¹²⁷ International pressure on Israel regarding its treatment of Palestinians began almost immediately following the cessation of hostilities in 1948 when the United States put significant pressure on Israel to repatriate Palestinian refugees displaced during the war (Morris 2004). The international community made this explicit on November 22, 1967, when the United Nations reaffirmed its opposition to Israel’s acquisition of territories captured in war by passing United Nations Security Council Resolution 242. The resolution, passed

¹²⁷ For example, in a letter to his son in 1937, Israel’s first Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion (from the left of the political spectrum) wrote that “the Arabs will have to go, but one needs an opportune moment for making it happen, such as a war” (Pappé 2006). However, the issue of expulsion was politically sensitive and Ben-Gurion never publicly enunciated the policy and always refrained from issuing clear or written expulsion orders.

unanimously by the Security Council, demanded Israeli withdrawal from territories it acquired in 1967. The resolution called for Israel to return its recently won territories in exchange for peace with its neighbors, making clear that the international community strictly opposed Israeli annexation of the territories.

Israel therefore opted for the third option, an ambiguous position that consciously refrained from taking a position on how far or if Israel was prepared to withdraw from territories captured in 1967 (Aronson 1990, 13). To this end, the government pursued what Moshe Dayan called a “functional compromise.” The basic strategy was to divide security and administrative control of Palestinians in the West Bank. Israel would be responsible for security while local Palestinian representatives would be responsible for civil administration.¹²⁸ Quiescence of the Palestinian population would be obtained by providing a mix of material benefits to those who cooperate and repression of those who openly challenge the regime. As was the strategy in pre-state Palestine, Jewish settlement would be used to “Judaize” the West Bank over time (Yiftachel 2006). The strategy succeeded in demobilizing the Palestinian population in the short-term, but could not maintain quiescence in the long-term. The Israeli government has been unable to

¹²⁸ For the first 10 years, the idea was that Jordan would be responsible for the West Bank’s civil administration. Jordan was initially interested in maintaining control over the West Bank in order to prevent the re-emergence of a strong Palestinian political identity. To this end, they continued to pay the salaries of civil servants in the West Bank, including police officers, and to run the public education system. However, it became clear early on that Jordan was not interested in such an arrangement in the long-term and had no interest in letting Israel control the land and water resources of the West Bank (Kimmerling 2003). As a plan B, Israel sought out local Palestinian elites that could administer services to the West Bank’s Palestinians and act as a liaison between the military occupation and the civilian population.

prevent the large-scale mobilization of Palestinians against the regime with its mixed strategy of repression and cooptation.

Post-1967 Israel, then, is characterized by the central contradiction of ethnic democracies: the need to maintain ethnic hegemony while providing (at least the perception of) political openings to minorities (Yiftachel 2006, 2000). International pressure, as well as some internal pressure from the Israeli peace camp, on the Israeli government to ensure the rights of excluded groups has forced the Israeli government to limit its repression of Palestinian dissidents. This is true in terms of both the activities of security forces as well as the government's expansionist policies in the occupied Palestinian territories. While the signing of the Oslo accords stands as the most prominent example, all Israeli governments, including right-wing and nationalist coalitions, have limited expansion into the West Bank by curbing the number of new Jewish settlements as well as by restraining expansion of existing settlements. This is not to imply that 'Judaization' of the territory has ceased, only that it is significantly limited by international pressure (Yiftachel 2006).

The perception of uncertainty among Israeli settlers:

The result of Israel's mixed strategy of conflict management has been a profound and persistent sense of uncertainty among the Jewish settler population residing in the West Bank (Alimi and Hirsch-Hoefler 2012). Israeli settlers in the West Bank repeated this argument quite often during my interviews with them in 2016 and 2017. The overwhelming majority of respondents contended that the root of the problem is that the government "did not immediately annex the West Bank [after its victory in 1967]. If the government had annexed the territory, the world would have understood Israel's intentions and accepted the new reality" (respondent 02).

Another respondent put it this way: “The government and the army have no vision, which results in a feeling of constant chaos. What is needed is a clearer long-term plan” (respondent 22).

Though most respondents stated that international pressure on Israel, particularly by the European Union and United Nations, is unjustified and unhelpful, most respondents perceived the problem as ultimately being internal. The problem persists, according to this view, because of the continued indecisiveness of the Israeli government and its expression of uncertainty through Israel’s free media and civil society. According to a long-term resident of the eastern portion of the Gush Etzion settlement block south of Jerusalem, “Israeli uncertainty, portrayed through the media and the left more generally, encourages the international community to pressure Israel” (respondent 24). Voicing a popular position in the West Bank, another respondent bluntly stated, “When you know who you are and what is yours, the Arabs respect that. When you do not, the Arabs see that and think ‘if they are not sure we will make them sure’” (respondent 22). Echoing this position, another respondent explained, “When Israel knows what they want and acts accordingly, it creates certainty. International pressure comes from the fact that Israelis aren’t sure of what they want” (respondent 34). Ultimately, this line of reasoning assumes that “if Israel makes it clear that there will not be a Palestinian state and the West Bank will remain under Jewish sovereignty, there will be [Jewish] Israeli and international consensus [in support of Jewish control of the West Bank] and Arabs will come to accept the reality. Eventually, this will bring peace” (respondent 24).

While all settlers support the maintenance of Jewish sovereignty in the West Bank, interviews with Israeli settlers indicate that any final status decision regarding the West Bank would resolve the ongoing tensions in the territory. Both moderates and radicals who have been actively involved in violent attacks against Palestinian civilians and Israeli security personnel

carrying out evacuations of settlements and outposts in the West Bank expressed this view. A resident and founder of one of the most notorious radical outposts in the northern West Bank, who has mentored a large number of violent radicals and spent time in Israeli prison for his activities, encapsulates this position:

The truth is that the government has all the power in the relationship. If the government decides to end the uncertain situation in Judea and Samaria, they could do so. If they were to impose Jewish sovereignty on the territory unabashedly, the Palestinians would finally understand that they cannot succeed in their struggle and give up their resistance. This is of course the position that I support. However, I must admit that if the government were to decide to give up its claims to the land and allow a Palestinian state to emerge, that too would bring certainty. I, of course, would be devastated by such a decision and would oppose it vigorously, but in the end, I would have to accept it. Ultimately, we would all have to accept it and move on with our lives (respondent 34).

Uncertainty and the reemergence of anti-Jewish violence (1967-1979):

Palestinians had been largely demobilized following the shocking defeat in 1967 (Aronson 1990) and Jewish settlers had little reason to fear that the government would soon cede the newly acquired territory. In 1967, Israel annexed the Arab portions of Jerusalem and its northern and eastern environs and approved the reestablishment of Gush Etzion - a former cluster of Jewish settlements in the newly occupied region between Jerusalem and Bethlehem. From 1967 to 1973 the Israeli government supported the construction of Jewish settlements in sparsely populated areas obtained in the 1967 war and by 1973 the government had established 45 settlements in the West Bank, the Golan Heights, and the Sinai Peninsula (Weisburd 1989). Without the threat of physical harm or territorial concessions, settlers had little motivation to carry out attacks against the Palestinian population.

In 1974, following the shocking Israeli failures in the Yom Kippur War, the United States mediated an end of hostilities agreement, known as the disengagement accords, between Israel

and Syria. For the first time since Israel's acquisition of the Golan Heights, West Bank, and Sinai Peninsula, opponents of territorial concessions believed that the government might cede territory to its neighbors. These concerns were relatively minor, however, given the absence of any tangible Israeli concessions and the continued support within the government for the settlement enterprise. In addition, the settlement movement, and right more generally, felt empowered as the ruling left-wing coalition came under blistering criticism for its comportment in the war. Consequently, while moving to prevent the return of the occupied territories, settlers and their supporters largely refrained from using violent tactics in their efforts. Instead, they worked judiciously to settle the territories, to petition supportive members of the government, and to build their base of support among the Jewish Israeli public.¹²⁹

When the right-wing nationalist block headed by Menachem Begin's Likud party came to power in 1977, settlers and their supporters were again euphoric. Settlers believed that the government's first act would be the annexation of the entire West Bank and Gaza Strip given that this had been the main plank in the party's platform in the election campaign and had been a constant theme espoused by the party while they were in the opposition. Upon their ascension to

¹²⁹ Some violence during this period did occur in the form of minor violent clashes between settlers and security forces. For example, in their second attempt to establish the settlement of Elon Moreh in the Northern West Bank in March 1975, Israeli security forces confronted settlers. Despite the military's demand that the settlers evacuate the area, settlers refused. When the military stepped in to evacuate the settlers forcefully, settlers violently resisted. As settlers continued to establish outposts in the West Bank without government approval, clashes between security forces and settlers became more common. Though these violent events were relatively minor, rarely resulting in serious injuries, the scenes of Jews fighting Jews portrayed in the media were traumatic for the young nation and the settlers (Weisburd 1989, 28).

power, however, the Likud was confronted with the existence of a rapidly growing Palestinian population in the territories (Kimmerling 2003, 16). The absorption of Palestinians living in the West Bank and Gaza Strip into the state would therefore create an immediate demographic threat to the Jewish or democratic character of the state. Annexing the territories would force the Israeli government to make an immediate choice: provide full citizenship rights to Palestinians and surrender Jewish hegemony or abstain from providing Palestinians with full citizenship rights and implement a system of apartheid. The government did not deem either option acceptable.

In addition to the demographic concerns, the Israeli government faced growing political pressure from the United States. On July 26, 1977, Begin gave official government approval to the unrecognized settlements of Ofra, Kaddumim, and Maale Adumim. In response, President Carter strongly condemned the action as both illegal and an impediment to peace. Settlers' initial euphoria over Begin's decision quickly turned to distrust as they saw American pressure and Israeli coalition politics diminishing the government's support for settlement expansion. As a consequence of the external and internal pressures on the government, by September, not a single new settlement had been established by the government (Weisburd 1989, 36). The 1978 Camp David accords between Israel and Egypt, which included the return of the Sinai Peninsula to Egypt, increased the sense of threat among the settler community. It was now clear that the even Begin's right-wing government, which many expected would annex "greater Israel," was willing to trade land for peace. Feeling betrayed, many settlers became convinced that neither leftwing

nor right wing governments would take the initiative on the question of settlement in the occupied territories.¹³⁰

Within this highly uncertain environment, violent interactions between settlers and Palestinians began to increase significantly. By 1978, they had become an almost daily routine (Sprinzak 1999, 169, Lustick 1988). In response to increasing violence against the Jewish community in the West Bank, the Israeli military set up paramilitary units in which settlers protected their communities with arms and training provided by the Israeli security services (Sprinzak 1991). In addition, Israeli settlers began to set up their own small paramilitary units surreptitiously. They designed these squads to protect the settler community when the Israeli military failed to do so and to raise the cost of continued resistance against Jewish hegemony for Palestinians.¹³¹

While there were rampant rumors about settler violence in the West Bank, no proof existed of this activity until the publication of the Karp Report. In 1981, Attorney General Yitzhak Zamir appointed a commission of inquiry headed by Deputy Attorney General Yehudit Karp to examine reports of crimes against Palestinians in the West Bank and police failure to apprehend or prosecute the criminals (Institute for Palestine Studies 1984). The report did not just illuminate the problem of settler violence against Palestinians in the West Bank, including killings, physical assaults, property damage and violent and non-violent threats, it also showed that most of these acts went unpunished (Sprinzak 1991, 87-88). Of the seventy cases of settler

¹³⁰ Interviews conducted by the author with Israeli settlers in 2016 and 2017 indicate that this sentiment persists among a wide swath of the settler community to this day.

¹³¹ For a list of publically reported acts of settler violence between 1979 and 1988 see (Nakhleh 1991, 723-733).

violence examined in the Karp report, fifty-three were never prosecuted. Of these fifty-three cases, Israeli security services closed forty-three for lack of suspect identification, seven for lack of an official complaint, and three because there was not enough public interest to justify prosecution.

Fundamentally, the Karp report highlighted the central role of the government in the phenomenon of Israeli settler violence. The settlers were encouraged in their efforts not only by the government's acquiescence to their activities, but also by direct material assistance from government agents (Aronson 1990, 105, 190). One of the settlers' most potent advantages, for example, was their close relationship with local Israeli police forces. Friction sometimes occurred between officers in the military and the local police forces over how to respond to incidents of settler violence. Whereas the military did sometimes seek to reign in the settlers, local police often stymied their attempts to do so. Because local police forces had jurisdiction over Jewish inhabitants of the West Bank, the military was unable to impose sanctions on Jews involved in anti-Palestinian violence (Aronson 1990, 105). This is not to say the settlers had no support among the military in the West Bank (Hellinger, Hershkowitz, and Susser 2018, 88). Some military officers, particularly those who were from the settlements themselves, did provide support to settlers or, at a minimum, did not interfere with their activities despite prior knowledge that they would occur (Nakhleh 1991, 713). Overall, however, the government's approach to Jewish settlement in the occupied territories and its reaction to Israeli settler violence were bifurcated. The government's continued commitment to democracy and to Jewish hegemony meant that Jewish settlers continued to receive elite support, while also facing continuing threats to their elevated social status and physical security in the occupied territories.

As a result, Israeli settlers quickly adopted a violent posture in their relationship with the local Palestinian population.

How variation in the level of physical and social threat helps to explain the dynamics of Israeli settler violence:

The previous discussion supports the contention that the government's inconsistent policies toward the Israeli settlement enterprise have produced anti-Palestinian violence by creating a sense of uncertainty among the Jewish population in the West Bank about the feasibility of maintaining Jewish sovereignty in the territory. This uncertainty cannot explain, however, why the frequency, severity, and targets of anti-Palestinian violence have continued to vary over time. I have argued that this variation is a result of changes in the perceived level of physical and social threat facing the Jewish civilian population in the territory (chapter two). The quantitative analysis in chapter four supported this proposition, indicating that while physical threats increase the frequency and severity of violence more than social threats, social threats tend to increase violence against targets with symbolic significance to minority groups, such as places of worship.

In the following sections I build on my interviews to explore how and when Israeli settlers experience physical and social threat in the West Bank. I then build on the insights gained from these interviews and secondary literature to examine how the political context in the West Bank has produced shifting patterns of Israeli settler violence from 1967 through 2015.

The perception of physical threat in the West Bank:

Israeli settlers often speak about security in disjointed terms. They earnestly claim that they do not feel a sense of physical threat in their daily lives, but are acutely aware of the volatile security situation in the West Bank and as a result tend to keep close tabs on matters related to local security. According to a resident of the Gush Etzion settlement block south of Jerusalem, “in our community we feel safe. My children move about freely, more freely than in many communities on the other side of the green line” (respondent 03). Those living in outposts that are more isolated, where security is far more tenuous, also almost universally express this same sentiment. In trips to a large number of isolated outposts across the West Bank between 2007 and 2017, I often saw young children playing in and traveling around their outpost without any adult supervision. In fact, settlers often hail this sense of security as a benefit of living in the settlements in general and in small outposts in particular (respondent 25).¹³² According to a young couple living in an isolated outpost in the hills adjacent to the settlement of Itamar in the

¹³² It is common, however, for Israeli settlers to feel safe in their own communities, but unsafe in other areas of the West Bank. It is not that respondents believe that Palestinians are more likely to target them in other districts. Rather, there is an overwhelming tendency for settlers to feel more secure in their own district because it is familiar. To some degree, this is a product of familiarity with the physical environment, but there is also a sense of familiarity with the local Palestinian population. Repeatedly, when speaking about physical threats in the West Bank, respondents explained that they feel much safer in their own district than in others. The primary reason given was that “we know our own Arabs, but we don’t know theirs” (respondent 05). Respondents did not mean to imply that they knew local Palestinians personally, for the vast majority of respondents this was not the case. Instead, they were conveying an abstract sense of familiarity with the local environment, with Palestinians representing a part of the local infrastructure.

northern West Bank, “one of the primary things we value about our community is the freedom our children enjoy. We don’t have to worry all the time like many do in the cities (respondents 34 and 37).”

Palestinian attacks against the Jewish community in the West Bank often shake settlers’ sense of normalcy. Given that the objective level of threat in the West Bank is relatively high, however, attacks must reach a relatively high threshold of severity to affect the perceived level of threat for settlers. Consequently, the reaction to Palestinian attacks that result in casualties is markedly different from the reaction to less severe forms of violence or botched attempts at more serious physical integrity violations. Almost without exception, Israeli settlers indicated in interviews that small scale acts of Palestinian violence such as stone throwing on the roadways or failed attempts to stab Israeli settlers did not significantly affect their perception of threat or their behavior (respondent 14). Attacks that result in casualties, however, do have a significant and immediate effect, with fatal attacks within settlements having the greatest effect. Overall, when the security situation is believed to have deteriorated - that is, when the sense of physical threat is high - both the settlers and Israeli military personnel refer to the area in which the threat is present as a “hot sector” (*gizra hama*). Though there is no quantifiable measure of the overall sense of threat, discussions with Israeli settlers makes clear that the overall “temperature” is palpable.¹³³

¹³³ Israeli security forces convey information about the overall level of physical threat to Israeli settlers in two ways. The first is the dissemination of intelligence from the military hierarchy to settlement security personnel attached to individual settlements, who then pass this information on to the rest of the community (respondent 37). Settlement security personnel are generally prominent members of their community who coordinate closely with security forces

While there was consensus among respondents that deadly attacks altered their behavior, some claimed that deadly attacks produce a tendency toward avoiding the source of threat, while others asserted that these attacks motivated them to confront the source of threat. Some respondents indicated that they are less likely to travel following a deadly attack and more likely to avoid Palestinian populated areas altogether. Others, however, are motivated to confront the source of threat and to put themselves in danger in order to signal to the Palestinian population that they are not afraid (respondents 06 and 09). Employing this logic, some even advocate that their school-age children not take additional precautions when the level of physical threat is high in order to make clear to Palestinians that their violent tactics are not achieving their objectives (respondent 02). As one respondent put it, “*davka* (loosely translated as “despite expectations to the contrary”) after a terrorist attack I tell my children to hitchhike on the roadways. It is important that the Arabs see that we are not afraid and it is important for our own well-being that

in their area and nearly all are IDF combat veterans. Members of these security details receive regular intelligence briefings from the regional forces commander (*Machat*) and they pass this information on to their communities, traditionally by way of public meetings. Increasingly, however, the settler community is obtaining this type of information directly through social media. Security forces and local governing councils, for example, have developed a phone number with an automated message updated 24 hours a day that indicates whether any security incidents have occurred on the roadways or whether any other potential security threats exist in the area. In addition, security forces have begun to disseminate information about Palestinian violence and military activities such as arrests and military raids through message chains on the WhatsApp messaging platform (respondent 25). Those attacks that result in casualties are also widely covered in traditional media. In this way, Israeli settlers obtain almost real time information about the level of physical threat in their immediate environment. Due to the proliferation of these direct information channels, fewer settlers are receiving their information about security threats from settlement security personnel (respondent 37).

we do not let fear overtake us” (respondent 02). Most respondents, whether confronting or avoiding the perceived source of threat, tend to take additional personal precautions to increase their own security following a deadly attack. For instance, many indicated in interviews that they are more likely to carry a gun when leaving their settlement after a deadly attack (respondents 04 and 07), or alter the routes of their daily commutes to avoid heavily populated Palestinian areas when possible (respondent 10).

Despite the variation in individual level reactions to Palestinian violence, respondents indicated that at the community level a heightened sense of physical threat tends to produce a desire for vengeance, a sense that retaliatory violence is legitimate, and the belief that strategic retaliatory violence may be necessary to deter additional attacks against settlers.¹³⁴ Settlement security personnel, for example, indicated that following a Palestinian attack security personnel allow settler youth to congregate on the roadways and throw stones at Palestinian vehicles in order to “blow off some steam.” Doing so serves two functions: It allows young people to vent their anger and frustration through the perpetration of retaliatory violence, with the hope that this will reduce the likelihood that they will perpetrate more severe attacks or turn their frustration against Israeli security forces. Additionally, it imposes a collective cost on the local Palestinian population and makes clear that settlers will “not sit idly by as their friends and families are targeted.” Some respondents were explicit that this form of violence is legitimate, while others, unwilling to advocate violence openly, claim that it is “understandable” and therefore “those involved should not be punished by authorities.” In addition, while often not openly advocating more severe forms of retaliatory violence, respondents do overwhelmingly contend that settler

¹³⁴ For a discussion of the desire for vengeance among Israeli settlers see also (Pedahzur and Perliger 2009, 143).

violence produces a greater deterrent effect than state repression. As a member of a settlement security team put it, “Palestinians are far more frightened of settlers than they are of the military. They know the military is constrained in a way that we are not. We are therefore far better situated than the security forces to impose the types of costs on the Palestinians that will convince their community to prevent future attacks against [Israeli settlers]” (respondent 37). This is consistent with the overwhelming consensus among respondents that while they appreciate that the security forces do act to keep them safe, their ability to do so given the sensitive political situation is highly constrained and therefore insufficient. Consequently, “[Israeli settlers] tend to support and respect members of their own community who carry out retaliatory violence because these actions increase their own sense of safety and security” (respondent 15).

While Palestinian violence has a significant effect on the attitudes and behavior of Israeli settlers, all respondents indicated that the heightened sense of physical threat is short-lived, with a sense of normalcy returning within days or weeks. Describing the experience of civilians in conflict zones, a psychologist living and working in a West Bank settlement explained that “when people live in a dangerous place for an extended period of time, they often put threats out of their mind” (respondent 05). Speaking specifically about the experience of her patients as well as her own personal experience, she continued, “We have a short memory, we return to our routines quickly.” Echoing these sentiments, one respondent living in an unrecognized outpost in the northern West Bank explained that “yes, we take precautions after a terrorist attack, but we return to our routines quickly” (respondent 32). Another respondent living in the southern Hebron region was more specific, “even after a deadly terrorist attacks, things return to normal within a week, sometimes even less” (respondent 07).

The perception of social threat in the West Bank:

Social threat in the West Bank, centers on the perceived threat to “Jewish sovereignty” (*ribonut yehudit*) in the territory. The notion of Jewish sovereignty linked directly to the concept of “Jewish democracy” advocated by the Rabbi Zvi Yehuda Kook. According to Kook, “popular sovereignty and majority rules [in greater Israel] are relevant only when the government represents the Jewish majority” (Hellinger, Hershkowitz, and Susser 2018, 67, Ravitzky 1996). Within this conceptualization, “liberal democracy constitutes the most serious danger to the existence of the people of Israel” (Rabbi Zalman Melamed in Hellinger, Hershkowitz, and Susser 2018, 133). Therefore, while the vast majority of Israeli settlers support democracy, the form of democracy they advocate rests on a clear division between Jews and gentiles. Within this conceptualization, the state affords Jews full citizenship, while officially relegating minorities to a second-class status. This minority citizenship is based on the halachic notion of resident alien (*ger toshav*), in which gentiles living in the land of Israel must accept Jewish sovereignty and their own second class status as legitimate (respondent 06). As such, even those who support extending citizenship to the Palestinian population are explicit that they “must swear allegiance to the *Jewish* state” (respondent 16).

Concessions to Palestinians are perceived as a direct threat to Jewish sovereignty because they signal Israel’s acquiescence to Palestinian claims based on “liberal democratic principles such as citizen equality, the rights of the minority, pluralism and the like” (Hellinger, Hershkowitz, and Susser 2018, 65). For this reason, Israeli concessions to Palestinians are viewed not only as a “deplorable submission to the Gentiles” (Hellinger, Hershkowitz, and Susser 2018, 63), but also as a fundamental undermining of Israel’s commitment to its Jewish

character. According to one settler who has been involved in numerous acts of violence against Palestinians, “one of the primary problems is that Israel does not abide by Jewish law [as it relates to the treatment of minorities]. If Israel wants to [practice democracy] like all other nations, it only encourages Palestinians to continue challenging the regime. This is because this type of system implies that Palestinians are deserving of equal rights” (respondent 29).

As with physical threat, Israeli settlers do not experience a constant sense of social threat. Day to day, most Israeli settlers do not feel that their dominant status is under immediate threat. This is because, to a surprising degree, life in West Bank settlements has been largely “normalized” in the sense that they are in many ways indistinguishable from Jewish communities in Israel (Tulumello 2017, Hirschhorn 2017). In interviews with Israeli settlers living within large settlement blocks, respondents were nearly unanimous in their belief that there was no real threat of a substantial Israeli withdrawal from their respective settlements or outposts. Surprisingly, however, even settlers living in unauthorized outposts outside of recognized settlement blocks, many with standing government demolition orders on their homes, indicated that they do not worry regularly about the government evacuating them and dismantling their homes (e.g. respondents 05, 07, 08, and 19).

However, when the government actually makes concessions to Palestinians, as when they carry out settlement evacuations, they trigger a sense of social threat among the settler community. One reason for this is that settler elites tend to frame even minor conciliatory events as posing a significant threat to the continued existence of the Jewish community in the West Bank and its ability to preserve its values (Pedahzur and Perliger 2009, 160). This is because the act of carrying out settlement or outpost evacuations is believed to undermine the legitimacy of the settlement project as a whole (Hellinger, Hershkowitz, and Susser 2018, 156). Another

reason is that the settler community views settlement evacuations as a capitulation to international demands that Israel relinquish its control of the West Bank and, as such, they are perceived as a tangible erosion of Jewish sovereignty (respondent 04). Consequently, Israeli settlers tend to argue that their community must actively resist even incremental moves by the government to undermine Jewish sovereignty in the West Bank in order to deter more significant government concessions to Palestinians.

While physical and social threats may occur contemporaneously, events that trigger acute physical threat often decrease the perceived level of social threat in the short-term. Palestinian violence resulting in casualties, for instance, tends to increase government support for settlement expansion and reduces the likelihood that the government will carry out actions deemed socially threatening by Israeli settlers. Getmansky and Sinmazdemir (2018), for example, show that the Israeli government increased its support for settlement and outpost expansion in the West Bank in response to suicide bombings during the second intifada (2000-2005). My own interviews with Israeli settlers support this proposition. A public employee in the southern West Bank, for instance, explained, “Following terrorist attacks, [settlers] know that the government will look the other way when they build illegally and may even provide them support.” Often, settler elites work to publicize acts of violence for this reason. Making this point explicitly, the mayor of a large settlement in the Gush Etzion settlement block expounded, “Although every death is tragic, we can use these attacks to build sympathy for our cause and bring our community together for a common purpose” (respondent 17). There is a tendency, therefore, “for [settlers] to take advantage of this temporary public sympathy by establishing new outposts or expanding existing outposts following an attack” (respondent 15). For those elites who oppose settler violence, allowing settlers to build following an attack also “helps to direct the energy of [settler youth]

away from violence and toward constructive behavior” (respondent 21). In this way, terrorist attacks tend to “bring communities together” by creating a “sense of unity and shared struggle” and in so doing, decrease the perception among the affected community that their position of power and influence is threatened in the short-term (respondents 15 and 37).

Physical threat, social threat, and the history of Israeli settler violence: A Periodization

Table 5.1 represents a periodization of Israeli settler violence based on changes in the structural nature of environmental threat. Periods may be marked by acute physical threat, acute social threat, no threat, or both. The particular combination constitutes what I call a *threat regime*. The first column lists the “transformative event” that triggered a change in the threat regime facing the Israeli settler community. Transformative events here are conceptualized as those events that represent “critical junctures in which overall perceptions of threat shift categorically [resulting in altered] patterns of collective action” (Snow et al. 2013, 4). These events alter the “previously established frameworks within which events occur and acquire meaning” and produce “divisions, tensions, and power relations that [are] deeply ingrained in the social structure” for extended periods of time (Bosi and Davis 2017, 224, 225). According to McAdam and Sewell (2001, 110),

The key feature of transformative events is that they come to be interpreted as significantly disrupting, altering, or violating taken-for-granted assumptions governing routine political and social relations. In so doing, they serve to dramatically ratchet up (or down in the case of demobilizing events . . .) the shared sense of uncertainty (with its partisan variants, “threat” and “opportunity”) on which all broad episodes of contention depend.

In order to explain changing patterns of Israeli settler violence in the medium term, therefore, it is necessary to isolate the transformative events that alter the structure of threat perceived by the Jewish community in the West Bank.

Table 5. 1 Periodization of threat regimes for Jewish settlers in the Occupied Palestinian Territories and patterns of Israeli settler violence against Palestinians (1967-2015)

Periodization		Threat Regime		Pattern of Violence		
Transformative Event	Years	Acute Physical Threat	Acute Social Threat	Symbolic targeting	Severe attacks	Level of popular participation in violence
Foundation of settlement	1967-1976	Low	Low			Low
Camp David Accords	1977-1986	High	High	Yes	Yes	High
First Intifada	1987-1992	High	Low		Yes	High
Oslo Accords	1993-1999	Medium	High	Yes	Yes	Medium
Second Intifada	2000-2004	High	Low		Yes	High
Disengagement	2005-2011	Low	High	Yes		Low
2012 Israel-Gaza war	2012-2015	Medium	Low		Yes	Medium

The years between the events' occurrence and the following transformative event are listed in column 2. The threat regime produced by the transformative events is shown in columns 3 and 4. Each column indicates the level of physical and social threat, respectively. Threat may be labeled as low, medium, or high. Finally, columns 5, 6, and 7 represent the pattern of Israeli settler violence during their respective periods. Columns 5 and 6 indicate whether the period was marked by a significant level of symbolic targeting and severe forms of violence meant to injure or kill Palestinian civilians respectively. Column 6 indicates the relative level of popular participation in anti-minority violence, with the level of participation marked as low, medium, or high. In the remainder of the chapter, I examine each threat regime in the West Bank from 1967 to 2015. As table 5.1 indicates, I show that periods marked by acute social threat tend to produce symbolic

targeting, while periods marked by acute physical threat tend to produce relatively severe violence by hardcore radicals as well as relatively high levels of participation in more moderate forms of violence.

Foundation of settlement (1967-1977):

Israeli settlers did not perceive an acute sense of physical or social threat in the period between 1967 and 1977. This period, during which Jewish settlement in the occupied territories was progressing and the radical right in Israel was steadily increasing its political influence, was marked by a sense of euphoria and empowerment among supporters of a greater Israel. One group in particular, the students of Rabbi Zvi Yehuda Kook, viewed these events as a clear signal that messianic redemption was imminent and that Jewish settlement of the territory was vital to its unfolding (Ravitzky 1996). They worked judiciously to obtain the support of sympathetic members of the Israeli government and to grow support for the settlement enterprise among the Jewish Israeli public.

Following the Israeli government's series of failures during the 1973 Arab-Israeli War, the public mood turned against the left-leaning labor party. Whereas the country as a whole was feeling an acute sense of vulnerability, the supporters of a greater Israel were empowered (Sprinzak 1991, 64-65). For the first time in Israel's history, it seemed, the Israeli right may actually be in a position to unseat the labor coalition. If this were to occur, the fledgling settler community believed, their goal of instituting Jewish sovereignty over Greater Israel could finally be achieved by government edict. Consequently, while some low level acts of violence did occur in response to Palestinian attacks, particularly in the city of Hebron, the community largely left violence to the security forces as it worked judiciously to establish settlements across the West

Bank. It should also be noted that with the exception of the Jewish settlement in Hebron, where a few dozen settlers had staked a claim to territory within a densely populated Palestinian city and faced open resistance from the local Palestinian population centering on the shared holy site known to Jews as the *Maarat Hamachpelah* and to Muslims as the Ibrahimi mosque (Sprinzak 1999, 169), there was little contact between Jewish settlers and the Palestinian population in the early years of Israeli settlement.¹³⁵ However, even in Hebron where settlers were allowed to carry small arms from the very beginning, settler violence was rare (Sprinzak 1991).¹³⁶

Camp David Accords (1977-1986):

Begin's acquiescence to American pressure to limit settlement in 1977 and the signing and implementation of the Camp David Accords between Israel and Egypt in 1978 marked a significant shift in threat perceptions among Jewish settlers. During this period, settlers became increasingly worried that their hold of the occupied territories was more tenuous than they had thought and faced increasingly frequent and severe Palestinian attacks. The result was popular violent mobilization against the local Palestinian population and a wave of violence against Palestinian places of worship.

¹³⁵ On October 10, 1968, for example, a 17-year-old Palestinian high school student through a hand grenade at Jewish visitors to the Ibrahimi mosque. The attack injured 47 participants in an organized visit to the site.

<https://www.jta.org/1968/10/11/archive/hebron-youth-admits-throwing-grenade-which-injured-47-jews>

¹³⁶ The government did not only allow settlers to carry weapons, it also helped them obtain those weapons in some cases. For example, when Rabbi Moshe Levinger led 30 families to Hebron in April 1968, then Minister of Labor Yigal Allon provided him with three Uzi submachine guns for protection Mitchell (2000, 24).

Israeli settlers were again euphoric in 1977 when the right-wing Likud succeeded in unseating Israel's left-wing ruling coalition. This was the first time in Israel's 29-year history that a right-wing party was able to defeat the left-wing coalition that had dominated Israeli politics since its founding. Supporters of greater Israel believed that the extension of Jewish sovereignty in the occupied territories was imminent. As a result, Begin's reluctance to annex the territories and his adoption of a strategy of land for peace in negotiations with Israel's Arab neighbors came as a complete shock to Israeli settlers and their supporters. The euphoria and sense of a power produced by Israel's victory in 1967 and failures in 1973 soon turned to a growing sense that Israel's annexation of the occupied territories was not as assured as supporters of greater Israel had come to believe. Settlers, it seemed, would have to continue to work judiciously to settle the land of their own volition in order to make withdrawal more difficult.

Incidents of violence against Israeli settlers steadily increased in the late 1970s as the Israeli government signaled its willingness to make territorial concessions in exchange for peace with its Arab neighbors. In response to perceived inaction by the security services following Palestinian attacks, settlers with military training began to carry out actions resembling traditional military operations against the Palestinian population.¹³⁷ As Palestinian violence

¹³⁷ In February 1979, for instance, a group of settlers encountered stone throwing at a roadblock Palestinians had placed along the Nablus-Ramallah road. In response, the settlers raided the nearby high school in the town of Sinjil and apprehended the principle. The settlers turned the man over to security forces, who promptly released him since he had no part in the incident. The settlers, who had no legal authority to conduct raids or make arrests, were "chided" by security forces, but were not sanctioned for their actions (Aronson 1990, 104-5). On March 13 of the same year, armed settlers from Ofra carried out an operation in response to ongoing stone throwing by Palestinians

became more severe, however, there was an increasing sense within the community that a more decisive response was needed.

On May 2, 1980, Palestinians perpetrated a particularly severe attack in which they killed six Jewish yeshiva students returning home from Sabbath prayers in Hebron. The general feeling among the settler community was that a severe violent response was needed to reestablish deterrence (Sprinzak 1999, 165-66). Members of the Jewish community in Hebron, including members of the violent network, which would later come to be known as the Jewish Underground, began to discuss a violent response to the attack as early as the funeral procession. They were unwilling to take the initiative, however, without the blessing of the community's rabbis. Shortly after the funerals, with members of the community calling for revenge, the community's rabbis quickly convened in order to discuss the matter. Following their meetings, the rabbis released a decree that retaliatory violence against the Palestinian population was both legitimate and necessary given the level of physical threat to the community. Consequently, one of the rabbis approached Menachem Livni, a founder of the Underground network, and asked him whether he would be willing to take charge of a retaliatory operation against the Palestinian

against Israeli buses traveling to and from their settlement. They drove into Ramallah, rounded up local civilians, and forced them to clear roadblocks for at least two hours. This same tactic was commonly used by security forces against Palestinians in the West Bank (Winslow 2007, 173). Security forces did not intervene. While the security forces did demand that settlers involved in the raid surrender their weapons, the settlers refused and the government quickly backed down. Two days later, on March 15, two Palestinians participating in a protest were shot and killed by Israeli settlers in Halhul, near Hebron. While Israeli security forces had killed Palestinian demonstrators in the past, this was the first time that Israeli settlers were implicated. Following the incident, however, the military was cleared of any responsibility by the government and no suspects were ever apprehended (Aronson 1990, 104-5).

community (Pedahzur and Perliger 2009, 50-51). Immediate costs had to be imposed on the Palestinian population and the rabbis knew that Livni and his network had the means and skills needed to organize and carry out an attack. This was the approval members of the Underground had been waiting for.

Livni and his coconspirators decided that they would respond to the Palestinian attack by blowing up the cars of the five Palestinian mayors most active in the Palestinian National Guidance Council, which settlers blamed for the wave of violence in the West Bank. The idea was to cripple, but not kill, the mayors so that they would remain a living warning to the Palestinian population. On June 2, 1980, they acted; the mission was a partial success. Two mayors were crippled, two bombs failed because of faulty wiring, and an Israeli police sapper was killed attempting to disarm a fifth bomb (Sprinzak 1999, 165-66). A precedent had been set, the Jewish community would respond to severe acts of Palestinian violence in kind.

By the spring of 1982, tensions between the Israeli military and the Palestinian population in the West Bank had also significantly increased and Israeli political and military leaders had begun to advocate for the use of collective punishment against the Palestinian civilian population openly. However, heavy-handed state repression produced a backlash from the Palestinian civilian population, which only increased Israel's reliance on repressive tactics. As the situation became increasingly unstable, the level of Israeli settler violence against the Palestinian population increased. Nighttime incursions into Palestinian villages by Israeli settlers, where groups of settlers smashed windows and fired their guns into storefronts, became commonplace. Settlers also increasingly used live fire against Palestinian civilians (Aronson 1990, 286-287). In March 1982, for example, settlers were implicated in the killings of two Palestinians. In the first incident, Israeli settlers fired shots at a number of Palestinian minors,

hitting and killed one of them. Settlers brought another back to a Jewish settlement where settlers held him for several hours, beating him before turning him over to the police.¹³⁸ In the second incident, a settler killed a Palestinian minor in the southern Hebron region of the West Bank. In addition to these two incidents, in April of 1982 the head of the local regional council of Jewish settlements in the Ramallah region was filmed shooting into a crowd of demonstrating Palestinians while Israeli soldiers stood casually behind him (Aronson 1990, 286-287). Overall, between 1980 and 1984, the Israeli press reported 380 attacks by settlers against Palestinians in which settlers killed 23 Palestinians, injured 191, and abducted 38. Hundreds more attacks were directed at Palestinian property (Lustick 1988, 66).

While Israeli settlers were frustrated by the relatively low level of settlement expansion permitted by the government and were shocked by the Camp David Accords, the idea that the government may actually backtrack and begin to dismantle Jewish settlements crystalized around the evacuation of the settlement of Yamit and its satellite settlements in the North-East Sinai on April 23, 1982. In response to the looming evacuation, a large-scale mobilization effort was carried out by Gush Emunim in the form of a civil disobedience campaign and the coordination

¹³⁸ The Israeli government eventually charged Nathan Nathanson, the external secretary of the Shiloh settlement, for the murder, but following pressure from the settler community, the government reduced the charges to manslaughter.

In 1985 as part of the crackdown on the Jewish underground network, Israeli authorities arrested Nathanson and charged him with murder for his role in planting a bomb in the Palestinian mayor of Nablus' car in 1980. This was the first time any settler had been tried and convicted of murder committed against Palestinians (Nakhleh 1991, 708, 712).

of protests and demonstrations all over the country (Sprinzak 1999, 173).¹³⁹ Overall, however, the community remained hopeful as their spiritual leaders in the territories continued to contend that divine intervention would prevent the evacuation. When Israeli security forces carried out the evacuation of Yamit, therefore, many members of the community were shaken. It was now clear that the government was not only willing to slow the process of settlement in response to international pressure, but was also willing to unravel it if they believed doing so was strategically expedient (Feige 2009, 196).

While the profound sense of social threat created by the Yamit evacuation and corresponding grant of limited autonomy to Palestinians in the West Bank did not result in large-scale violence against Palestinians, it did motivate the first attack by a Jewish extremist on one of the most important symbols of Palestinian culture. On April 11, 1982, just 11 days before the evacuation of Yamit was to take place, a young American immigrant living in Jerusalem and serving in the IDF carried out a deadly shooting attack against Palestinian civilians at the al-Aqsa mosque in Jerusalem. The attacker, Alan Goodman, was a supporter of the Kach Movement, a small extremist network of ultranationalists led by the rabbi Meir Kahane and centered in the cities of Jerusalem and Hebron. Goodman shot at least thirteen Palestinians during the attack, two of whom succumbed to their wounds.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁹ The Movement to Halt the Retreat from Sinai, which was dominated by prominent members of Gush Emunim, organized most of these activities.

¹⁴⁰ “2 Arabs are Killed as Israeli Attacks Dome of the Rock.” *The New York Times*. April 12, 1982. “Soldier Gets Life Term in Dome of the Rock Death.” *The New York Times*. April 8, 1983.

While press reports indicated that Goodman was a loner and by some accounts mentally ill, he was not the only one who had seriously considered an attack on the temple mount. The Underground network began as a small clique of four Israeli settlers who believed that the mosques on the temple mount in Jerusalem were an abomination and, as such, had to be destroyed. The hope was that destroying the mosques on the temple mount would cause a crisis between Israel and the Muslim world, thereby reducing the likelihood that Israel would make or implement peace agreements with its neighbors (Pedahzur and Perliger 2009, 48-49). Despite preparing for the attack, however, the group was unable to obtain approval from the community's religious leadership who viewed such an action as illegitimate and potentially counterproductive. Without this approval, the group was unwilling to implement their plan.

While the Underground refrained from actualizing their planned attack on the Temple Mount in the aftermath of the Camp David Accords, the evacuation of Yamit changed their calculus. Following the evacuation, Jewish radicals in the West Bank increasingly targeted Palestinian holy places despite the longstanding disapproval of such activities by the community's spiritual leaders. The wave of attacks began in February 1983 when settlers set off a bomb at a Palestinian mosque in Hebron. In June, armed settlers broke into the Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron and threatened Palestinian worshippers with their weapons and in December, Jewish civilians carried out at least eight bomb attacks against Muslim and Christian places of worship in the West Bank and Jerusalem. In January 1984, the wave of attacks continued, culminating in two thwarted attempts to blow up the Dome of the Rock mosque on the Temple

Mount with high power explosives (Nakhleh 1991, 725, Hellinger, Hershkowitz, and Susser 2018, 91, Pedahzur and Perliger 2009, 141).¹⁴¹

As the level of Palestinian violence against the Jewish community increased, retaliatory attacks by Israeli settlers became increasingly severe. One of the most notable incidents occurred in July of 1983 when members of the Underground carried out an attack on the Islamic College of Hebron. This attack was a response to a recent murder of a Jewish seminary student in the city. Underground members killed three Palestinian students and wounded thirty-seven in the attack. Following the attack, settlers perpetrated a number of smaller acts of indiscriminate violence against Palestinians. During this time, the most aggressive member of the underground, Shaul Nir, became impatient with the small-scale operations the group had been perpetrating. He believed that the group needed to carry out a decisive attack that would deter the Palestinian population from continuing their attacks. After approaching - and receiving the blessing of - the community's rabbis, he convinced Livni to plan a bombing of the men's dormitory on Bir Zeit University in Ramallah which they hoped would result in a large number of Palestinian casualties (Sprinzak 1999, 166-67). When security forces unexpectedly shut down the University, the group instead decided to blow up five Palestinian passenger buses.¹⁴² The buses were to explode late on Friday afternoon, at a time and place where Jews were unlikely to be present, but the number of Palestinian civilian casualties would be considerable. Unbeknownst to

¹⁴¹ Settlers perpetrated many more attacks of a less severe nature against Palestinian religious institutions. Between 1980 and 1984, at least 41 such attacks were carried out by Israeli settlers (Lustick 1988, 66).

¹⁴² The planners of the attack chose this tactic because Palestinians had carried out a number of attacks on Jewish public buses.

the group, the Israeli security services had been trailing them and succeeded in dismantling the explosive devices before the attack could be carried out.

Following an undercover investigation, on April 27, 1984, the Israeli security services raided the Underground network and arrested 25 of its members. Following this initial wave of arrests, Israeli security services carried out further arrests, including of prominent members of the settler community's leadership who had been involved in the network's activities.¹⁴³ It soon became clear that settler violence during this period was not a peripheral phenomenon; prominent members of the settler movement largely organized and perpetrated this violent campaign as part of a calculated strategy of demobilizing the Palestinian population. Attacks against Palestinians, in other words, were carried out as a community strategy of "social control" that was widely discussed and broadly supported in the settlements (Weisburd 1989).¹⁴⁴

Despite the severity of their crimes, the underground maintained widespread support among the settler community even after the full scope of their activities was made public (Lustick 1988, 70). According to one poll conducted for a Jerusalem weekly newspaper, over 50 percent of respondents felt that "the members of the underground had acted legitimately in their

¹⁴³ For a list and biographies of Underground members see (Nakhleh 1991).

¹⁴⁴ While it is unclear exactly what proportion of the settler community participated in violent activities, these acts were quite popular within the settler community as a whole given the growing frequency of Palestinian attacks on the Jewish community in the 1980s (Weisburd 1989). In addition, by 1980 anti-Palestinian violence had become quite popular among Israeli Jews more generally. According to a poll taken in 1980, approximately one third of the Jewish Israeli public supported the use of terror. Among non-Ashkenazi Jews, the political base of the right-wing government, supporters of anti-Arab violence outnumbered opponents (47 percent to 46 percent) (Aronson 1990, 210).

own self-defense” (Benvenisti 1984, 71). There was also widespread support among Israel’s political and religious establishment for those members of the Underground arrested by the Israeli security forces (Nakhleh 1991, 707). Many in the leadership maintained that the activities of the underground were legitimate on a number of grounds. Attacks on the mayors were justified by arguing that they were representatives of the PLO and were therefore guilty of incitement against Israel. According to one prominent settler Rabbi, Moshe Levinger, “the government should have threatened the lives of the mayors, and since it failed to do so, the members of the underground did it instead.” The attack on the Islamic college was similarly justified by arguing that the site had been a “center of incitement.”¹⁴⁵ Ultimately, the majority of Gush Emunim’s leadership differentiated between retaliatory acts of violence following

¹⁴⁵ The attempted attack on the buses was a bit more difficult to justify in this manner since it indiscriminately targeted the Palestinian civilian population. Therefore, instead of justifying the violence explicitly, a number of radical settlers equated the attempted attack to the tactics used by the Irgun and Lehi in mandate Palestine. Israeli society venerated members of these organizations as heroes not despite of but because of their use of indiscriminate violence. Yitzhak Shamir, who was the foreign minister in 1984 and argued that members of the underground receive a pardon from the government, had ordered many attacks against civilians when he led the Irgun (Lustick 1995, 525). One bomb placed at the direction of the future Prime Minister in an Arab market in Jaffa killed approximately 40 Palestinians (Bell 1976, 49-54). According to many settlers, therefore, the underground did not represent a deviation from the past. To the contrary, they were a reconstitution of the early radicals that had been instrumental in Israel’s founding (Nakhleh 1991, 707). The difference, however, is that whereas the Irgun and Lehi had been fighting for Jewish independence from a position of relative weakness, Israeli settlers now represented the dominant ethnic group in control of the state.

Palestinian attacks and acts of violence and “hooliganism” not directly linked to Palestinian violence. The former was deemed legitimate, the latter illegitimate (Sprinzak 1999, 212).

Jewish political and spiritual leaders largely ignored attacks on Palestinian places of worship in their deliberations about the legitimacy of anti-Palestinian violence. While a small number of Jewish spiritual leaders deemed attacks on Palestinian places of worship legitimate, most did not (Hellinger, Hershkowitz, and Susser 2018, 97-98, 119). However, rather than condemn attacks on holy places, most Jewish settlers and their supporters did not speak directly to this form of violence and instead tended to focus their attention on attacks against Palestinian persons and their private property. In this way, they sought to frame the overall phenomenon of anti-Palestinian violence as understandable, legitimate, and necessary given the acute physical threat the community faced.

The First Intifada (1987-1992):

The outbreak of the First Intifada in 1987 significantly increased the perceived level of physical threat among the settler community as Palestinian violence against the Jewish community spiked. Simultaneously, however, increased Palestinian violence brought a decrease in the perceived threat to Jewish sovereignty in the West Bank as the Israeli government categorically rejected Palestinian demands and significantly ratcheted up its repression of the Palestinian civilian population (Hellinger, Hershkowitz, and Susser 2018, 101). Consistent with the expectations of the arguments in chapter two, violence against Palestinian holy places ceased during this period as Israeli settlers focused their violence on Palestinians and their personal property in an attempt to deter to the rising level of Palestinian violence and to vent their frustration and anger.

While reprisal attacks against Palestinians continued even after the dismantlement of the Jewish Underground network in 1984, the severity and frequency of violence increased considerably in response to the outbreak of the first Palestinian intifada in 1987. Though the First Intifada is generally conceptualized as having been nonviolent (e.g. Chenoweth and Stephan), it was marked by a substantial spike in low-level violence against the Jewish community in the West Bank in the form of regular stone throwing and petrol bombings on the roadways and sporadic shootings resulting in civilian casualties. As Palestinians mobilized against the regime, the Jewish public became less supportive of negotiations and more willing to forsake the rule of law when they believed it jeopardized security (Alimi and Hirsch-Hoefler 2012, 337). The government, for its part, responded to the Palestinian uprising by significantly increasing its repression of the Palestinian population. Consequently, the threat of territorial concessions declined significantly among the Jewish community in the West Bank as the level of physical insecurity increased (Hellinger, Hershkowitz, and Susser 2018, 101).

While the government increased its repression of the Palestinian population in the territories, it was unwilling to carry out the types of severe punitive actions many were demanding. As a result, the settler community increasingly concluded that the government was unwilling to provide the sufficient protection the Jewish community was demanding. As such, the settler community concluded that they would have to deter Palestinian violence themselves. As a result, the settler community increasingly viewed attacks against Palestinians as legitimate and necessary. Consequently, an increasing number of Israeli settlers began to participate in attacks against Palestinians. On June 6, 1987, for example, in response to a stone throwing attack against a Jewish bus near Jerusalem, Kach activists in Hebron quickly organized approximately

70 Jewish settlers from the area for an attack on the Deheisha refugee camp near Bethlehem.¹⁴⁶

The settlers entered the camp by force, firing their M16 rifles in the air, at Palestinian homes, and at water tanks on Palestinian rooftops. Palestinians in the camp who were initially stunned by the attack confronted the group and violent brawls broke out. When Israeli security forces arrived on the scene an hour later, the Kach activists refused to leave, forcing soldiers to use tear gas to drive them out of the camp. This was not an isolated incident. While settlers did continue to perpetrate covert attacks against Palestinians and their property in response to Palestinian violence against Jews, they increasingly opted for public acts of violence that involved a relatively large number of participants (Perliger and Pedahzur 2011, 91).

While much of the violence perpetrated by Israeli settlers during the intifada lacked a clear organizational framework, radical settlers increasingly organized violent networks to coordinate their activities. One of the most prominent groups involved in organized violence was the 'Committee for Road Security'. The organizational structure of the Committee was paramilitary and comprised almost 1,000 members. Given its name, one might assume it was a primarily defensive security force; however, it tended to initiate attacks against the Arab population in a systematic fashion. Typically, before they acted, members of the group gathered information on police and IDF patrols, and if there were no security forces in the area, they would enter the Palestinian city with several cars and begin to attack innocent civilians and set cars and houses ablaze (Pedahzur and Perliger 2003, 24).

¹⁴⁶ Kach was a radical Orthodox Jewish, ultranationalist political party led by Rabbi Meir Kahane. For a discussion, see introduction.

The Oslo Accords (1993-1999):

The Oslo Accords, signed in Washington on September 13, 1993 represented the single greatest threat to Jewish sovereignty in the West Bank since the founding of Jewish settlement in the territory. Further, the signing of the accords did not eliminate Palestinian violence against the settler community. To the contrary, Palestinian factions opposing the deal carried out a wave of deadly attacks in an attempt to prevent the agreement's full implementation.¹⁴⁷ The attacks sparked a wave of settler violence against Palestinians and their property, culminating in the most severe attack ever perpetrated by an Israeli settler. On February 25, 1994, a 37-year-old Jewish American doctor named Baruch Goldstein entered the Ibrahimi mosque in Hebron while hundreds of Palestinian civilians were in the midst of prayer. Goldstein opened fire with his military issued assault rifle, killing 29 Palestinians and injuring 125. He only ceased his attack when the crowd overtook him as his gun jammed and beat him to death. A state investigation of

¹⁴⁷ These attacks began almost immediately. On September 24, only 11 days after the Oslo Accords were signed, a squad of the Iz-a-Din al Kassam brigades, the armed wing of Hamas, stabbed a Jew to death near the trailer he lived in in Central Israel. On October 29 Chaim Mizrahi, a resident of the settlement of Beit-El, was kidnapped by Palestinian members of Fatah near Ramallah. The Palestinian attackers subsequently killed Mizrahi and burned his body. Eight days later, members of Hamas shot and killed the personal driver of a prominent West Bank rabbi near Hebron. The wave of attacks continued in the following months.

<http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/ForeignPolicy/Terrorism/Palestinian/Pages/Fatal%20Terrorist%20Attacks%20in%20Israel%20Since%20the%20DOP%20-S.aspx>

Overall, Palestinians killed 43 Jewish civilians in the West Bank and wounded 567 between 1993 and the outbreak of the second intifada in 2000. <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/comprehensive-listing-of-terrorism-victims-in-israel#1993>

the attack concluded that Goldstein was motivated both by Palestinian violence and by a desire to prevent the implementation of the Oslo accords, which he viewed as an unacceptable threat to continued Jewish sovereignty in the West Bank. As Kiryat Arba's emergency physician, Goldstein had personally responded to numerous attacks against Jews and a number of Jewish victims of Palestinian violence, including close friends, had died in his arms. Goldstein also saw himself as a representative of the Jewish people tasked with carrying out a severe act of violence that would scuttle the political process threatening Jewish control of the West Bank (Sprinzak 1999, 241-2). As the theoretical argument in chapter three would have predicted, the combination of acute social and physical threat triggered a deadly assault on an important cultural symbol for Palestinians, just as it had done in the attack on the al-Aqsa mosque in April of 1982.

While the attack shocked much of the Jewish Israeli public, including many settlers, and was deemed illegitimate by most of the settler leadership, only a small minority of the religious Zionist camp "directed the blame inward and called for introspection and soul searching" (Hellinger, Hershkowitz, and Susser 2018, 115). Most laid the blame at the feet of the government, who they claimed had endangered the Jewish people by signing the Oslo Accords. A segment of the settler community, including some notable spiritual leaders such as Rabbi Yizchak Ginsburgh, venerated Goldstein as a hero and a righteous martyr (*tzadik*). Consequently, in the days after the attack, hundreds of Jewish supporters came to pray at Goldstein's grave, which settlers in Hebron subsequently transformed into a pilgrimage site for Jewish extremists.¹⁴⁸ Supporters installed a marble plaque at the site that reads "To the holy Baruch

¹⁴⁸ "Hundreds of Jews Gather to Honor Hebron Killer." *The New York Times*, April 1, 1994.

Goldstein, who gave his life for the Jewish people, the Torah, and the nation of Israel." By the year 2000 when the second intifada broke out, approximately 10,000 people had visited Goldstein's grave (BBC, March 21, 2000).¹⁴⁹ Overall, the attack largely succeeded in undermining the fledgling Oslo Accords by contributing to a significant upsurge in Palestinian violence, including a wave of suicide bombings by Hamas, that severely hampered the peace process and culminated in the outbreak of the second Intifada in 2000 (Sprinzak 1999, 242).

Following the attack and the subsequent public backlash, the Israeli government cracked down on Jewish vigilantes, particularly in and around Hebron (respondent 6). While authorities continued to ignore many minor acts of violence (Sprinzak 1999, 124-130), they responded forcefully to those perpetrating shootings or other attacks meant to severely injure or kill Palestinian civilians. The government also began instituting a policy of "administrative detentions," in which settlers suspected of violence could be arrested and held without charge (Hellinger, Hershkowitz, and Susser 2018, 115). Therefore, while some radical settlers continued to perpetrate minor acts of violence against the Palestinian community in the West Bank and Jerusalem, many settlers were hesitant to participate in severe acts of violence against Palestinians or attacks on Palestinian places of worship. Consequently, attacks against Palestinian places of worship largely ceased while violence against Palestinians became less coordinated and more diffuse (respondent 16).

¹⁴⁹ Gravesite Party Celebrates Hebron Massacre." *BBC News*, March 21, 2000.

Yigal Amir, who would later assassinate Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, claimed that he first came to the conclusion that he must assassinate the prime minister during Goldstein's funeral (Hellinger, Hershkowitz, and Susser 2018, 116).

Along with its direct impact on intercommunal violence, the Oslo accords also had a significant effect on the patterns of Jewish settlement in the West Bank, which further exacerbated inter-ethnic tensions and further decentralized Israeli settler violence. Settlers, now fearing a large-scale retreat from the West Bank, believed it was more important than ever to solidify their position in the territory. In order to increase the Jewish footprint in the West Bank quickly, Israeli settlers, led by future member of Knesset Moshe Feiglin, launched an initiative to build satellite outposts adjacent to every existing settlement and, in so doing, doubled the number of settlements in the West Bank overnight. By referring to these outposts as “neighborhoods” or “satellites,” settlers succeeded in alleviating both domestic and international concerns by allowing the Israeli government to claim that no new settlements had been founded. The adoption of the plan by the Yesha Council marked the dawn of the so-called outpost era (Pedahzur 2012, 131-3).¹⁵⁰

Two men who popularized this new strategy of settlement activity on the ground best illustrate the shift in the pattern of settlement: Avri Ran in the Northern Nablus region and Eddie

¹⁵⁰ The Yesha Council (*Moetzet Yesha*) was established in 1980 and included many of the leadership of the Gush Emunim movement (Feige 2009, 24-25). The Yesha Council’s role is to represent the Jewish communities in Judea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip. The settler community created the organization in order to lobby the government for resources for the settlements. It has also lobbied aggressively against territorial concessions to Palestinians (Pedahzur 2012, 58-59). The Yesha Council provides settlers with substantial administrative and economic resources and direct involvement in the implementation of government policies in the occupied Palestinian territories (Lustick 1988, 10). Over time the parliamentary arena became secondary for the organization as the settlers managed to circumvent it and gain disproportional influence in the agencies that actually formulate and carry out policy (Pedahzur 2012, 58-59).

Dribin in the Southern Hebron hills. Both men acted as charismatic models for the emerging “hilltop youth” that have become increasingly associated with both the outposts and violence against the Palestinian civilian population. Ran formulated the concept of the “hilltop outposts” around the time that Israel started negotiating with the Palestinian leadership in the early 1990s. The idea was to populate empty spaces of the West Bank with Jews to preclude their being handed over to the Palestinians. While this strategic logic was the foundation for settlement of the West Bank from the beginning, Ran advocated a tactical shift away from settlement organized by Gush Emunim and its settlement arm, Amanah, toward a “do it yourself” approach.¹⁵¹ The new settlement tactic was much more straightforward and did not require the largescale mobilization that the early settlements did (Weisburd 1989). The new strategy dictated that settlers pick a hilltop and decide that that is where they would build their home.¹⁵²

Eddie Dribin, an American veteran of the Korean War who moved to Israel and decided to settle in the West Bank, played a similar role in the southern West Bank. Dribin developed a

¹⁵¹ Gush Emunim is “a religious-fundamentalist movement with a certain brand of messianism and ultra-rightist political outlook. Its main declared aim is to bring the whole land of Israel within Israel’s possession, and its main strategy is the construction of Jewish settlements on contested territory” (Feige 2009, 5). Amanah is the settling agency associated with Gush Emunim that was founded in 1977 (Feige 2009, 24).

¹⁵² Ran and his wife, Sharona, started out in Itamar, a settlement just south of Nablus, and moved from hilltop to hilltop, finally establishing a private ranch more than a mile east of the mother settlement named *Givaot Olam*. The farm has become a meeting point for young committed Jews intent on returning to the land and contributing to the expansion of the settlement enterprise (Pedahzur and Perliger 2009). Avri Ran did not only help to popularize a new method and pattern of settlement, he continues to assist and encourage young Jews who often spend time as volunteers on his ranch to follow his example and work to maximize Jewish territorial control in the West Bank.

reputation as a quintessential American “cowboy” among Jewish settlers in the Hebron region. This image was particularly powerful for the children of American immigrants in the settlements who imagined Dribin as the personification of the American frontier culture. Riding on horseback, speaking with a heavy American accent, and with a gun slung over his shoulder, Dribin showed no fear when it came to the local Palestinian population and paid little mind to government regulations or directives. He rode his horse freely through Palestinian villages and developed a reputation among both the Jews and Palestinians as being “untouchable.” He acted as a mentor for young Jewish settlers in the Hebron region, instilling in them “a sense of pride, a sense of power and strength.” He became a living legend for the young settlers in Hebron. In the early 1990s, partially through example, Dribin encouraged young Jewish settlers from Hebron to seize the surrounding hilltops and to settle the land without coordination with the government. Many young settlers heeded his call, including his son who was later killed in a scuffle with Palestinian shepherds near his outpost of Havat Ma’on in the south Hebron hills.¹⁵³

This new strategy of expansion brought settlers into increasing contact with the Palestinian population as Jewish settlement progressively pressed up against Palestinian communities and agricultural land. This created “interfaces” – that is, “spaces that lie between...highly segregated neighborhoods’, which ‘remain sites of contestation and antagonism” – which often “operate as the battlegrounds for ongoing, indeed intensifying

¹⁵³ Information about Eddie Dribin was conveyed to me during interviews with Israeli settlers in the Hebron region in 2017. Most informative was an interview with two Israeli settlers in the Hebron region who had been mentored by Eddie Dribin and participated in setting up unauthorized settlement outposts in the south Hebron hills during the early and mid-1990s.

demographic disputes” (Cunningham & Gregory, 2014: 76).¹⁵⁴ In intercommunal conflicts over territory, violence in these areas is often perpetrated strategically in order to make people feel threatened and unwanted, given that doing so can induce people to flee (Balcells and Steele 2016, 37). It is not surprising, then, that settler violence became increasingly associated with the new outposts that, by design, extended deep into Palestinian populated areas.

The Second Intifada (2000-2005):

In 2000, as it became clear that the Oslo Accords had failed to alter facts on the ground for the Palestinian population in the West Bank in any significant way, Palestinians mobilized against the regime. This time, they did so far more violently than in 1987, incorporating attacks by suicide bombers designed to kill large numbers of civilians and regular shooting attacks on soldiers and settlers in the West Bank. The violent nature of the Second Intifada and the harsh Israeli response had a direct effect on threat perceptions within the West Bank; settlers feared for their lives, but given the deterioration in the relationship between the Israeli government and Palestinian leadership, there was no sense of threat to Jewish control of the West Bank. As a consequence, settlers began to perpetrate severe forms of violence against Palestinian civilians including drive-by-shootings and bombings of Palestinian schools, but did not target Palestinian holy sites (Pedahzur and Perliger 2009).¹⁵⁵

¹⁵⁴ These spaces exist in both urban and rural environments. They can take the form of streets, allies, and buildings as well as agricultural land, water sources, and contested hilltops.

¹⁵⁵ It is important to note that during the second intifada, Israeli settlers were far more prepared to challenge the Palestinian population openly than they had been in the first Palestinian intifada. Following the First Intifada, the

Two incidents exemplify the pattern of violent reciprocity between the Palestinian community and Jewish settlers during the Second Intifada. In the first incident, which occurred on March 26, 2001, Palestinian gunmen opened fire on Israeli settlers in Hebron. During the attack, a ten-month-old in the head while she lay in her father's arms. Settlers claimed that a Palestinian sniper targeted the young child deliberately. Israeli and Palestinian gunmen exchanged fire after the incident and Jewish militants even clashed with Israeli security forces attempting to maintain order following the incident as their frustration and anger over the government's tepid response to increasing levels of violence against the Jewish community boiled over. Four months later, in retaliation for the killing, Israeli settlers carried out an indiscriminate shooting attack against Palestinian civilians while in their car near the village of Ethnam, not far from Hebron. A clandestine Jewish militant group called The Committee for Road Security which was linked to the extremist Kach movement in Hebron took responsibility

government began to outsource at least a portion of the training and arming of Israeli settlers to an organization called *Mishmeret Yesha*, which stands for "guardians of the Jews of Judea, Samaria, and Gaza." The organization trains armed response teams in Jewish settlements and students attending religious seminaries in the West Bank, plants vines and olive trees around the West Bank in order to strengthen Jewish claims to the land, and pushes the creation of jobs and development for Jews. See Wagner, Mathew. "Leading Rabbi Calls for Yeshivas to Set Up Rapid Response Teams." *The Jerusalem Post*, March 17, 2008. It does so while explicitly rejecting any cooperation with the Palestinian population or acknowledgement of the legitimacy of their political claims. See Bronner, Ethan, and Isabel Kershner. "Resolve of West Bank Settlers May Have Limits." *The New York Times*, September 13, 2009. Through the organizations activities, Israeli settlers both in large settlement blocks and in isolated outposts had significantly increased their capabilities to confront Palestinians directly.

for the attack in which three Palestinians were killed, including a three month old child (Davis 2004).

A second incident illustrates how strategic spaces within the West Bank, such as natural springs, became flashpoints of the conflict during the Second Intifada. According to an Israeli settler who was involved in violent incidents between Jews and Palestinians before and after the Second Intifada,

Things [really] changed around the Second Intifada. The relations between Jews and Arabs grew tenser. Whereas before we only scuffled with Palestinian shepherds if they were unwilling to share the spring [outside of the outpost of Givat Ronen in the northern West Bank], now we wanted to drive them away from there permanently. We began to stand watch and to confront any Arabs that came close violently. The Arabs had to understand that their violent behavior has a price for their whole community. We were not going to allow them to benefit from the spring while Arabs were killing Jews. After a number of increasingly severe confrontations, they understood they could not return here (respondent 12).

The Second Intifada was also marked by increased government support for settlement in the West Bank, resulting in a decrease in the sense of social threat by settlers. In response to Palestinian terrorism, the Israeli government allowed the founding of additional outposts which significantly increased Jewish territorial control of the West Bank (Getmansky and Sinmazdemir 2018). Consequently, the Second Intifada significantly increased the perceived level of physical threat for Jews in the West Bank, while simultaneously decreasing the sense of social threat triggered by the signing of the Oslo Accords. As a result, settlers used violence during the Second Intifada to increase short-term costs for Palestinians in order to deter their violent behavior, rather than to undermine social relations between the populations. As expected, Israeli settler violence during the Second Intifada was characterized by a marked increase in the

frequency, severity, and number of participants, but did not include attacks against symbols of Palestinian culture such as places of worship (Pedahzur and Perliger 2009).

The Unilateral Disengagement (2005-2011):

As the Second Intifada came to end in 2004-2005, settlers were shocked and angered by the government's decision to disengage from the Gaza Strip and four settlements in the northern West Bank unilaterally. A resolution passed by the Israeli government that committed to dismantling a large number of settler outposts in the West Bank compounded the effects of the disengagement from Gaza. In addition, leaders of Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's ruling Kadima party were openly talking about plans to withdraw unilaterally from vast parts of the West Bank, which would require uprooting thousands of Israeli settlers. The result was an increase in the perception among settlers that Israel was moving toward a solution to the conflict that would include the return of much, if not most, of the occupied Palestinian territories (Nir 2011).

As the sense of social threat grew, radical Israeli settlers were motivated to renew their symbolic attacks. In early May 2005, as the evacuation of Gaza loomed, a small cell of radical Jewish settlers planned an attack on the Dome of the Rock mosque in Jerusalem. After receiving rabbinic approval, the cell planned to fire anti-tank missiles at the mosque from the roof of a nearby Jewish seminary and thereby scuttle the disengagement from Gaza by igniting a third intifada and possibly a war between Israel and surrounding Arab countries (Pedahzur and Perliger 2009, 126). Security forces uncovered the attack, as they did in the majority of previous attempts to target the Dome of the Rock mosque, before the cell could implement their plan.

The shock of the disengagement following the most violent period in the conflict's history brought the settlers' ongoing generational crisis to a breaking point (Nir 2011, Eiran and Krause 2016). Having secured positions at the highest levels of government (Pedahzur 2012, Acosta 2014), the settler leadership was convinced the disengagement could be prevented by institutional means.¹⁵⁶ They were wrong. Consequently, young activists accused the traditional leaders of creating a situation that would make future withdrawals from the West Bank much easier for the government to implement (Nir 2011). They pointed to the fact that the institutional and non-violent direct-action tactics espoused by the traditional settler leadership had failed to prevent the disengagement from Gaza, just as they had failed in Yamit in 1982. Consequently, increasingly radicalized young settlers drew on the teachings of a small group of radical settler rabbis who advocated the creation of a "balance of terror" that would deter future settlement evacuations (Hellinger, Hershkowitz, and Susser 2018, 217).¹⁵⁷

It did not take long before the rebellious young settlers adopted violent tactics against their Palestinian neighbors in response to the evacuation of Israeli settlements or outposts. As the level of violence perpetrated by young settlers increased, and especially when this violence began to target security forces at the margins, people began to refer to these violent settlers as *nahare gvaot* (hilltop youth). Scholars and the public in Israel generally conceptualize the hilltop

¹⁵⁶ While the majority of settler activity against the Gaza evacuation was non-violent, two deadly shooting attacks against Palestinians were perpetrated by opponents of the disengagement (Weisburd and Lernau 2006).

¹⁵⁷ While this type of violence became more pronounced following the Gaza disengagement, it was not new. Violence was first carried out by Israeli settlers against Palestinian targets in response to settlement evacuation when the Israeli settlements in the Sinai were evacuated as part of the peace agreement with Egypt in early 1982 (Pedahzur and Perliger 2003).

youth as radicalized young settlers who live or spend time in unauthorized outposts throughout the West Bank and reject the authority of the traditional settler leadership. Like most Israeli settlers, they resent the Israeli government's unwillingness to expand Jewish settlement in the West Bank. However, unlike mainstream settlers, they have decided that they must expand Jewish settlement outside of the law using the tactical methods developed by Ran and Dribin in the 1990s. The movement, however, does not have a clear leadership structure or clear rules regarding inclusion or exclusion. It is more often than not a term used to describe "bad actors" from among the Jewish population in the West Bank who are unwilling to defer to the government and security forces on matters relating to Jewish settlement and relations with the local Palestinian population.¹⁵⁸

On February 1, 2006, the Israeli government moved to evacuate nine structures built illegally in Amona, the largest Israeli outpost in the West Bank. This was the first attempt to evacuate any portion of a Jewish settlement forcefully since the disengagement. The operation was relatively minor in its objectives and did not represent a threat to the entire outpost. Nevertheless, in response, young activists mobilized thousands of Jewish settlers and their supporters who clashed with a large force of police officers, pelting the officers with stones, bricks, and metal bars. Despite the violent resistance and the settlers' success in mobilizing approximately 4,500-5,000 supporters to the outpost, the Israeli security services succeeded in clearing the area within hours (Alimi 2015).¹⁵⁹ By the conclusion of the evacuation, 86 security

¹⁵⁸ For a discussion of the hilltop youth, see (Friedman 2018).

¹⁵⁹ "Israeli Settlers Clash with Troops." *The New York Times*, February 1, 2006.

personnel and 140 protestors had been wounded in the confrontations. In addition, Israeli security services arrested 32 protestors accused of perpetrating “extreme violence.”¹⁶⁰

Following the events at Amona, Israeli initiatives to disengage from the West Bank continued. In August 2006, Prime Minister Ehud Olmert floated his “convergence plan,” which envisioned a unilateral Israeli disengagement from all but two percent of the West Bank. However, while the plan was widely condemned by settlers and their supporters, there was never a real sense that the plan could be implemented and as a result the response by settlers was fairly muted (Hellinger, Hershkowitz, and Susser 2018, 230).

In March 2008, under American pressure, the Israeli government participated in the Annapolis peace conference. The settler community deemed the Israeli government’s participation in the conference far more threatening by the settler community than Olmert’s convergence plan had been because it signaled that the recently elected right-wing government

¹⁶⁰ “Israeli Settlers Clash with Troops.” *The New York Times*, February 1, 2006.

The events at Amona created a problem for those committed to deterring future settlement evacuations by violent means. While settlers increasingly viewed violence in response to settlement evacuations as legitimate and strategically expedient, the violence aimed at security forces elicited a harsh backlash from among the Jewish-Israeli public, where support for the Israeli security forces is extraordinarily high. In response to diminishing public support in the aftermath of the Amona clashes, therefore, these radical young settlers were forced to reevaluate their tactics. Realizing that violence against Palestinians would allow them to avoid the costs associated with challenging government agents directly, radical settlers instituted a tactical shift (Nir 2011, 283, 286). Instead of targeting security forces, they would direct most of their violence toward Palestinian. Doing so allowed them to exact a cost for additional concessions to Palestinians while maintaining support among the Jewish public in Israel and avoiding harsh government repression.

was willing to consider conceding territory in the West Bank as part of a peace agreement. These fears were confirmed on November 25, 2009, when Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, under heavy pressure from the Obama administration, announced that Israel would impose a unilateral ten-month freeze on construction in West Bank settlements in a bid to restart stalled peace talks with the Palestinians.¹⁶¹ Having been recently blindsided by a former staunch supporter of the settlement project, Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, the settlers were reluctant to believe Netanyahu when he claimed to have their interests at heart. As a result, there was a sharp increase in the number of settler attacks on Palestinian civilians and their property following the implementation of the settlement freeze in late 2009, though these attacks remained at a relatively low level of severity (United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner October, 2013).

The precipitous rise in the perceived level of social threat led radical settlers to renew their strategy of symbolic targeting. In November 2008, the Israeli Supreme Court ordered the evacuation of a residential building in the city of Hebron that settlers had occupied illegally. As the evacuation neared, a relatively small but highly radicalized group of settlers from across the West Bank congregated in the house and began to perpetrate a wave of mostly low-severity attacks against the local Palestinian population in the city.¹⁶² Along with some physical assaults

¹⁶¹ Ravid, Barak. "Netanyahu Declares 10-month Settlement Freeze 'To Restart Peace Talks'." *Haaretz*, November 25, 2009.

¹⁶² The vast majority of violence in response to settlement evacuations would take the form of stone throwing and destruction of property. Limiting their activities to this type of low-intensity violence accomplished two tasks. First, it allowed Israeli settlers to maintain high levels of support from the Israeli public because low-intensity violence does not tend to produce the kind of public backlash produced by incidents such as the Goldstein massacre. Second,

and a significant number of attacks against Palestinian property, some of these young radicals began to target Muslim cemeteries, smashing some headstones and defacing others with racist graffiti (Hellinger, Hershkowitz, and Susser 2018, 231).¹⁶³ These attacks represented a tactical shift by radical young settlers who increasingly targeted Palestinian places of worship. Between 2010 and November 2012, settlers carried out at least twenty-two attacks against Palestinian places of worship in the West Bank and East Jerusalem. In the majority of these incidents, settlers firebombed mosques using Molotov cocktails and often graffitied these sites with incendiary messages such as “death to Arabs” or “Kahane was right,” the latter referring to Meir Kahane’s advocacy of the large-scale expulsion of Palestinians from the West Bank. While these attacks were largely condemned by the community’s political and religious leadership, often because they were expected to incite Palestinians and lead to additional Jewish casualties, some militant rabbis refused to condemn the attacks and Israeli authorities failed to arrest and

low-intensity violence allows radical settlers to avoid accountability because local police forces do not have the resources or motivation to investigate “petty crimes and vandalism,” while attacks resulting in casualties tend to be taken far more seriously by security forces. Ultimately, by carrying out large numbers of low-intensity attacks, settlers believe they can divert security forces away from the threatened settlement(s) or outpost(s) during an evacuation and deter future evacuations while avoiding severe government sanctions (Nir 2011, International Crisis Group July 20, 2009).

¹⁶³ The defacing of Jewish cemeteries, it should be noted, is relatively common in the diaspora. These attacks have been vehemently denounced by Jewish communities around the world as unacceptable acts of anti-Semitism.

prosecute the perpetrators in the majority of cases (Hellinger, Hershkowitz, and Susser 2018, 250 – 254).¹⁶⁴

In sum, the disengagement and subsequent peace efforts by the Israeli government marked a shift in the perceived nature of threat to the Jewish community in the West Bank. Unlike the Camp David and Oslo Accords, the disengagement did not trigger a spike in Palestinian violence against the Jewish community in the West Bank, and consequently the overall frequency and severity of attacks, as well as the number of people participating in violent activities, was quite low. However, like the Camp David Accords and to a somewhat lesser degree the Oslo Accords, the disengagement did trigger a wave of attacks against Palestinian places of worship.

Post-2012 Gaza War (2012-2015):

The second Israel-Gaza War in November 2012 triggered a sustained shift in Palestinian collective action in the West Bank. As the Palestinian Authority abandoned their fledgling peace talks with the Israelis, the level of Palestinian frustration and violence began to rise. Consistent with the arguments in chapter two, the most radical Israeli settlers shifted away from attacks on Palestinian places of worship and toward attacks meant to injure or kill their victims, such as firebombings of Palestinian homes.

¹⁶⁴ While not the norm, these attacks have triggered efforts by a small number of spiritual leaders, in the West Bank, most notably Rabbi Menachem Froman, to mitigate the effects of the attacks by visiting desecrated mosques and replacing damaged or destroyed Qurans.

As Figure 4.3 (chapter four) indicates, the war triggered a wave of both peaceful and violent organized Palestinian protests against the regime in the West Bank. The level of organized protests quickly declined, however, following the cessation of hostilities. At the same time, the heightened frequency of clashes between Palestinians and security forces persisted, culminating in the large spike in violence in October 2015 (figure 5b, chapter 5). While the precise size of the effect of the mosque attacks had on the rise in Palestinian violence is debatable, it is clear that settlers had accomplished their underlying objective. Relations between Jews and Palestinians had soured considerably and the peace process was frozen.

Rising Palestinian violence during this period legitimated more severe acts of violence against Palestinian civilians and, as a consequence, support for the perpetrators of severe acts of violence within the settler community increased significantly (Hellinger, Hershkowitz, and Susser 2018, 258). Consequently, consistent with the argument presented in chapter two, militant settlers shifted their tactics from symbolic attacks on mosques to firebombings of Palestinian homes meant to injure or kill Palestinian civilians (figures 5.1 and 5.2). These attacks gained international notoriety when two radical settlers killed three members of a single family, including an infant, in a firebombing attack in the Palestinian village of Duma. After the attack, the Israeli security services cracked down on radicalized settler youth. For the first time, the Israeli government significantly increased its use of administrative detentions – that is, imprisonment without trial - of those suspected of carrying out these types of attacks and began to use “moderate physical pressure” in interrogations of these suspects (Hellinger, Hershkowitz, and Susser 2018, 256-258). Before the incident, these tactics had largely been reserved for Palestinians suspected of involvement in violent attacks against security forces and Jewish civilians.

Figure 5.1 Settler attacks on Palestinian Religious Sites (2010-2015)

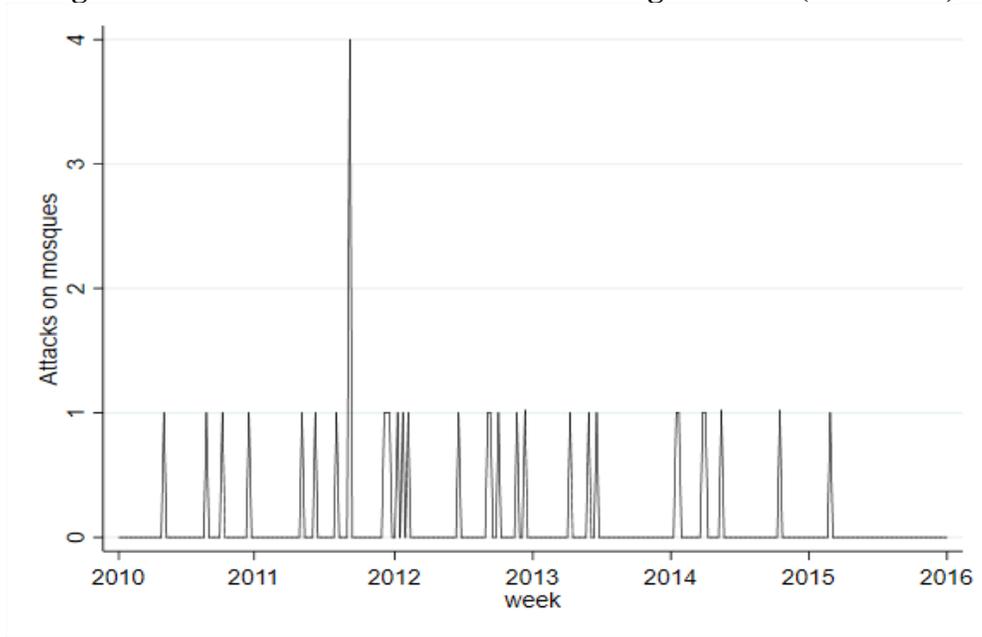
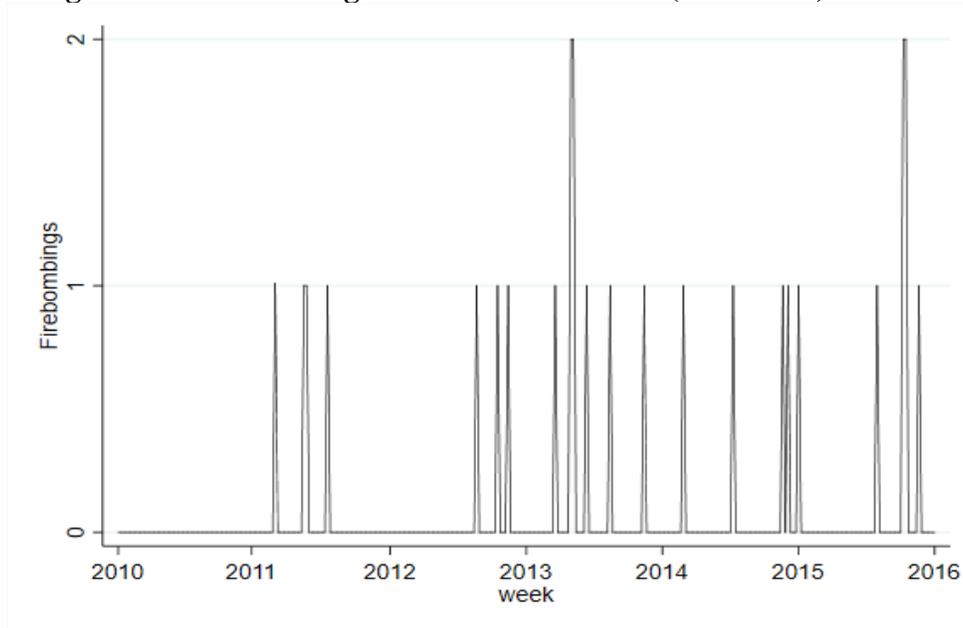


Figure 5.2 Firebombings of Palestinian homes (2010-2015)



In October 2015, Palestinians initiated a wave of deadly attacks against both Israeli security forces and Israeli settlers.¹⁶⁵ As a result, the frequency of attacks against Palestinians increased dramatically as Israeli settlers mobilized in defense of their community. These attacks included some firebombings perpetrated by hardcore radicals, but also a large number of incidents of stone throwing, physical assaults, and destruction of property. Many young radicals were stimulated by the rhetoric of Israel's political leadership who encouraged Jews legally permitted to carry a firearm to do so and encouraged all Jewish civilians to confront Palestinian attackers where they were able. A heightened sense of physical threat in the face of Palestinian attacks and encouragement by elites to take matters into their own hands produced a wave of

¹⁶⁵ While Palestinians carried out some attacks in Israel proper, the vast majority of attacks were concentrated in Jerusalem and the West Bank.

settler attacks (in which an unusually high number of individuals participated) that aimed to demobilize the Palestinian population.

Conclusion:

Israel represents a difficult case in attempts to explain the occurrence of dominant group violence. This is because Israel maintains strong and entrenched democratic institutions and possesses a coercive capacity capable of addressing challenges to the regime. The emergence and persistence of Jewish settler violence in Israel-Palestine therefore helps to highlight the underlying cause of dominant group violence. Namely, the Israeli case highlights the central role of uncertainty. In weak states, the effect of uncertainty is clear. Dominant group members perceive an existential threat to their physical safety and social status as the regime struggles to fend off challenges from ethnic minorities. Within this context, the government and its supporters mobilize dominant group members to assist the regime in its time of need. Where the regime is strong, however, the government need not rely on non-state actors to perpetrate violence because security forces are capable of quelling challenges on their own. In this context, dominant group violence is likely to occur where the regime does not take a clear position about its commitment to maintaining the ethnocratic nature of the polity. In the Israeli case, this has occurred because the government has attempted to maintain an inclusive democratic character and a social and political structure dominated by one ethnic group simultaneously. In sum, what the Israeli case shows is that wherever it occurs, uncertainty among dominant ethnic groups about their ability to maintain their elevated status increases the risk of dominant group abuses against ethnic minorities.

The periodization of Israeli settler violence presented here indicates that in order to explain the dynamics of dominant group violence, a distinction must be made between the different forms of threat dominant groups face. As the analysis indicates, those periods marked by acute physical threat produced relatively severe and frequent acts of violence by a relatively large proportion of the affected civilian population. Where settlers perceived the level of social threat to be high, particularly intolerant members of the Jewish community tended to adopt symbolic targeting meant to undermine social relations between Jews and Palestinians.

Conclusion:

Since shortly after Israel's acquisition of the West Bank in 1967, Jewish civilians in the territory have engaged in a violent campaign against the local Palestinian population. They have done so despite their socioeconomic dominance in the territory and their close relationship with the Israeli government and its security forces. Building on the case of Israel-Palestine as a primary case of analysis, the aim of this dissertation has been to explain why and how dominant ethnic groups choose to perpetrate violence against ethnic minorities. To this end, the research questions were as follows: Why does dominant group violence occur and why does it vary in its frequency, severity, target choice, and level of popular participation over time?

I addressed these research questions by way of a mixed methods research design focused on the West Bank as the primary case of analysis. This research design included (i) a quantitative analysis of an original dataset of contentious events in the West Bank and East Jerusalem (2010-2015), (ii) a qualitative historical case study of both the occurrence and absence of anti-Arab violence by Jewish civilians in Israel-Palestine (1929-1979), (iii) a periodization of Israeli settler violence from 1967 through 2015, and (iv) an analysis of approximately 50 original interviews with Israeli settlers conducted in the West Bank in 2016 and 2017.

This dissertation produces a number of important findings. One important finding supported by a district level analysis of the event data, a historical case study of anti-Palestinian violence by Jews in Israel Palestine (1929-1979), and interviews with Israeli settlers is that Israeli settlers have been most likely to perpetrate violence against Palestinian civilians when and where they face uncertainty regarding sustainability of their dominant sociopolitical status. In chapter one, I argued that uncertainty is particularly likely to occur where and when the government sends mixed signals about its willingness to maintain the stratified nature of the

regime. This is particularly likely to occur, I suggested, in ethnic democracies, in which governments express a commitment both to democratic governance and to the maintenance of systematic horizontal inequalities.

Consistent with this assertion, I showed that Israeli settler violence is most likely to occur in regions of the West Bank in which Israeli settlement policy has been the most ambiguous. Specifically, Israeli settler violence is most prevalent in regions of the West Bank in which the Israeli government has approved a large number of new housing units in Jewish settlements or allowed Israeli settlers to found a large number of new outposts *and* has carried out a relatively large number of forceful evacuations of Israeli settlements or outposts. In addition, the qualitative analysis indicated that the level of ambiguity in the government's settlement policy can explain both why non-state Jewish violence ceased in Israel-Palestine upon Israel's founding in 1949 and why this type of violence has been remarkably persistent in the West Bank since the 1970s.

In addition, the results of the study suggest that consistent with the theoretical arguments presented in chapter two, distinguishing the effects of perceived physical and social threats on the behavior of dominant ethnic groups can help to explain the dynamics of dominant group violence. In short, the results of both the quantitative and qualitative analysis of settler violence in the West Bank suggest that events that signal physical threat (e.g. Palestinian terrorist attacks) tend to produce relatively frequent and severe attacks against Palestinian civilians by a relatively large proportion of the settler community. In contrast, events that signal social threat (e.g. settlement evacuations) tend to trigger relatively infrequent attacks against symbolic sites representing the culture and values of Palestinians, such as places of worship, by a relatively small and intolerant subsection of the settler population.

These results suggest that extant approaches to eradicate anti-minority violence in general and anti-Palestinian violence in particular, such as education campaigns and increased repression of “bad actors,” are bound to fail if the governments continue to send mixed signals about their intention to maintain or extend the dominant position of the dominant ethnic group. In addition, the study suggests that incremental concessions to minorities that do not fundamentally alter the status-quo may help to manage conflict in the short-term, but exacerbate it in the long-term. Together, these conclusions suggest that dominant group violence is likely to persist until governments adopt an unambiguous stance regarding the status of the populations and territories under their control.

Theoretical contributions and policy implications:

Democratization and ethnic violence:

This research extends and bolsters extant scholarship that links horizontal inequalities to an increased likelihood of domestic instability and conflict (Yiftachel 2006, Snyder 2000, For a review see Cederman, Gleditsch, and Buhaug 2013, Stewart 2008b, Cederman, Weidmann, and Gleditsch 2011, Cederman, Wimmer, and Min 2010, Wimmer 1997, 2002). The existing literature has shown that democratization in the presence of significant horizontal political inequalities increases grievances among groups systematically excluded from executive power by increasing the perceived illegitimacy of the stratified nature of the regime. This perceived illegitimacy, in turn, motivates politically excluded minorities to mobilize against the regime. In addition, democratization produces opportunities for minority rebellion by providing political openings that allow excluded minorities to mobilize. The result is an increased probability of domestic instability and minority rebellion.

This dissertation supplements this extensive body of research, which primarily focuses on the behavior of excluded minorities, by addressing a dynamic that extant theories largely fail to consider. Specifically, the dissertation explicates the reason why horizontal political inequality in democratic or democratizing societies sometimes produces ethnic violence by dominant ethnic groups against ethnic minorities. While the argument presented here supports the proposition that democratization in horizontally unequal societies breeds instability by increasing the probability of minority dissent, it extends this argument by contending that the tension between a commitment to democratic governance and to horizontal political inequality produces dominant group violence that further exacerbates instability and conflict.

To this end, I have argued that states marked by both democratic governance and systematic horizontal political inequalities (i.e. ethnic democracies) tend to adopt a mixed strategy of conflict management in order to manage minority dissent. This strategy produces significant uncertainty for dominant ethnic groups because dominant group members simultaneously perceive a threat to their dominant sociopolitical status as the government expresses its commitment to democracy and feel emboldened as political elites provide reassurances about the government's commitment to the stratified nature of the regime. This uncertainty, in turn, significantly increases the probability that dominant group members will use violence against minorities as part of their strategy to protect their privileged status.

Ethnic democracy, then, does not only increase the likelihood of domestic instability by increasing the likelihood of minority rebellion, as extant research has indicated (Peleg 2007, Yiftachel 2006, Cederman, Gleditsch, and Buhaug 2013), it also does so by increasing the

probability of protracted intercommunal violence.¹⁶⁶ In sum, explicitly incorporating dominant ethnic groups as independent actors into theories of horizontal inequality and ethnic conflict provides a clearer picture of the way in which horizontal political inequality produces protracted domestic instability and conflict.

Theories of dominant group violence:

The uncertainty argument presented in this dissertation also contributes to the ethnic violence literature by providing a unifying theoretical framework that can incorporate a range of theories developed to explain dominant group violence. Current explanations of dominant group violence tend to focus on specific conditions that may trigger violence, which has resulted in a fragmented literature. For example, Posen (1993) and Lake and Rothchild (1996) build on the security dilemma mechanism from the field of international relations to argue that dominant group violence is triggered by declining state capacity that creates a sense of existential threat among members of the dominant group. Adopting an alternative approach in her examination of anti-minority violence in the United States, Olzak (1992) argues that economic structural changes which give rise to niche economic competition produce anti-minority violence. Building on Stuart Kaufman's symbolic politics approach, Rannou (2017) has recently argued that dominant group violence may occur where elites take advantage of large influxes of foreign migrants or refugees to propagate xenophobic myths and fears that allow them to grow their own political power.

¹⁶⁶ For early formulations of this argument, see (Alimi and Hirsch-Hoefler 2012, Maney 2016).

While all of these studies provide valid mechanisms that help to explain why dominant group violence occurs in specific cases, they lack a unifying theoretical framework. Consequently, these studies tend to explain only a limited number of cases. For instance, while the declining state capacity argument is applicable in some cases (e.g. Yugoslavia), this approach fails to explain the occurrence of dominant group violence in the context of relatively strong states such as Israel-Palestine and Germany. Similarly, while Olzak's niche economic competition argument applies to the United States at the turn of the twentieth century, it struggles to explain dominant group violence in the cases just mentioned, as well as in many non-western cases such as Iraq and Myanmar. The same is true of Rannou's argument founded on symbolic politics theory. While a large influx of refugees may help to explain the rise in anti-minority violence in contemporary Germany, it fails to explain the occurrence of dominant group violence in states without a large inflow of foreigners such as Israel-Palestine, Myanmar, or the United States during the Civil Rights Movement.

While extant explanations of dominant group violence are important for explaining why dominant groups target minorities in particular cases, the social-psychological mechanism of uncertainty can help to unify these approaches. In developing my argument, I have built on extant literature positing that political actors are far more likely to view political violence as both legitimate and efficacious where outcomes are highly uncertain (Ross and Gurr 1989, 418, McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001, 60). I have used this logic to argue that when members of dominant ethnic groups come to believe that the government is ineffective in dealing with challenges to the prevailing socio-political order (Rosenbaum and Sederberg 1976b, 7, Silke 1999, 3, Abrahams 1987, 179), but continue to receive support from political elites (Luders 2003), they are likely to experience uncertainty. That is, they both feel an acute sense of threat

and tend to believe that they have the support they need to overcome this threat by transgressive means. This sense of uncertainty, in turn, significantly increases the probability that members of the dominant group will view anti-minority violence as both a legitimate and necessary means of protecting their dominant position within the polity. Building on the notion that uncertainty increases the likelihood of dominant group violence, I posit that dominant group violence is most likely to occur where the government adopts an ambiguous stance concerning the inclusion and exclusion of ethnic minorities. The reason is that this ambiguity produces a sense of threat that motivates dominant groups to perpetrate violence and a sense of elite support that provides dominant groups with the belief that they can overcome that threat outside of the state's institutional framework.

Rather than challenging extant theories of dominant group violence, this uncertainty mechanism provides a theoretical framework that unifies existing explanations. This is because a variety of factors can produce the acute sense of threat that is a central component of uncertainty. In the context of continued government support for the maintenance of systematic horizontal political inequalities, these various factors can significantly increase the likelihood of dominant group violence. In the Israeli case, for example, I have argued that widespread support for the extension of Jewish sovereignty into the West Bank among Israeli political elites and a sense of threat among Jewish settlers produced by the government's refusal to annex the territory have combined to produce persistent non-state Jewish violence against Palestinians.

In other countries, alternative factors have produced a sense of threat among dominant ethnic groups and these factors have combined with continued elite support for ethnocentric policies to produce uncertainty among dominant ethnic groups. In Germany, for example, where the government is deeply committed to democracy, but still defines the nation in ethnic terms, a

large influx of refugees from the Middle East has triggered uncertainty among ethnic Germans about their ability to maintain their dominant status. Significant opposition to the German government's liberal refugee policy by local political elites has exacerbated this uncertainty. The result has been a substantial increase in the level of violence against minorities, particularly migrants and refugees (Benček and Strasheim 2016, Krell, Nicklas, and Ostermann 1996).

In Yugoslavia, where positions of political power and influence were dominated by Serbs, but the government espoused its commitment to multinationalism, impending state collapse and ethnocentric policies and rhetoric advanced by Serbian politicians came together to generate significant uncertainty among ethnic Serbs about their ability to maintain their dominant status. Significant elite support from the government (Mueller 2000) combined with an acute sense of threat (Posen 1993) led to the slaughter of thousands of civilians by Serbian militias in Croatia, Bosnia, and Kosovo.

In early twentieth century America, the combination of structural changes in the economy that threatened white socioeconomic dominance and continued support for white privilege among political elites produced uncertainty among the white population about their ability to protect their dominant status (Olzak 1992). Similarly, a significant sense of uncertainty was produced among southern whites during the civil rights movement as minority mobilization increased and local political elites encouraged white countermobilization (Luders 2003). In both cases, anti-minority violence significantly increased. More recently, the "make America great again" rhetoric espoused by Donald Trump and his perceived defense of the neo-Nazi protesters in Charlottesville Virginia has created a sense among white nationalists that they have significant support for their cause at the highest rungs of the American political hierarchy. This perception of elite support has merged with the continuing sense of threat these communities feel due to

substantial demographic shifts in order to produce a significant rise in anti-minority violence within the United states.¹⁶⁷

Current non-western cases of anti-minority violence exhibit a similar pattern. In Myanmar, for example, where the government continues to publicly support Buddhist dominance, democratization has triggered a sense of threat among the country's Buddhist majority. As a result there has been a sharp increase in support for islamophobic movements, such as 969 and Ma-Ba-Tha, that perpetuate the belief that Buddhism is existentially threatened by Muslim expansion (Kyaw 2016). The increase in the perceived level of threat in the context of the government's commitment to ethnocentrism has significantly increased support for and participation in anti-Muslim violence, most notably targeting the Rohingya minority in Rakhine state.

In sum, a sense of uncertainty among dominant ethnic groups about their ability to maintain their privileged status, which is produced by a combination of perceived threat and elite support, produces dominant group violence, even if the conditions that trigger the underlying perception of threat differ across cases. Uncertainty, therefore, provides a unifying framework that can help to bridge existing explanations of dominant group violence that have been developed to explain a wide range of seemingly disparate cases.

¹⁶⁷ See, "New Hate and Old: the Changing Face of American White Supremacy." *The Anti-Defamation League*, 2018.

Threat and ethnic violence:

The dissertation builds on a large body of research that has established a link between threat perception and both support for and perpetration of interethnic violence. This literature has shown that actions of ethnic rivals that increase the perceived level of threat, such as violent attacks and symbolic transgressions, increase retaliatory violence through a number of mechanisms. One way in which transgressive behavior by ethnic competitors triggers violence is by producing affective responses among those directly and indirectly affected such as fear and anger (Maoz and McCauley 2008, Kaufman 2015) as well as by producing prejudice (Kaufman 2001) and intolerance (Tir and Singh 2015). In addition, threatening actions by ethnic opponents tend to increase the perceived legitimacy of retaliatory violence by increasing the sense that authorities are unable or unwilling to protect the affected community (Abrahams 1998, Gazit 2015, McCauley and Moskalenko 2008, Della Porta 2013, White 1993b, Rosenbaum and Sederberg 1976b, 7). Transgressive activities of ethnic adversaries are also likely to increase the belief among those directly or indirectly affected that violence is an efficacious strategy for altering the threatening behavior of ethnic opponents. This is because violence can produce immediate costs that make adversaries less likely to continue their transgressive behavior (Alimi, Bosi, and Demetriou 2012, Maney, McCarthy, and Yukich 2012).

Further, in the context of ethnic democracies, transgressive behavior by excluded minorities against dominant ethnic groups increases the likelihood that dominant group members that view interethnic violence as legitimate will actually perpetrate violence. The reason is that governments are less likely to impose sanctions on violent actors when the level of support for anti-minority violence is high among the government's constituency (Rosenbaum and Sederberg 1976b, 8). A reduction in the level of personal risk associated with violent behavior increases the

likelihood that those who view anti-minority violence as legitimate or necessary will carry out attacks against minorities.

While there is a large body of literature linking threat perception to interethnic violence, the vast majority of this research fails to differentiate physical and social threat theoretically. Addressing this lacuna, this dissertation supplements the extant literature by developing a series of arguments about the unique effects of physical and social threat on the dynamics of interethnic violence. Specifically, by differentiating between physically and socially threatening events and analyzing their relative effects on short and medium-term patterns of interethnic violence, the dissertation helps disentangle the relative effects of each form of threat on the frequency, severity, and target choice of violence, as well as on the level of popular participation in violent activities.

The dissertation's findings suggest that physical threats produce a pattern of communal violence marked by relatively frequent attacks and large-scale participation by the threatened community. In addition, events that increase the perception of physical threat tend to trigger hardcore radicals within the affected community to carry out severe attacks designed to kill and/or injure members of the ethnic group deemed responsible. In contrast, socially threatening events do not tend to trigger large-scale communal participation in intercommunal violence and, thus, do not produce the same frequency of violence as physically threatening events do. That said, hardcore radicals from within the threatened community continue to react to social threats violently. However, these radicals tend to alter their choices of targets given that support for interethnic violence is likely to be relatively low among their ethnic kin and the risks associated with severe acts of violence are therefore likely to be higher. In addition, since social threats do not trigger the same need to impose severe costs on opponents in order to alter their short-term

behavior, personal integrity rights violations are a less effective means of achieving their objectives. Therefore, when responding to socially threatening events, hardcore radicals tend to direct their violence at symbolic sites that represent their ethnic rivals' culture and identity in an attempt to undermine social relations and prevent social reconciliation that can produce an erosion of their elevated status in the medium to long-term.

In addition to the theoretical contribution provided by distinguishing between the effects of physical and social threats on the dynamics of dominant group violence, these findings also have implications for policymakers interested in managing or resolving protracted ethnic conflicts. Namely, these findings suggest that an incremental approach to conflict management, in which governments extend limited concessions to excluded minorities in order to temper violent dissent, may be counterproductive. The reason is that while socially threatening events, such as limited government concessions to minorities, may tend to trigger symbolic attacks that produce less short-term suffering for ethnic minorities, these attacks can have devastating effects on the development and hardening of prejudicial and intolerant attitudes among ethnic minorities in the long-term. These attitudes, in turn, make the recurrence of ethnic violence more likely and make conflict management and resolution far more difficult (Kaufman 2001). This suggests that in ethnically divided societies, adopting an incremental approach to conflict management may help governments manage conflicts in the short-term (Dugan and Chenoweth 2012, Asal et al. 2018), while simultaneously making conflict management and resolution more difficult in the long-term.

Israeli settler violence:

In addition to the dissertation's contributions to the general theoretical literature, the study also improves on existing explanations of Israeli settler violence. Specifically, by highlighting the central causal role of uncertainty in the phenomenon of dominant group violence, the dissertation provides a unified theoretical framework for explaining both the occurrence and absence of anti-Arab violence by Jewish civilians in Israel Palestine.

As I discussed in the introduction, existing explanations of Israeli settler violence tend to focus on the ideological orientation of violent actors or on the level of threat Jews perceive. While I do not dismiss the importance of threat and ideology, I contend that uncertainty produced by ambiguous government policy improves on these explanations because it helps to explain why anti-Arab violence by Jewish civilians has occurred at some points in time and in particular regions, but not in others.

Both spatial and temporal patterns of anti-minority violence by Jewish civilians in Israel-Palestine support my theoretical claims. For example, as I explained in chapter five, Jewish radicals ceased their violent attacks against the local Arab population following Israel's founding. This cessation of violence occurred despite their rejection of the partition of greater Israel, their opposition to the extension of full citizenship to Arabs who remained within the state's boundaries, and their continued belief in the legitimacy of anti-Arab violence. Jewish radicals ended their violent campaign against the Arab population, I contend, because the Israeli government adopted an unambiguous position regarding the nascent state's borders and the status of its non-Jewish residents. In contrast, the Israeli government's ambiguous position regarding the final status of the West Bank and the Palestinian population residing there quickly led to the reemergence of anti-Arab violence by Jewish civilians. In other words, a sense of

threat and an ideological stance that legitimized anti-Arab violence was not enough to produce violence between 1949 and 1967. What was required was a sense of uncertainty produced by the government's ambiguous stance concerning the final status of the West Bank and its non-Jewish population.

Similarly, uncertainty can explain spatial variation in the level of anti-Arab violence in post-1967 Israel-Palestine. It can do so not only by explaining district level variation in the level of settler violence in the West Bank, as I argued in chapter four, but also by clarifying the reason why this type of violence has been so prevalent in the West Bank but not in other territories under Israel's control such as the Golan Heights. In both the West Bank and Golan Heights, the local non-Jewish populations have significantly opposed Israeli rule and have openly called on the government to relinquish its control of the territories. However, while Israel has adopted an ambiguous stance concerning the final status of the West Bank, the government has taken a clear stance regarding the final status of the Golan Heights and the Druze population living there by annexing the territory and extending citizenship to the Druze community.¹⁶⁸ Consequently, Jews in the Golan Heights perceive their dominant status in the territory to be unequivocal and therefore lack the motivation to perpetrate violence outside of the state's institutional framework.

In addition, the uncertainty argument presented here can help to explain why Israeli disengagement from territories under its control such as the Sinai Peninsula (1982) and Gaza Strip (2005) did not produce large-scale Jewish violence against Palestinians. Though settlers were adamantly opposed to Israel's withdrawal from these territories, the lack of ambiguity in

¹⁶⁸ Israel has provided full citizenship to both the Israeli-Arab community and to the Druze community on the Golan Heights.

the government's policies disincentivized violence. Once it was understood by the community that they had failed to dissuade the government from disengaging from these territories and that the use of violence would not alter the expected outcome, there was little motivation to engage in violent activities (See for example Hellinger, Hershkowitz, and Susser 2018). Said differently, despite the strident opposition of the settler community to the government's decision to withdraw all Jewish settlements from the Sinai Peninsula and Gaza Strip, the government's definitive decision produced certainty among the settler community about their inability to maintain their elevated status in these territories. Consistent with the uncertainty argument I have presented, settlers did not engage in significant anti-minority violence around the time of the evacuations.

The decision not to engage in anti-minority violence during the Gaza and Sinai withdrawals sharply contrasts with the violent campaign waged by settlers in the West Bank. The reason for this discrepancy, I am suggesting, is that limited nature of concessions in the West Bank, such as the partial evacuation of Amona in 2006, combined with continued government support for settlement in the territory, creates a significant degree of uncertainty among the settler community about their ability to maintain their dominant status.

This argument is not only theoretical; it also has important policy implications for both Israel and the international community. Specifically, it suggests that attempts to alter the ideology of radical settlers through education campaigns and to appease them by way of limited concessions will not succeed in mitigating Israeli settler violence. While ideology is an important part of the story, it is largely epiphenomenal to sociopolitical conditions that produce uncertainty for Israeli settlers. Consistent with this claim, recent research has indicated that ambiguous government policies in the West Bank have led religious Zionist rabbis who have historically opposed anti-minority violence to increasingly develop ideological justifications for this type of

behavior (Hellinger, Hershkowitz, and Susser 2018). In addition, as the quantitative analysis in chapter four indicated, government concessions to the settler community in the form of housing approvals may help to temper Israeli settler violence in the short-term, but these concessions have done little to reduce the level of settler violence in the medium to long-term.

This suggests that in order to eradicate Israeli settler violence, the Israeli government must take a definitive stance regarding the final status of the West Bank. Ultimately, Israel has three options: it can incorporate the West Bank into Israel and provide full citizenship to those residing there, it can implement a permanent apartheid system, which permanently excludes Palestinians from Israel's political system while brutally repressing Palestinian dissent, or it can relinquish control of the West Bank. The first option would strengthen Israel's democratic character, while undermining its Jewish identity. The second option would cement Israel's Jewish character, while rendering the country undemocratic. The third option would allow Israel to maintain the delicate balance between its Jewish and democratic character, but may be impractical in the short to medium-term given that nearly half a million Jews now live in the West Bank and there is little support for their forceful evacuation among the Israeli public. Consequently, the international community would need to place significant pressure on the Israeli government in order to disincentivize it from maintaining the status-quo. Barring such pressure, Jewish violence against Palestinians in the West Bank is likely to persist.

Future work:

While the dissertation helps to explicate the causes of dominant group violence, it suggests a number of additional avenues of research. One avenue for future research is to extend the findings of the dissertation to additional cases in both the developed and developing world.

The argument presented in chapter one suggests that combining ethnic forms of nationalism with democratic governance increases the probability of dominant group violence. While I have used the case of Israel-Palestine to illustrate and test this argument, testing the argument formally across additional cases would strengthen these findings.

In extending the analysis to additional cases, one useful strategy would be to compare dominant group violence across Western European states to assess the degree to which differing conceptualizations of nationhood within democratic societies affect the likelihood of anti-minority violence. A most similar research design comparing dominant group violence in Germany and France could be productive here. Germany and France resemble one another in many regards. Both countries are, for example, wealthy, secular, and democratic. However, the two states differ in their conceptualizations of nationhood; the French notion of nationhood adheres to a civic understanding of the nation, while German nationality is based on an ethnonationalist conceptualization of nationhood. A comparison of these two cases would probe how the inconsistency between Germany's democratic character and its institutionalized adherence to ethnonationalist principles of nationhood and citizenship produce uncertainty for ethnic Germans that are far less prevalent in France. It would go on to explore how the structural ambiguity in the German case may help to explain why anti-minority violence has been far more prevalent in Germany than in France.

Another useful extension of the dissertation would be to use a most different research design to compare the occurrence of dominant group violence in developed and developing countries. Such a study would compare the prevalence of dominant group violence in states that combine democratic governance with an ethnonationalist orientation, but differ in terms of their level of development, religiosity, and state capacity (e.g. Israel, Northern Ireland, Germany, the

American south during the civil rights movement, Iraq, India, and Myanmar). Tracing the way in which ambiguity in these regimes has created uncertainty for members of the dominant group about the sustainability of their sociopolitical dominance could bolster the argument that structural uncertainty breeds dominant group violence in a wide range of cases. Additionally, a most different research design could help to tease out how other structural characteristics effect the intensity of this violence. For example, while dominant group violence has been a persistent problem in Israel, Germany, Myanmar, and Iraq, this violence has been more intense in Myanmar and Iraq than in Israel and Germany.

This project could also be extended globally by examining how discriminatory legal frameworks alone and in combination with particular forms of political governance affect patterns of anti-minority violence. Many countries, for example, offer automatic or expedited citizenship to diaspora members of the dominant ethnic group (e.g. Turkey, Croatia, Estonia, Greece, Malaysia, Russia, and Serbia). Many of these and other countries also discriminate against ethnic minorities in the areas of political representation, education, civil service, and housing. Future research can explore whether/how these policies affect the likelihood of anti-minority violence. This research should assess whether these policies have an independent effect, whether they produce different effects in democratic and non-democratic countries, and explore what other factors may interact with these sorts of policies to exacerbate the type of ambiguity and uncertainty that tends to drive dominant group violence.

Another avenue for future research is to test the dissertation's findings that physical and social threat produce different patterns of violence using additional cases. While this dissertation has shown that this argument holds in terms of both short and medium-term variation in patterns of Israeli settler violence, the collection of global level data could help to bolster these claims.

Recent work by Kruetz and Croicu (2018) provides a strategy for collecting data on religiously sensitive targets such as places of worship and religious leaders. They use a combination of machine scraping and human coding approaches to identify attacks on religious targets in the UCDP-GED dataset. This data could be combined with data that captures minority violence from the UCDP-GED and the Pro-Government Militia Dataset (PGMD) and data that captures government concessions to minorities such the Ethnic power Relations (EPR) and the Justice During Armed Conflict (DCJ) datasets (Wucherpfennig et al. 2011, Loyle and Binningsbø 2016) to assess how government concessions and minority violence affect the targeting strategies of dominant ethnic groups.

While this dissertation theorized and analyzed dominant group violence at the group level of analysis, it is important to acknowledge that dominant group violence may range in its level of organization. In some cases, dominant group members are hierarchically organized into militias. For example, Protestant loyalists have organized into various anti-Republican militias in Northern Ireland such as the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) and the Ulster Defense Association (UDA). In Israel-Palestine, Jewish militias organized by the Israeli government have carried out military style operations against Palestinians at various points in the conflicts history and continue to play an important role in the defense of Israeli settlements in the West Bank. Dominant group members may also form leaderless networks committed to violence against minorities. Jewish Israeli settlers in the West Bank, for instance, have established leaderless violent networks such as The Jewish Underground (*HaMakhteret HaYehudit*), Bat Ayin Underground (*Makhteret Bat Ayin*), and The Revolt (*HaMered*) (Pedahzur and Perliger 2009, Perliger and Pedahzur 2016). While organized groups and violent networks may use violence to attract public attention and place issues that trouble them on the public agenda (Sprinzak 1995),

individual acts of violence need not be part of an explicit strategy by organization or movement leaders (Demirel-Pegg 2016, 179); they may also occur quite organically (Sprinzak 1995). Attacks by dominant group members, therefore, may also be perpetrated by lone wolves with no formal link to a violent organization or networks. In some cases, these attacks may be quite consequential. A lone-gunman named Baruch Goldstein, for example, perpetrated the deadliest Israeli settler attack in history despite not being a member of or coordinating with any violent network or organization (see chapter 5).¹⁶⁹

Thus far, scholars have kept theoretical studies of dominant group violence at various levels of organization remarkably discrete.¹⁷⁰ The problem is that disaggregating dominant group violence by its level of organization undermines analysts' ability to understand the dynamic nature of that violence. As the case of Baruch Goldstein indicates, an examination of only one level of organization also risks ignoring violent events that can have a significant effect on the dynamics of conflict. To understand dominant group violence fully, then, it is necessary to examine this type of violence at the group level while simultaneously accounting for the ways in which this violence varies in its level of organization over space and time.

Future research should therefore examine the reasons why dominant group violence varies in its organizational structure both spatially and temporally. This project would require the collection of global data on the occurrence and level of organization of dominant group violence. As an initial step, it would build on existing data collection projects such as the Ethnic Power

¹⁶⁹ Increasingly, organizations from dominant ethnic groups have adopted a strategy of "leaderless resistance" in order to avoid government attempts at undermining their activities (Dobratz and Waldner 2012).

¹⁷⁰ Some notable exceptions exist (e.g. Alimi and Hirsch-Hoefler 2012, Pedahzur and Perliger 2009).

Relations Dataset (EPR), the Minorities at Risk Dataset (MAR), the Pro-Government Militia Dataset (PGMD), the UCDP data collection project, the Armed Conflict Location and Events Project (ACLED), and the Social Conflict Analysis Database (SCAD) to identify countries in which systematic dominant group violence occurs and whether this violence takes the form of militia violence, attacks by organized violent networks, and/or lone wolves operating within a leaderless movement framework. Additional information can be collected from reports produced by non-profit monitoring organizations such as Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International, UN country reports, and by way of Lexis Nexis searches of world news sources. Information about the level of organization of dominant group violence would then be evaluated against a range of country level variables such as regime type, the existence of discriminatory laws, economic measures, alliances, and the level of government abuses of minorities to clarify how these factors affect the organizational structure of dominant group violence.

Overall, future research should attempt to develop a more holistic understanding of the phenomenon of dominant group violence. This is particularly important at present given the surprising surge of dominant group violence in both the developed and developing world and the failure of democratization to stem this trend. Ultimately, as long as ethnonationalist sentiments remain entrenched, democratization is likely to exacerbate rather than moderate violence against minorities by dominant ethnic groups. For this reason, it is imperative that scholars and policy makers continue to improve their understanding of dominant group violence in order to develop strategies to mitigate it.

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