The London School of Economics and Political Science

The Good Soldier:

Dynamics of Moral Judgment among Israeli Reserve Soldiers and Conscientious Objectors within the context of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

Donna Baillie

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Abstract

There is extensive empirical evidence which suggests that moral judgment involves not only rational assessment, but also cognitive processes involving emotion, biases, and intuitions which can at times conflict with rationality. Nowhere is the understanding of such dynamics of more importance than in situations of seemingly intractable conflict, such as that between Israel and the Palestinians. My original contribution to such understanding is twofold. First, in applying Moral Foundations Theory (MFT) to analysis of the real-world, situated experiences of Israeli reserve soldiers and conscientious objectors within the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, I (a) identify differences along the liberal-conservative continuum in the selective application of the moral foundations relating to harm and fairness, and (b) critique the structural relationship between the fairness and loyalty moral foundations as currently presented within MFT. Second, using both qualitative and experimental research, I present evidence in support of a proposed cognitive bias not currently in the literature which can affect moral judgment: the influence of competent performance on assessment of actor morality.

As individuals and as members of collectives we are responsible for making moral judgments. But cognitive biases, intuitions, and emotional responses can colour our perceptions in ways that can, in the case of intergroup conflicts, sometimes prove catastrophic. In highlighting (a) the relationship between political ideology and intuitive responses to violations of harm- and fairness-based moral foundations, and (b) how competent performance can influence assessment of actor morality, this research makes a small contribution to our understanding of what are necessarily incredibly complex dynamics around moral judgment.

Acknowledgements

This thesis is dedicated to Rahel and Adam

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Introduction: Cognition, Morality, and Conflict

Aims of the research

The overarching remit of this thesis comprises three distinct but interrelated aims, the combination of which allows for engagement with dynamic tensions between the universal and the particular. First, at the level of the particular, the research seeks to understand moral judgment processes of Jewish Israeli[1] soldiers and conscientious objectors within the specific context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Detailed ethnographic data and interpretative phenomenological analysis shed light on the complexities within Israel of concepts of ingroup-outgroup identities and of how individuals perceive the ongoing conflict and prospects for peace. Discursive analyses of nationalist narratives prevalent within Israel, and of how these are embodied through military service, provide insight into how the impact of a specific cognitive bias—the influence of competent performance on assessment of actor morality—can affect the perceptions and behaviours of individuals facing moral dilemmas relating to military service within this particular context.

At the level of the universal, the research engages with evolutionary theories of moral judgment and of ingroup-outgroup relations (e.g., Graham, Haidt, & Nosek, 2009; Fiske, Cuddy, Glick, & Xu, 2002). Applying research on cognitive processes hypothesized to be universal, to the particular real-world context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, facilitates a process through which "the universal" simultaneously interrogates, and is interrogated by, "the particular." For example, through engagement with moral foundations theory (MFT) (Graham et al., 2009;

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[1]As will be detailed in Chapter 3, there is much disagreement within Israel regarding what makes someone Jewish. For the purposes of this thesis I am defining "Jewish Israelis" as groups and individuals who would meet the criteria for living in Israel under the Law of Return, and who are therefore subject to military conscription.

Haidt, 2007) this approach provides a (universal) conceptual framework through which to explore differences between Israeli participants across the political spectrum in terms of their selective application of moral intuitions relating to harm and fairness. But equally importantly, through engagement with cultural specifics of the Israeli-Palestinian context, the research also tests the robustness of the MFT model itself. Similarly, competence and morality have been described as distinct and orthogonal dimensions (Wojciszke, 2005a), but idiographic analysis of interview material, coupled with a nomothetic approach to hypothesis testing, provide evidence that competence and morality are only weakly orthogonal.

Staying with this theme, the current research provides evidence in support of a proposed (hypothesized to be universal) cognitive bias which to date has not appeared in the literature, the aforementioned influence of competent performance on assessment of actor morality. The existence of this cognitive bias was suggested by analysis of semi-structured interviews with Jewish Israeli reserve soldiers and conscientious objectors. In other words, it emerged from an idiographic phase of the research, but has implications for the literature on (universal) cognitive biases. Such recursive dynamics between universal cognitive processes and specific cultural contexts are at the heart of the research presented in this thesis.

To a more limited extent, this research also engages with aspects of moral philosophy. In Chapter 4, the research addresses the controversy pertaining to normative claims which have come to be associated with moral foundations theory (see Jost, 2012; Graham, 2014). And the conceptual framing of the experimental research on cognitive bias (see Chapter 6) adopts a person-centred approach to moral judgment which is grounded in virtue ethics (Uhlmann, Pizarro, & Diermeier, 2015). This approach is in contrast to the more usual engagement with moral philosophy

currently found within social psychology, which tends to focus on act-centred moral judgments in the form of deontological and consequentialist judgment (e.g. Greene, Morelli, Lowenberg, Nystrom, & Cohen, 2008). A person-centred approach to moral judgment is particularly appropriate when seeking to understand how individuals make sense of their own behaviours, and those of perceived ingroup members, when faced with situations in which ingroup and outgroup identities are salient, such as those involving moral dilemmas relating to long-standing conflict. Ingroup-outgroup dynamics which involve stereotyping of "us" and "them" colour perceptions of the morality of individuals and groups engaged in morally problematic behaviours, along the lines of "our" violence cannot be compared with "their" violence because "we" are inherently better people. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is, to the great detriment of everyone involved, a classic example of such dynamics.

Moral judgment among Israeli reserve soldiers and conscientious objectors

Moral judgment on the part of those called to active military service can necessitate responding to moral dilemmas in which the behavioural demands of competing moral imperatives come into stark conflict. But how are such judgments made? And how do these cognitive processes within individuals affect the possibilities of societies moving beyond seemingly intractable conflict? Such were the questions with which I began my present research. There is extensive empirical evidence which suggests (a) that moral judgment involves not only rational assessment, but also cognitive processes involving emotion, bias, and intuitions which can conflict with rational judgment (e.g., Haidt & Joseph, 2004; Greene et al., 2008; Schwitzgebel & Cushman, 2012), and (b) that individuals experience moral

intuitions differently depending on how liberal or conservative they are (Haidt & Graham, 2007). But how do these dynamics play out in the real world?

Nowhere is the understanding of such dynamics of greater importance than in situations of seemingly intractable conflict, such as that between Israel and the Palestinians. Over 700,000 Palestinians became refugees during the 1948 conflict which established the State of Israel. They and their descendants, who are also classed as refugees by the United Nations, now number over five million. The military occupation of Palestine has been in force since 1967 when Israel captured territories in the West Bank and Gaza during the Six Day War, creating a further wave of Palestinian refugees (UNRWA, accessed 2015.). From the start of the first intifada (Palestinian uprising) in 1987 until 2014, this conflict has claimed the lives of over 11,000 individuals: over 1,600 Israelis, and over 10,000 Palestinians (B'Tselem, 2014). Both Israelis and Palestinians have suffered from psychological trauma related to the conflict (Pat-Horenczyk, Qasrawi, Lesack, Haj-Yahia, Peled, Shaheen, Berger, Brom, Garber, & Abdeen, 2009). In addition the economic aspects of the occupation have resulted in high levels of unemployment and poverty in the West Bank and Gaza (Samara, 2000; Ajluni, 2003). The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is also cited by Islamist groups such as Al Qaeda as a justification for violent attacks on western targets (Wiktorowicz, 2004; Fattah & Fierke, 2009).

Traditional political approaches to understanding conflicts based on rational choices made by the actors involved can only go so far in grappling with the issues that underpin such situations for the following reasons. They cannot touch upon cognitive processes that serve to colour perceptions and polarise views of the meanings of events, situations, and the "nature" of the enemy. Nor can they explore the psychological mechanisms involved in challenging the well-established norms of

one's perceived ingroup. Conversely, psychological approaches which seek to generalise empirical findings without taking into consideration cultural particularities including such specific factors as history, geography, and socio-economic structures risk making pronouncements that at best underestimate, and at worst disregard, the impacts of cultural context.

In contrast, research in fields such as cognitive anthropology, and social and political psychology increasingly seeks to address recursive interactions between psychological processes and specific cultural contexts. Recent research specific to the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has been able to explore such dynamics. For example, Bar-Tal (2007) describes how Israelis and Palestinians have developed specific psychological coping strategies in which collective identity is construed in opposition to the enemy "other," thereby contributing to the continuation of the conflict. Gubler (2011; 2013) provides empirical evidence from research involving Palestinians and Israelis suggesting that for individuals who strongly contrast their own identity against that of a demonised outgroup, experiences of meeting outgroup members in situations designed to humanise the "other" can prove counterproductive: such meetings result in increased cognitive dissonance, and to a hardening of prejudice, as beliefs that are important to these individuals' sense of identity are challenged. Experiments conducted in Israel and Palestine by Ginges, Atran, Medin, and Shikaki (2007) demonstrate that for both sides, the offer of material incentives in exchange for compromise over issues which they hold to be sacred, contrary to the predictions of cost-benefit analyses favoured by rational actor models, result in an increase in violent opposition to compromise. Such opposition decrease however, when instead of material incentives, symbolic concessions to their own sacred values are made by the "other." While such findings can, to differing

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degrees, also be applied to other contexts, all of these studies were able to draw their unique conclusions as a result of engaging with cultural specifics.

My research aims to contribute to this growing body of literature by integrating analysis of universal cognitive processes involved in moral judgment, grounded in evolutionary theory, with the particularities of a real-world case study. The specific purpose of the research is to analyse how moral intuitions and cognitive biases affect moral judgments relating to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict from the perspective of Israeli citizens called to participate in military service. The original contribution to the field that this research makes is twofold. First, by using moral foundations theory (MFT) as a theoretical frame with which to analyse dynamics of moral judgment of Israeli reserve soldiers and conscientious objectors within the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, I introduce evidence of 'selective fairness' in intergroup dynamics, which (a) identifies how narrow or broad application of the moral foundations relating to harm and to fairness differs along the liberal-conservative continuum, and (b) provides a critique of the current structural relationship within MFT between the fairness and loyalty moral foundations. Second, through analysis of my qualitative and experimental research, I present novel findings regarding a cognitive bias not currently found in the literature which can affect moral judgment: the influence of competent performance on the assessment of actor morality. Although the main focus of the research is descriptive, my critiques of MFT (see Chapter 4) and my categorisation of the influence of competence on assessment of actor morality as a "cognitive bias" (see Chapter 6) also necessarily entail engaging with normative issues relating to moral judgment.

The psychological, sociological, and political dynamics involved in violent conflicts such as that between Israel and the Palestinians are incredibly complex.

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There will be no nice, neat single-factor explanation for either why such situations arise or how they may best be ended. But the more we are able to understand about the dynamics involved in moral judgment, the better our chances of finding ways of dealing with seemingly intractable conflict. Through analysis of the relationship between political ideology and selective application of moral foundations relating to harm and fairness, and by highlighting the impact that competent performance can have on assessments of morality, the aim of this thesis is to try to contribute in a small way to such understanding.

Outline of the Thesis

This thesis is divided into seven chapters. The first three chapters "set the stage" for the project: Chapter 1 engages with the theoretical grounding of the current research, Chapter 2 addresses methodological and epistemological issues and describes the rationale for the choice of methods employed, and Chapter 3 presents contextual information by providing insight into the complex understandings of perceived ingroup and outgroup identities relevant to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict by 40 Jewish Israeli interviewees, and of their perceptions of the nature of the conflict itself and the prospects for peace. Chapters 4, 5, and 6 present the key theoretical and empirical contributions of the research. The concluding chapter (number 7) summarizes and discusses the findings, limitations, and implications of the research.

This research contains distinctive elements in the form of theoretical and empirical contributions specific to research relating to (a) moral foundations theory, particularly its application in situations of ingroup-outgroup conflict, (b) cognitive bias, specifically regarding its influence on moral judgment, and (c) models of competence and morality. These elements are woven into a coherent whole through their application to the overarching question of how cognitive processes in the form

of intuitions and biases affect the moral judgment of Jewish Israelis relating to military service in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The theories function to highlight different but complementary aspects of moral judgment relevant to this specific context. As such, Chapters 4, 5, and 6 engage in turn with the idiographic (applying moral foundations theory to analysis of moral judgment among IDF reserve soldiers and conscientious objectors in Chapter 4; analysing nationalist narratives specific to Israel, and their embodiment through military service in Chapter 5); and the nomothetic (experimentally testing for the presence of a specific cognitive bias hypothesized to influence moral judgment beyond the confines of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in Chapter 6). These inter-related threads are analysed as a coherent whole in the concluding chapter of the thesis.

Structure of the Thesis

The overarching question with which this thesis engages is that of how cognitive processes involving intuitions and biases affect moral judgments relating to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict for Jewish Israelis conscripted into the military.

Chapter 1: Theoretical Grounding engages with literatures relating to selected theories and models relevant to the exploration of how Jewish Israelis from across the political spectrum experience and seek to deal with mora dilemmas relating to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Chapter21: Methodology and Methods addresses methodological and epistemological issues relevant to the choice of research methods for this project, with a particular focus on debates relating to nomothetic versus idiographic approaches to research. The positioning of the present study within these debates—

that of epistemological pluralism— is specified. The rationale for choosing moral

foundations theory (MFT) as the cornerstone for the research is outlined, as well as

an explanation of how the inclusion of theories relating to models of competence and

warmth/morality, ingroup-outgroup dynamics, and cognitive dissonance supplement

this choice. The key research methods employed in the project—semi-structured

interviews analysed using interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) and

embodied discourse analysis; discourse analysis of nationalist narratives; and online

experiments—are described in detail. Reflexivity issues relating to both structural

and personal strengths and limitations relevant to the conducting of the research are

addressed. Finally, a brief description is given of how each phase of the research

informs the subsequent phases, and of how the overall research design has engaged

with both idiographic and nomothetic research methods.

Chapter 3: "Us," "Them," and *Hamatzav*: an Interpretative

Phenomenological Analysis of Semi-Structured Interviews. Ingroup-outgroup

dynamics are at the heart of the research questions addressed in the thesis.

Therefore, how individuals conceptualise what constitutes "us" and "them" is of

prime importance for this research. Chapter 3 applies interpretative

phenomenological analysis (IPA) to semi-structured interview data from 40 Jewish

Israeli reserve soldiers and conscientious objectors in order to ascertain the

interviewees' own understandings of identity, and specifically what it means to them

to be categorised as Jewish and Israeli. Separate analyses are conducted relating to

the interviewees' family history and ethnic/cultural backgrounds; their perceptions of

what makes someone Jewish; their attitudes towards Palestinians; their perceptions

of *hamatzav* ("the situation" between Israel and the Palestinians); and their thoughts

on possible solutions to the ongoing conflict. Within each of these sections, points

of convergence and divergence between four political categories (left wing, centre left, centre right, and right wing) are analysed. Cumulatively, these analyses provide insights into the significant complexities involving understandings of "ingroup" and "outgroup" identities among Jewish Israelis, and of how these differences affect individuals' perceptions of "the situation" with the Palestinians, and of prospects for peace. This chapter contributes to the literatures on ingroup-outgroup identity, intergroup conflict, and ethnographies of Israel. It provides useful context for understanding differences in moral judgment exhibited by Israelis from across the political spectrum which are addressed in the subsequent chapters.

Chapter 4: Selective Fairness in Intergroup Dynamics applies moral foundations theory (MFT) to analysis of the interview data with 40 Jewish Israeli conscientious objectors and reserve soldiers. This chapter introduces the first original empirical contribution of the thesis, providing evidence of 'selective fairness' in intergroup dynamics (a) highlighting differences across the political spectrum in the selective application of moral foundations relating to Harm and Fairness, and (b) critiquing the current structural relationship within MFT between the Fairness and Ingroup Loyalty moral foundations, and the current definition of Fairness within MFT. The findings from this research indicate that, within the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, there are key differences between political liberals, centrists, and conservatives within Israel regarding how broadly or narrowly they apply the Harm and Fairness moral foundations with relation to the Palestinian population, with more liberal individuals applying these foundations more universally than do their conservative compatriots. These variations correspond with differences between the political groups regarding sacred values which they attach to idealized notions of the State of Israel.

Building on these findings, it is argued that the "Binding" moral foundations (ingroup loyalty, deference to authority, sanctity/purity) effectively function to limit to whom the "Individualising" moral foundations (Harm, Fairness) are applied. The implications of this finding for the current debate around normative claims associated with MFT[2] are addressed, and the current structure of MFT, in which Fairness and Ingroup Loyalty are presented as distinct moral foundations is questioned. An alternative structure in which Fairness and Ingroup Loyalty constitute polarized positions along a single continuum is proposed, and MFT's current inclusion of "justice" as synonymous with "fairness" is critiqued in light of MFT's aim to provide a descriptive framework which incorporates non-western, non-liberal conceptions of elements of morality.

This chapter builds on Chapter 3 by further illuminating differences between liberals and conservatives in Israel with respect to the salience of perceived ingroup and outgroup identities, and the impact that these differences can have on the continuation of seemingly intractable conflict. These findings indicate that for "groupish" individuals, who identify strongly with a perceived ingroup which they deem to be inherently different from (and superior to) other groups, the categories of people to whom they apply the Individualising moral foundations are more limited than for less groupish individuals. This chapter contributes to the literatures on moral foundations theory, sacred values, intergroup conflict, and specifically the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Chapter 5: Narratives of competence and morality in Israeli nationalist discourse explores themes of competence and morality within nationalist narratives

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[2] Although MFT is purely descriptive in and of itself, normative claims relating to the perceived moral benefits of the Binding moral foundations have led to debates (see Haidt, 2012; Jost, 2012; Graham, 2014).

within Israel, how these colour perceptions of contrasts between Jewish Israelis and Palestinian Arabs, and how these narratives are embodied through military service. Three nationalist narratives which have been prevalent within the Israeli nationalist discourse since the inception of the State are analysed. The first two narratives, "making the desert bloom," and "*or lagoyim,*" have biblical origins, while the third, "Jewish genius," is of more recent provenance. All three were employed by Israel's first Prime Minister, David Ben-Gurion in the creation of a nationalist discourse capable of uniting Jewish people from diverse backgrounds into a unified Israeli state. This analysis proposes that a discourse in which Jewish Israeli competence is perceived as contributing to a moral justification for control of land, combined with Israeli governmental policies which severely restrict the ability of Palestinians to develop their lands competently, may produce a self-fulfilling prophecy which reinforces a narrative in which Jewish Israelis have a greater moral claim to the land, due in part to their competence in developing it, than do the Palestinians.

The embodied discourse analysis section of the chapter uses the 40 semi-structured interviews with Jewish Israeli reserve soldiers and conscientious objectors to unpack how their lived experiences of preparation for, participation in, and for some, refusal to participate in military service effectively embodies nationalist narratives in which competence and morality become intertwined. The findings of this chapter suggest that when individuals are faced with moral dilemmas relating to military service in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, if they or their colleagues perform what the individuals consider to be morally problematic actions competently, then their moral qualms about performing the actions may be to some degree assuaged. However, incompetent performance of actions which they find morally problematic may enhance their moral qualms. In some cases this appears to

have contributed to the decision of some soldiers to become conscientious objectors and refuse further military service. This proposed influence of competent performance on the assessment of actor morality is subsequently tested for using controlled experiments as described in Chapter 6. These findings contribute to the literatures on nationalist discourse, military studies, and specifically studies of the Israeli Defense Forces.

Chapter 6: Being Good at Being Bad introduces an original theoretical contribution by testing for the presence of a proposed cognitive bias suggested by analysis of the 40 interviews: the influence of competent performance on the assessment of actor morality. Two between-subject experiments (n=1194) were conducted online with Jewish Israeli participants. In these experiments, participants read a scenario in which the main character(s) were performing morally dubious actions either competently or incompetently, and then assessed the morality of the character(s). In the first experiment, participants read a scenario written in the 2nd-person and were asked to imagine themselves as the main character, a counterfeiter attempting to cash a forged cheque. In the second experiment a different set of participants read a 3rd-person scenario describing a group of international spies attempting to place a surveillance device in the embassy of a friendly ally. In this experiment the spies were either presented as Israelis spying on Micronesia, or as Micronesians spying on Israel. In both experiments the main characters were presented as either competent or incompetent, and regardless of this difference the outcome of the actions (trying to cash the cheque, trying to bug the embassy) was the same. The purpose of these experiments was to ascertain whether competent performance of a morally dubious action influenced the assessment of the morality of the person performing the action.

The design of these experiments drew on findings from existing models which posit that competence and morality/warmth are the two primary dimensions on which individuals judge themselves and others (Fiske, Cuddy, & Glick, 2007; Wojciszke, Bazinsky, & Jaworski, 1998). In the existing models, competence and morality/warmth are presented as orthogonal. However, the findings from the experiments suggest that morality and competence are only weakly orthogonal and that, in certain circumstances, competent performance of a morally dubious action can influence how moral one perceives the actor to be. In these experiments, the circumstances in which the cognitive bias appeared were (a) the actor was conforming to social norms; and/or (b) the victim of the action was an outgroup member. In the second experiment, although the competence/morality dynamic was evident across the political spectrum, differences were found between liberals and conservatives in how moral they assessed the Israeli spies to be, with conservatives rating their morality significantly higher than liberals. The dynamic was not exhibited when assessing the morality of outgroup members targeting the ingroup. Implications of this finding for the literatures on competence and morality, moral judgment, and institutional ethics are discussed.

Chapter 7: Discussion and Conclusion summarizes and integrates the findings of the preceding chapters within the framework provided by the overarching research questions; discusses limitations of, and future directions for, the current research; and reiterates the original theoretical and empirical contributions of the thesis.

Key Concepts and Terms

Below I give definitions and brief descriptions of key theoretical concepts which underpin the current research, key theoretical concepts introduced by the thesis, and relevant terminology specific to the Israeli-Palestinian context.

Theoretical Concepts Drawn from Existing Literature

- **Moral Foundations Theory (MFT):** Proponents of MFT argue that western liberal scholarship has largely limited its conception of morality to issues relating to the protection of individual rights, and to refraining from harming others. MFT instead engages as well with alternative understandings of morality, and contends that there are at least five core moral foundations with which humans engage (Graham et al., 2009; Haidt & Joseph, 2007).

  - **Individualising Moral Foundations:** as recognised within liberal western scholarship:

    - **Harm versus Care:** protecting the vulnerable, refraining from causing others harm

    - **Fairness versus Unfairness:** treating people equally[3]

  - **Binding Moral Foundations:** these specifically reinforce group solidarity, and are conceived of as integral to morality within more conservative collectives:

    - **Loyalty:** being loyal to the perceived ingroup

    - **Authority:** respecting the authority of those higher in the hierarchy

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[3] Recently Haidt (2013) has distinguished between how liberals and conservatives understand the concept of fairness, with liberals favouring equality of outcome, while conservatives favour equality of opportunity. See Chapter 3 for a discussion of this position.

- **Purity/Sanctity:** respecting boundaries between the perceived ingroup and outsiders

MFT proposes that liberals rely to a greater extent on the Individualising moral foundations, while conservatives rely more evenly on both the Individualising and Binding moral foundations. Differences along the political continuum can also be reflected in the sacred values espoused by liberals and conservatives.

- **Sacred Values:** Sacred values are defined as emotionally-charged values which are non-negotiable for those who hold them (Atran, 2010). These are moral commitments which should never be measured along an instrumental metric (Ginges & Atran, 2009). In situations of conflict negotiation therefore, suggesting an exchange of material incentives for concessions relating to sacred values is perceived as an insult, and is counter-productive. Sacred values are an integral element of group identities, and can function to reinforce boundaries which distinguish "us" from "them."

- **Models of Competence versus Morality/Warmth**
    - **Stereotype Content Model:** Stereotyping is another key way in which perceived ingroups are distinguished from perceived outgroups. The stereotype content model presents Competence and Warmth as two distinct dimensions which are of primary importance when individuals assess others. People tend to judge their perceived ingroup as stereotypically high in both Competence and Warmth, but tend to judge perceived outgroups in different combinations: High Competence, Low Warmth; Low Competence/Low Warmth; or Low Competence, High Warmth (Fiske et al., 2002; Fiske et al., 2007).

- o **Wojciszcke's Model of Competence versus Morality:** This model is similar to the Stereotype Content Model, but distinguishes between Competence and Morality, rather than between Competence and Warmth (Wojciszke et al., 1998). Fiske et al. (2007) consider the conception of morality espoused by Wojciszke and colleagues to be congruent with their conception of Warmth, but see Chapter 4 for Goodwin, Piazza & Rozin's (2014) critique of this stance. In the models of both Fiske and colleagues and Wojciszcke, it is proposed that individuals prioritize Competence when judging themselves (or their ingroups), and Warmth/Morality when judging "others."

- **Ingroup/Outgroup Dynamics:** Group-specific social norms can also function to reinforce inter-group boundaries. Individuals have a propensity to conform to the social norms of perceived ingroups with which they have a strong psychological identification, and to prioritize the needs of perceived ingroups over those of perceived outgroups (e.g., Tajfel, 1982; Wildschut, Insko, & Gaertner, 2002).

- **Cognitive Dissonance:** The protection of a perceived ingroup's reputation, for example as being high in morality and competence, can be of huge importance for individuals who identify strongly as members of the group. When this comes under threat, individuals can experience cognitive dissonance. Festinger (1957) originally described cognitive dissonance as the uncomfortable psychological tension felt by individuals when they become aware that they hold two or more important but inconsistent cognitions. Steele and Liu (1983) refined this definition as the holding of psychologically inconsistent ideas which specifically threaten one's positive

sense of self. Holding a consistently positive view of one's self and of perceived ingroups with which one strongly identifies minimizes cognitive dissonance. A person-centred approach to moral judgment can function to help retain a consistently positive self- or ingroup image even when confronted with specific morally problematic behaviours.

- **Person-Centred Approach to Moral Judgment:** Working within the philosophical tradition of Virtue Ethics, this approach posits that individuals intuitively make moral judgments of individuals based on their perception of the individuals' characters as a whole, rather than on specific, isolated behaviours (see Pizarro & Tannenbaum, 2011; Uhlmann et al., 2015). A negative aspect of the person-centred approach is that it provides both scope for glossing over specific morally-problematic actions performed by one's self or ingroup members, and also allows for downplaying morally laudable actions performed by members of demonized outgroups.

Original Theoretical Concept Introduced in the Thesis

- **The influence of competent performance on assessment of actor morality:** This original contribution posits that when individuals perform actions that they find morally problematic, they judge themselves to be more moral if they perform the morally problematic actions competently than if they perform incompetently, if they are conforming to social norms or targeting outgroup members. This proposed cognitive bias also affects assessment of the morality of perceived ingroup members in situations of intergroup interactions. The influence of competent performance on assessment of actor morality can result in individuals judging the morally

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problematic behaviors of themselves or of their ingroups less harshly if they perform the morally problematic actions competently.

Ethnographic Terminology

- **Largest Ethnic Categories of Jewish Israelis:**
  - **Ashkenazi:** Jewish population from Central Europe. Ashkenazim (plural), although numerically a minority, are the dominant ethnic group within Israeli society. Members of this ethnic group established the modern Zionist project. Relative to size of population, they are over-represented in the higher ranks of the Israeli military and in positions of political power (Levy, 2003).
  - **Mizrahi/Sephardi:** Although Mizrahi and Sephardi are two definitionally distinct groups, these terms are frequently used interchangeably within Israel. The Mizrahim originate from Middle Eastern countries with Muslim majorities such as Iraq, Syria, and Yemen. The Sephardim are descended from Jewish communities who lived in the Iberian Peninsula until around the 15th century. The Mizrahim and Sephardim have a lower social status then the Ashkenazim, and in the 1950s government policy placed them mainly in socially deprived "development towns" (Yiftachel, 2000).
  - **"Russian" or FSU:** People who identify as Jewish and who emigrated to Israel from former Soviet Union (FSU) countries starting from when this became possible in the 1990s. Due to historical and modern persecutions of Jewish people in these countries, many did not have the necessary paperwork to prove that they were Jewish.

Although required to serve in the Israeli military, in order to be fully accepted as Jewish they have to officially "convert" to Judaism. For some, this has been a source of resentment (Neiterman & Rapaport, 2009).

- **Ethiopian:** This population originates from the Beta Israel Jewish communities in Ethiopia. There were two main waves of immigration from Ethiopia, known as *Operation Moses* in 1984, and *Operation Solomon* in 1991, when the Israeli government organized mass airlifts of Jewish emigrants from Ethiopia, many of whom had attempted to make their way to Israel through the desert. Smaller groups of immigrants have travelled from Ethiopia since these two main waves. Ethiopian Jews are conscripted into the military, but were required to undergo a process of conversion in order to confirm their status as Jewish (Salamon, 2003).

- **Jewish Israeli Religious Categories:**
  - **Secular:** people from Jewish families who identify as not religious.
  - **Traditional:** people who identify with Jewishness in terms of culture, history, and ethnicity, and for whom maintaining Jewish traditions is primarily a means of strengthening social cohesion.
  - **Religious:** religiously observant Jews who also incorporate modern, secular attitudes into their way of life.
  - **(Ultra) Orthodox:** religiously observant Jews who, to a large degree, eschew modern, secular attitudes and ways of living. (Cohen & Susser, 2000).

- **Israel Defense Forces (IDF) Service-Related Categories:**
  - **Reserve Soldiers:** After fulfilling their compulsory 2-4 years of military service, soldiers in the IDF are required to be available for compulsory reserve duty until they are in their 40s. Frequency and duration of reserve duty, as well as exact age of exemption, varies according to the needs of the state and the skills of the soldier.
  - **Conscientious Objectors:** Israeli citizens who have been called to serve in the military but who refuse to serve on moral grounds. This may entail refusing any military service at all, any military service within the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT), or military service associated with specific actions, such as removing Jewish Israeli settlers from their homes. The first two categories are primarily associated with left wing individuals, and the third category with the religious right wing.
    - **Explicit Refusers:** Conscientious objectors who explicitly and openly refuse to serve in the military. Such refusal can, but does not always, result in arrest and detention in prison.
    - **"Grey" Refusers:** Individuals who find ways of avoiding military service without explicitly declaring themselves to be conscientious objectors (Linn, 2002).
- **Other Useful Terminology**
  - *Halacha:* Jewish law based on the legislative aspects of the Talmud (the collection of ancient Rabbinic interpretations of scripture which underpins Orthodox authority in relation to law and tradition). *Halachic* law plays a major role in disputes between religious and

secular Israelis with respect to what makes someone Jewish (see Chapter 2).

o *Halutz:* Literally, "pioneer," in Hebrew. The term refers to Jewish people who emigrated to Palestine post-WW1as part of the Zionist project in order to work the land and create Jewish settlements as a precursor to the creation of a Jewish state. Ben-Gurion (the first prime minister of Israel) envisioned the IDF soldiers as the natural successors to the pre-state *halutzim*, reclaiming the desert and protecting the nascent state (see Chapter 5).

o *Aliyah:* In Hebrew, "ascension." When a Jewish person from another part of the world immigrates into Israel, they are described as "making *Aliyah*."

o *Hasbara:* This is a term which can be translated either as "propaganda," or as "clarification." In the context that will be referenced in this thesis it refers to explaining to an international audience important aspects of Israel's situation in the Middle East, and the reasons for its military actions and policies. *Hasbara* is intended to counter international criticism of Israel, particularly, but not exclusively, with regard to the military occupation of the Palestinian Territories.

o *Tohar HaNeshek:* "Purity of arms" in Hebrew. This concept is detailed in the ethical code of the IDF, and decrees that IDF soldiers will only use their weapons to the extent necessary for the completion of their missions, will not use excessive force, will not harm prisoners of war and non-combatants, and will, as far as possible, avoid

harming their property, bodies, or dignity. This ethical code

underpins the controversial claim that the IDF is "the most moral

army in the world" (see Chapter 6).

- *Hamatzav:* In Hebrew, "the situation." This term is commonly used

  to refer to the political situation between Israel and the Palestinians.

- *Nakba:* In Arabic, "catastrophe." This term is used by Palestinians to

  refer to the displacement of over 700,000 Palestinians from their

  homes and lands during the 1948 war which led to the creation of the

  State of Israel.

- *Occupation:* Although this term is widely used within Palestine and

  the international community to describe Israel's control of the West

  Bank and Gaza since 1967, the term is contentious within Israel, and

  is usually only used by individuals towards the left of the political

  map. Individuals further to the right tend to refer to "military

  operations" or "the military presence" in Gaza and either (a) the West

  Bank (political centrists) or (b) by the biblical names Judea and

  Samaria (religious right).

- *Intifada:* In Arabic, literally "shaking off." This term refers to

  Palestinian uprisings against Israel's military occupation of the West

  Bank and Gaza. The first intifada began in December 1987 and is

  generally considered to have ended with the signing of the Oslo

  Accords in 1993; the second began in September 2000 and is

  generally considered to have ended with the Sharm el-Sheikh summit

  in 2005.

1.   Theoretical Grounding

The overarching aim of the current research is to analyse differences across the

political spectrum in the experience of moral dilemmas relating to conscription into

military service for Jewish Israelis within the context of the Israeli-Palestinian

conflict. I am approaching this task by seeking to analyse how relevant cognitive

processes hypothesized to be universal may influence moral judgment within this

specific context. To that end, the thesis engages with theories relating to moral

intuitions, cognitive dissonance, models of competence and morality, and heuristics

and cognitive biases. These theories address factors which have been shown to

influence individuals' moral judgment and are therefore relevant to my research

remit. By integrating these theories and applying them to the real-world context of

the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, this research hopes not only to shed light on how

specific cognitive processes influence moral judgment within this specific context,

but also to use the findings from the empirical research to interrogate relevant

aspects of the theories themselves. In the following sections I detail the specific

theories which underpin the current research, why they are applicable to my research

questions, and where relevant I identify debates relating to these theories to which I

hope my empirical research will be able to make a contribution. I begin with a

review of a theory which is particularly relevant to questions of moral judgment and

how these might vary across the political spectrum: moral foundations theory.

1.1 Moral Foundations Theory

Haidt (2012) has described a liberal western bias in much academic engagement with

morality, in which morality is understood as relating solely to individual rights and

to refraining from causing harm to others. Moral foundations theory seeks to

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transcend this perceived bias by engaging with alternative understandings of morality (Graham et al., 2009; Haidt & Joseph 2004). Haidt and Joseph (2004) take as their starting point Shweder's anthropological research into morality, which identified three distinct elements recognised in many cultures as constituting morality: community, autonomy, and divinity (Shweder, Much, Mahapatra, & Park, 1987). They unpack these three elements and contend that there are at least five core moral foundations with which humans engage, and that these evolved in response to specific adaptive challenges found in our ancestral past. They have categorised these five groups as either "Individualising" foundations, in which the locus of moral value was seen as resting with individuals; or as "Binding" foundations, in which the locus of moral value was the preserve of the group. The Individualising and Binding foundations break down as follows:

Individualising: the Harm versus Care foundation refers to the adaptive challenge of needing to keep vulnerable offspring alive and healthy, which Haidt argues is too important to evolutionary success to be left to learning through a domain-general learning mechanism, and that therefore it is probable that a harm-detection module or predisposition evolved in order for mammals to recognise signs of suffering in their offspring. Similarly, the Fairness/Injustice foundation addresses the adaptive challenge of needing to behave in ways that strengthen the cooperative capabilities of the group.

Binding: Ingroup Loyalty, Authority, and Sanctity/Purity all relate to adaptive challenges that threaten the stability of the group. Loyalty/Betrayal pertains to the predisposition of humans to organise themselves into groups that compete with other groups, and addresses the adaptive challenge of the need to defend the group from other groups. The Authority foundation refers to the benefits to social

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stability of hierarchies which require not only deference from those lower down the scale, but also protection of the weaker members by those higher up the scale. Haidt views Sanctity/Purity as the only one of the moral foundations to have evolved from a nutritive rather than a social adaptive challenge. Humans have evolved cognitive and emotional adaptations related to disgust that initially served to make individuals cautious regarding what foods are considered clean, and that appears to have been transferred to the social realm in the form of ideas around notions of bodily purity which can be "contaminated" by immoral activities (Haidt & Joseph, 2004).

In his later research, Haidt (2012) added a sixth moral foundation: Liberty versus Oppression, and proposes that this foundation evolved in response to early human small-group living in which it was possible for physically strong individuals to bully, dominate, and constrain others. He describes this moral foundation as operating in tension with the Authority foundation, in as much as it discriminates between what is perceived as legitimate or illegitimate forms and uses of authority. Haidt also proposes that liberals and conservatives employ the Liberty versus Oppression foundation differently, with liberals using it in the defence of oppressed people universally, while conservatives primarily limit concerns regarding liberty to their own ingroups (Haidt, 2012). Haidt has not situated the Liberty versus Oppression foundation within the Individualising /Binding framework, and as such, I have not included it in my current research: it is the contrast between relative reliance on the Individualising versus the Binding moral foundations which is relevant for answering my research questions.

The inclusion of the Binding moral foundations places Haidt and his colleagues at odds with moral philosophers such as Richard Joyce (2007) who focus on interpersonal relations concerning fairness and harm as the basis for a universal

morality, and do not consider MFT's Binding foundations as constituting morality at all. However, Haidt and his colleagues are not alone in their stance: Stich (2008) criticised Joyce's thesis as being based on western-centric norms, and also cites concepts of purity and deference to authority as important components of many cultures' understandings of morality.

Empirical research has demonstrated that, in accordance with MFT's predictions, individuals who identify as liberal draw largely on the Individualising moral foundations, while conservatives draw more consistently on all five foundations, with an emphasis on the Binding foundations (Graham et al., 2009; Haidt & Graham, 2007). This pattern holds true across many cultures even though some cultures are, overall and according to MFT's measures, more conservative or liberal than others (Graham et al., 2011). It must be borne in mind that cultures are, of course, fluid and subject to change rather than stable and reified. But, on balance, MFT provides a useful descriptive framework through which to analyse differences in experiences of moral perception and judgment along the liberal-conservative continuum.   My current research includes a study which creates a Hebrew language version of the moral foundations questionnaire (moralfoundations.org, 2008a) in order to establish whether MFT is suitable for research into moral judgment within Israel, and follows this with analysis grounded in an MFT framework of interview data relating to individual Israeli soldiers' and conscientious objectors' experiences of moral dilemmas relating to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (see Chapter 4).

An area of particular contention surrounding MFT involves the normative suggestion by Haidt (2012) that in relying primarily on the Harm and Fairness moral foundations, the moral palette of liberals is less rich than that of conservatives who draw more heavily on all five foundations. Jost (2012) disputes Haidt's analysis that

liberal morality constitutes a mere subset of a more comprehensive conservative morality, and instead suggests that in drawing primarily on the Harm/Fairness moral foundations, liberals demonstrate more differentiated moral judgments than do conservatives. Jost (2012) also refers to empirical evidence which suggests that social dominance, authoritarianism, and prejudice are positively associated with the Authority/Loyalty/Purity foundations. Similarly, Kugler, Jost, and Noorbaloochi (2014) demonstrate empirically that greater reliance on the Authority/Loyalty/Purity moral foundations by conservatives corresponds to relatively higher levels of authoritarianism, and that liberals' heavy reliance on the Harm/Fairness moral foundations corresponds to relatively lower levels of social dominance.

In response to such critiques, Graham (2014) acknowledges that there has been lack of clarity at certain points regarding a clear distinction between MFT as a descriptive model and normative interpretations relating to the perceived benefits of adherence to the Loyalty/Authority/Purity moral foundations. However, in defence of MFT's normative leanings, Graham (2014) refers to studies within sociology and psychology which point to negative societal impacts of high levels of individualism, and to benefits accruing from strong and enduring social bonds, to argue that exclusive reliance on the Harm/Fairness foundations might result in a society that was less humane than one that relied on all five foundations. Indeed, Haidt (2012) adopts a group-level selection argument in contending that societies which are made up of a mix of liberals and conservatives are more successful than societies which are either primarily liberal or primarily conservative. The findings from the empirical research as described in Chapter 4 contribute to this debate by introducing data gleaned from the interview analysis which illustrates dynamics between the Individualising and Binding moral foundations. Although particular to the context

of intergroup dynamics relating to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, these findings suggest that strong adherence to the Binding foundations can effectively limit to whom individuals apply the Individualising foundations, with conservatives largely restricting application of the Individualising foundations to perceived ingroup members.

Moral foundations theory provides a framework through which to explore how intuitions can affect our moral judgment with respect to perceived ingroups and outgroups. The understanding of the implications of cognitive processes which affect such judgment—and which do not conform to rational, cost benefit analyses—are crucially important when attempting to find solutions to intergroup conflict. Approaches to conflict resolution that rely exclusively on utilitarian reasoning risk misunderstanding powerful motivations involved in conflictual intergroup dynamics. Such motivations also surface in the form of powerful emotional attachments to symbolic personifications of important aspects of our collective identities. These 'sacred values,' if ignored, can present crippling obstacles to intergroup negotiations.

1.2 Sacred Values: the Collective Search for Meaning

Tetlock, Elson, Green, and Lerner (2000) define sacred values in terms of boundaries placed by people around non-negotiable principles whose violation provokes moral outrage regardless of whether such violations incur material costs. Ginges and Atran (2011) argue that the understanding of sacred values is crucial in trying to make sense of intergroup conflict. They cite findings from their experimental research in the Middle East, Nigeria, and the US which indicate that judgments about violent episodes in intergroup conflict are not based on utilitarian reasoning relating to their perceived levels of success or efficacy, but are instead grounded in deontological

reasoning around sacred values. As part of their research, Ginges and Atran contributed to an fMRI study in which integrity was used as a proxy for sacred values (Berns et al, 2011). In this study participants' neurological responses were monitored while they were offered cash payments as inducement to disavow values that the participants considered sacred, such as belief in God. The researchers found that engagement with values that participants refused to sell—those treated as sacred—were associated with higher levels of activity in the left temporoparietal junction and ventrolateral prefrontal cortex, regions associated with semantic rule retrieval. Berns et al. (2011) suggest that this indicates that it is through the retrieval and processing of deontic rules rather than utilitarian cost benefit analyses that sacred values affect behaviours.

Graham and Haidt (2012) explore how cultural specifics impact on such deontological reasoning, and argue that sacred values are constructed on different combinations of moral foundations, in ways that meet particular collective needs. They argue that sacred values can only be understood as a *collective* endeavour: to be sacred, values must be constructed by close-knit communities, and they must be viewed as 'all or nothing.' Graham and Haidt describe how moral monism— the belief that there is only one correct way to live—can be used to justify idealistic support of violent acts, and that, depending on which moral foundations provide the basis of the sacred values being protected, such violent ideologies can come just as easily from the left end of the political spectrum as from the right. What is crucial is not so much the particular content of sacred values, but the fact that they provide individuals with a sense of meaning that makes them feel bound to something larger than themselves.

Similarly, Atran (2011) cites the need to belong as key to the establishment of terrorist groups, explaining that while such groups may include a strongly ideologically motivated minority, for most members it is the social bonding that provides the greatest attraction. In a presentation given at Oxford University he explained, "…people don't simply kill and die for a cause. They kill and die for each other, to give a collective meaning to life beyond the morning mist" (Atran, 2009). Adhering to the social norms of a valued ingroup creates meaning, a sense of belonging, and emotional connection. Kishida, Yang, Quartz, Quartz, and Montague (2012) (cited in Berns and Atran, 2012) have conducted neuroimaging studies which indicate that individuals who are able to inhibit the amygdala (which is associated with emotional processing) are also better able to resist conforming to cultural norms. In situations involving emotionally charged sacred values, such research suggests that utilitarian approaches to conflict resolution are unlikely to be effective.

To test this hypothesis, Ginges, Atran, Medin, and Shikaki (2007) conducted experiments with Israelis and Palestinians which demonstrated that not only were utilitarian approaches to this particular long-running conflict unsuccessful, they were actually counterproductive. When Israelis and Palestinians were offered material incentives to compromise with regard to sacred values, such as giving up territory for Israeli settlers and giving up the right of return for Palestinians, they became even more determined not to compromise. Although 'rational actor' models would predict that the offers presented by the experimenters should be accepted, the recognition that the Israelis and Palestinians in this context were functioning instead as 'devotional actors' committed to sacred values (Atran, 2003) would correctly predict the participants' refusal: offering material incentives in exchange for betraying sacred values is perceived by devotional actors as highly insulting.

However, when the 'other side' was willing to make a symbolic concession – such as Palestinians acknowledging the right of the Jewish people to establish a nation in Israel, or Israelis acknowledging the right of the Palestinians to their own state—opposition to compromise with the other side decreased. Interviews with political leaders in the Middle East reinforce these findings, with even hard-line leaders expressing willingness to be flexible in return for strong symbolic gestures from the 'other side,' such as a sincere apology for historical incidents relevant to the current conflict (Atran, 2012).

Such research suggests that in situations of apparently intractable conflict, an understanding of the sacred values of the groups involved can provide a means of overcoming seemingly immovable barriers to peace. In the current thesis I will analyse differences in the content of sacred values held by individuals across the political spectrum within Israel in order to identify how these correspond with differences between liberals and conservatives in their experiences of moral dilemmas within the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In analysing differences between liberals and conservatives in (a) their experiences of moral dilemmas resulting from the competing behavioural demands of different moral foundations, and (b) differences in the contents of sacred values, this part of the research will integrate moral foundations theory and sacred values theory. A key area of interest will be that of the possible role of cognitive dissonance—and of the motivation to reduce it—within these dynamics.

1.3 Cognitive Dissonance

Cognitive dissonance has largely been understood in one of two ways: either as resulting from an individual simultaneously holding two inconsistent cognitions, or

as resulting from a conflict between an individual's belief and their actual behaviour (Reber and Reber, 2001). In the following sections I will explore how these seemingly different conceptualisations interrelate, and why they are relevant to the exploration of moral dilemmas.

<u>Induced Compliance with Insufficient Justification</u>

In his ground breaking research Festinger (1957) used the phrase "cognitive dissonance" to describe the uncomfortable psychological tension felt by individuals when they become aware that they hold two or more important but inconsistent cognitions. Festinger describes dissonance as a motivational state having a "magnitude" which increases in line with the degree of discrepancy and the level of importance of the individual's conflicting cognitions: the greater the magnitude, the more uncomfortable the tension, and the greater the motivation for the individual to take measures to reduce the dissonance (Festinger, 1957).

In an innovative experiment Festinger and Carlsmith (1959) tested the effect of induced compliance on participants who were asked to perform a very tedious task and then paid either one dollar or twenty dollars as compensation. The participants were then asked, ostensibly as a favour, to tell someone else who had turned up to take part in the experiment (but who was actually a confederate of the experimenters) that the task had been enjoyable. The purpose of this part of the experiment was to induce participants to *behave* in a way that was inconsistent with their *attitude* that the task had been boring, thus triggering cognitive dissonance. They predicted that participants who were only paid one dollar for completing the task would feel greater cognitive dissonance than those paid twenty dollars when reporting that the task had been enjoyable, as not only had they had to perform a tedious task, but they had been poorly compensated for doing so (induced

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compliance coupled with insufficient justification). Crucially, they also predicted that in an attempt to reduce cognitive dissonance, the participants paid one dollar would be more effusive in their praise of the task when speaking with the confederate, not so much to convince the confederate, but to convince themselves that they had not wasted their time. In other words, in the face of conflicting attitude and behaviour where they were now unable to change their behaviour (they had already performed a very tedious task for little compensation), they would instead change their attitude toward the task in order to minimise the cognitive dissonance that they were experiencing.

As predicted, the participants who were only paid one dollar were more lavish in their subsequent praise of the task than were the participants who were paid twenty dollars. This study proved highly influential, leading to (a) the use of induced compliance coupled with insufficient justification, and (b) the adoption of cognitive dissonance reduction strategies, such as attitude change, as a proxy for dissonance itself, to be employed as standard techniques for exploring cognitive dissonance in many subsequent academic studies, as well as providing inspiration for new applications of the theory (Cooper, 2007).

<u>Effort Justification and Free Choice</u>

Building on Festinger and Carlsmith's research, Aronson and Mills (1959) hypothesised that individuals might also engage in attitude change in order to reduce cognitive dissonance resulting from having to endure punishing activities. They devised an experiment to determine whether individuals who endure difficult initiation rites when joining a group assess the group they have joined more highly than individuals who have undergone either mild or no initiation rites. They randomly allocated participants into groups in one of three conditions: initiation

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involving severe embarrassment, mild embarrassment, or the control condition of no initiation. They found that participants who had endured severe embarrassment provided higher ratings for their group and fellow group members than did participants in either of the other two conditions. They concluded that adopting such a positive attitude towards the group was a strategy employed to reduce the cognitive dissonance triggered by participating in activities that caused them distress. This study provided a challenge to behaviourist predictions that individuals' behaviour is motivated in a straightforward manner by reward and punishment.

Although it preceded Festinger's terminology, Jack Brehm's (1956) free choice study—in which participants first rated their liking for various home appliances, were then asked to choose between two similarly-rated items to take home, and finally re-rated all of the appliances—has also come to be viewed as a key cognitive dissonance study. Brehm found that once participants had to make a choice between two similarly-rated appliances, they subsequently rated the one they had chosen higher than the one they rejected. Brehm described the process by which participants minimised the cognitive dissonance inherent in rejecting a well-rated appliance through exaggerating the benefits of the chosen item and the shortcomings of the rejected item as the "spreading of alternatives."

Self-Affirmation and the Relevance to Moral Judgment

Steele and Liu (1983) describe dissonance processes in terms of self-affirmation, proposing that cognitive dissonance is caused not by psychologically inconsistent ideas in general (as Festinger argued), but instead only results from cognitions that present a threat to one's positive sense of self. In a series of experiments they observed that dissonance triggered by induced compliance tasks could be reduced by

having participants subsequently reaffirm positive self-worth in areas unrelated to the original dissonance-triggering task, and concluded that self-affirmation strategies could be as effective at reducing dissonance as could attitude change.

Indeed, Steele has argued that the dissonance-reducing tactic of spreading of alternatives observed in free choice experiments can best be understood as an attempt to regain a positive self-image when faced with the possibility that one may have acted incompetently when making a difficult choice (Steele cited in Heine and Lehman, 1997). This finding is key to my current research, which attempts to identify whether a motivation to reduce cognitive dissonance plays a role in processes of moral judgment in situations where a threat to a positive sense of an individual's *moral* self may be ameliorated by reinforcement of their positive sense of self as a *competent* actor.

1.4 Models of Competence and Morality/Warmth

Findings from research in experimental social psychology, the psychology of personality, election poll results, and cross-cultural studies have revealed that individuals consistently judge individuals and groups with relation to two distinct universal dimensions: competence and warmth/morality (see Cikara, Farnsworth, Harris & Fiske, 2010; Cohrs, Asbrock & Sibley, 2012; Fiske, Cuddy, Glick, & Xu, 2002; Wojciszke, Bazinska & Jaworski, 1998). The competence dimension is described as including traits such as skill, creativity, and intelligence. In the work of Fiske and colleagues (e.g., Fiske et al., 2002), competence is contrasted against the warmth dimension, which encompasses characteristics including trustworthiness, fairness, and helpfulness. However, Wojciszke et al., (1998) conceptualize a model contrasting competence and morality, rather than competence and warmth. Fiske,

Cuddy, and Glick (2007) regard the traits included within Wojciszke and colleagues'
conception of morality as indicating pro-social intentions that are congruent with
those of the traits which comprise the warmth dimension in their own research.

But the conceptual fit between warmth and morality is problematic: in
addition to using words which are synonymous with warmth in their list of terms
relating to morality (e.g., "helpful," "understanding"), Wojciszke et al. (1998) also
include words which do not relate to warmth (e.g., "honest," "righteous"). Indeed,
Goodwin et al. (2014) argue that warmth and moral character, although related, are
themselves distinct constructs. Their empirical research demonstrates that it is
possible for individuals to be assessed as warm but not moral, or as moral but not
warm. Their findings also provide evidence that moral character is perceived as a
more stable trait than warmth, which is seen as more context-dependent. It is
interesting to note that morality as understood in this research correlates with MFT's
Individualising moral foundations, but not with the Binding foundations. This is
consistent with Haidt's (2012) observation that most academics to date have
focussed on what he would describe as a liberal conception of morality that does not
include the Binding foundations favoured by conservatives. What all of the
competence versus morality/warmth studies detailed above agree on is that
competence on the one hand, and morality and/or warmth on the other, are distinct
constructs which are to some degree orthogonal.

According to morality/warmth and competence research, when making
judgments about others, the assessment of morality/warmth occurs more quickly,
and is considered of greater importance than the assessment of competence.
However, when assessing one's self, competence is deemed more important
(Wojciszke et al, 1998; Fiske et al, 2007; Leach et al., 2006). As an adaptive

strategy this makes sense: both malevolent intentions on the part of another individual or group, and lack of competence on the part of one's self or one's ingroup can make surviving and thriving far less certain (Fiske et al, 2007). And, as these assessments would often need to be made quickly in order to be able to respond to strangers in an appropriate and timely manner, we evolved cognitive tools to aid us with these judgments.

The Stereotype Content Model (Fiske et al., 2002; Fiske et al., 2007) presents a two-dimensional space in which four different combinations of warmth and competence represent stereotypical perceptions of one's ingroup as opposed to outgroups. In this model, ingroups are typically rated in a positive manner as being high in both warmth and competence. But outgroups can be judged in one of three combinations: high in warmth but low in competence; low in warmth and low in competence; or low in warmth but high in competence. Individuals have been observed to react to outgroups which they perceive as low warmth/low competence with contempt and disgust. Harris and Fiske (2006) conducted an fMRI experiment in which participants viewed photographs of various social groups, and found that when viewing pictures of low warmth/low competence groups (such as drug addicts) there was significantly increased activation in the amygdala, and in the insula, a brain region associated with disgust.

Data from the USA revealed that outgroups deemed low in competence but high in warmth (such as elderly people and the disabled), tend instead to be viewed paternalistically and with affection, but enjoy fewer social and employment opportunities, while those stereotyped as high in competence but low in warmth (such as minority professionals, Jewish people, and the British) are treated with suspicion and may also suffer limited employment and social opportunities (Fiske et

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al, 2007; Oldmeadow and Fiske, 2007). Cikara et al. (2010) applied the warmth/competence model to an adaptation of the trolley moral dilemma experiment (see Foot, 1978; Greene et al., 2001) in order to examine whether participants would value the lives of ingroup members over those from various outgroups. They found that the lives of ingroup individuals viewed as high competence and high warmth were valued more highly than outgroup members, and that outgroup members rated as low in both warmth and competence were more readily sacrificed to save individuals from more highly rated groups. How an individual or group is perceived with relation to warmth/morality and competence would appear to have a significant impact on interpersonal and inter-group interactions.

That we differentiate between what is deemed salient when judging ingroups as opposed to outgroups is not surprising given the findings produced by the wealth of research on inter-group dynamics. Extensive research in social psychology has demonstrated that we tend to compete with perceived outgroups (e.g., Sherif, Harvey, White, Hood, & Sherif, 1988; Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Indeed, empirical studies have shown that individuals' responses towards the suffering of outgroups differs from their responses to ingroup suffering (e.g. Cikara, Bruneau, & Saxe, 2011; Cikara, et al., 2010; Mathur, Harada, Lipke, & Chiao, 2010), with outgroup suffering eliciting less empathy than the suffering of ingroup members. And evolutionary theory posits that cooperation towards ingroup members and compliance with the ingroup's social norms serve the (arguably) adaptive function of enhancing group solidarity (Boyd & Richerson, 1985, 2005; Kitcher, 2011; Krebs, 2008; O'Gorman, Wilson, & Miller, 2008). Such analysis suggests that individuals will be more likely to assess outgroup members as potential competitors, and ingroup members as potential allies.

My current research investigates how perceptions of competence and morality within the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict affect moral judgments relating to perceived ingroup and outgroup members, and crucially, provides evidence which suggests that competence and morality are only weakly orthogonal. In focusing on how competent performance may influence assessment of actor morality, my current research adopts a person-centred approach to analysis of processes of moral judgment.

1.5 Moral Judgment: Person-Centred and Act-Centred Approaches

In a move away from the current trend in moral psychology research to focus on moral judgment relating to specific actions, recent research has reconnected with a person-centred approach to moral judgment (see Pizarro & Tannenbaum, 2011; Uhlmann, Pizarro & Diermeier, 2015). Act-centred research employ dual process frameworks grounded in the distinction between deontological and utilitarian reasoning when making moral judgments[4] (e.g., Greene, Nystrom, Engel, Darley, & Cohen, 2004; Greene, Morelli, Lowenberg, Nystrom, & Cohen, 2008). In contrast, the person-centred approach draws on the philosophical tradition of virtue ethics in arguing that people make judgments about the moral character of individuals, and not just on the morality of specific acts that they perform. This change in focus has suggested a reinterpretation of key research findings in moral psychology relating to dual process models of cognition (Uhlmann et al, 2015).

Proponents of a person-centred approach argue that many alleged "inconsistencies" in moral judgment presented as evidence of cognitive bias in psychological research do not represent inconsistencies at all. Instead, they are

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[4] Although see Kahane, 2012 for a criticism of Greene's association of automatic and controlled processing with deontological and utilitarian judgment.

evidence of people interpreting, in a logical and valid way, information regarding the performance of specific acts as relevant to understanding the moral character of the actors (Pizarro & Tannenbaum, 2011; Ulhmann et al., 2015). For example, research into how people attribute blame has shown that information which is interpreted as providing clues about an actor's moral character affects how morally responsible the actor is judged to be. Pizarro and Tannenbaum (2011) cite Alicke's (1992; 2000) experimental research in which participants judge the culpability of a car driver who was involved in a road accident, causing injury to others, while exceeding the speed limit. If the driver was presented as speeding because he was hurrying home to hide an anniversary present for his wife, he was judged as less morally responsible for causing injury to others than if he was presented as hurrying home to hide cocaine.

While Alicke interprets this as evidence of cognitive bias, Pizarro and Tannenbaum (2011) and Ulhmann et al. (2015) argue that instead of indicating irrational cognitive bias, when character-based inferences influence other judgments this is evidence of the workings of a moral system which has evolved in order to allow individuals to distinguish between "good" and "bad" people, as such information is necessary for successfully navigating the complexities of the social world. Uhlmann et al. (2015) argue that character-based inferences can only be considered to be irrational biases if the information they contain is irrelevant to the understanding of the event to which they are being applied. My current research actively engages with analysis of whether the proposed competence/morality dynamic is best considered as an appropriate heuristic or as a cognitive bias.

1.6 Conclusion

The literatures with which I engaged at the beginning of my research for this thesis—moral foundations theory, sacred values, and cognitive dissonance—were chosen as being of particular relevance to understanding how individuals across the political spectrum experience and attempt to resolve moral dilemmas associated with intergroup conflict. In addition, and as a result of initial analysis of the interview material, I subsequently incorporated the literatures on morality and competence, and on person-centred approaches to moral judgment.

The recurring theme that weaves its way through all of the various theories and models touched upon in this chapter is that of how intuitive cognitive processes, as opposed to conscious reasoning, can influence our moral judgment. The overarching purpose of the current thesis is to analyse how these hypothesized to be universal cognitive processes underpin and constrain perceptions and behaviours relating to moral dilemmas for Jewish Israelis within the specific context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In the next chapter I will detail how I approached this task.

2   Methodology and Methods

In this chapter I engage with debates within social psychology around experimental and social constructivist/critical approaches, and locate my own position within this debate. I then provide a detailed account of my methods and of how they address my research questions. Finally, I address reflexivity concerns, and how the overall design of the research project corresponds with my epistemological stance. But first, in order to orient the reader, I provide Table 2.1 below which illustrates the different methods employed to answer the research questions addressed in Chapters 3 - 6.

Table 2.1: Research Questions and Methods

Chapter	Research Questions	Methods
Chapter 3: *"Us," "Them," and Hamatzav: Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis of Semi-Structured Interviews*	How do Jewish Israelis perceive ingroup and outgroup identities relevant to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict? How does this vary between and within ethnic and political groups? How does this relate to their perceptions of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and of prospects for peace? **These RQs provide useful context for the remaining chapters relating to the complexity of identity issues within Israel.**	Semi-structured interviews Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA)

Chapter 4: ***Selective Fairness in Intergroup Dynamics: a moral foundations theory analysis of moral dilemmas experienced by Jewish Israeli reserve soldiers and conscientious objectors within the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict***	How do Jewish Israelis along the liberal-conservative continuum differ regarding selective application of moral foundations relating to Harm and Fairness with respect to perceived ingroups and outgroups? What are the implications of these findings for (a) the current structure of Moral Foundations Theory (MFT), and (b) normative claims associated with MFT? **These RQs address the role of moral *intuitions* on individuals' moral judgment, and employ these findings to critique structural elements of, and normative claims associated with, MFT.**	Moral Foundations Questionnaire Semi-structured interviews Thematic content analysis incorporating MFT framework

Chapter 5: ***Narratives of Competence and Morality in Israeli Nationalist Discourse: the possible role of cognitive bias***	How are Israeli nationalist narratives interwoven with concepts of competence and morality? How are the resulting discourses embodied by individuals through compulsory military service? Are Israeli individuals' assessment of the morality of themselves and their colleagues when engaged in military actions affected by perceived competence? **Analysis of these RQs suggest the existence of a proposed *cognitive bias* which affects real-world judgments relating to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.**	Discourse analysis of Israeli nationalist narratives Semi-structured interviews Embodied discourse analysis of semi-structured interviews

| Chapter 6: **Being Good at Being Bad: the influence of competent performance on assessment of actor morality** | Does competent performance affect judgment of actor morality?

Is the need to reduce cognitive dissonance, which arises from the morally problematic action posing a threat to individuals' positive self-perception, a mediating factor in this process?

Does this vary:
(a) when targeting ingroup and outgroup members?

(b) when judging ingroup and outgroup members?

(c) when conforming to social norms?

These RQs test for the existence of a proposed *cognitive bias* which can affect individuals' moral judgment. | Two online experiments involving participants making moral judgments after reading scenarios in which competence is manipulated.

One 2 x 4 design.

One 2 x2 design. |

2.1 Methodology and Epistemology

The overarching question addressed by this thesis is that of how cognitive processes involving intuitions, emotion, and biases affect the moral judgments of Israelis called to active military service within the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. I therefore needed a theoretical framework which acknowledged such processes. At the beginning of the research process I chose to use Moral Foundations Theory (Graham et al., 2009; Haidt, 2012; Haidt, & Joseph, 2004) in order to unpack the dynamics between the application of the moral intuitions relating to (1) treating others with fairness and care, and (2) those relating to ingroup loyalty, respect for

authority, and notions of purity, as experienced by Israeli reserve soldiers and conscientious objectors in the context of the ongoing conflict with the Palestinians. Moral Foundations Theory is grounded in evolutionary theory and posits that these moral intuitions are universally shared by humans. In applying this universal framework to the analysis of a particular real-world situation, my research embraces the inherent tension between the nomothetic and the ideographic. The methodological implications of this are significant.

2.1.1 Current Debates on Nomothetic and Idiographic Approaches

Historically, psychology has taken a nomothetic stance and has sought to identify generalizable, law-like principles which hold universal relevance. Nomothetic research is epistemologically positivist, and uses scientific methods drawn from those used in the natural sciences. In contrast, ideographic research focuses on particularities rather than on universals (see, for example, Kral, 2007; Bender, Hutchins & Medin, 2010; Bender & Beller, 2011), and has historically been associated with anthropology. Astuti and Bloch (2012) illustrate these differences by comparing the methodologies and epistemologies of cognitive psychologists with those of cognitive anthropologists. They describe the two disciplines as setting out from opposite starting points, with psychologists formulating and testing hypotheses in artificial lab conditions designed to isolate the hypothesized phenomenon. Anthropologists, however, begin with a phenomenon observed in a real-world setting, and then engage in reflection and apply theories in order to identify processes contributing to the phenomenon. Astuti and Bloch (2012) describe cognitive psychologists as critical of anthropology due to the lack of reproducibility of anthropologists' findings, while cognitive anthropologists are critical of

psychology for seeking to test phenomena in situations devoid of all meaningful social context.

Given these differences, it is hardly surprising that some researchers, such as Stainton Rogers (2003), consider the gap between nomothetic and idiographic research to be unbridgeable. Stainton Rogers cites the debate within social psychology regarding whether the discipline should be experimental, or should instead take a critical approach. She describes how the experimental approach, in seeking to generalize, effectively downplays individual complexity, treating it as unwanted noise, while the critical approach instead perceives complexity as integral to understanding the phenomena in question.

However, some researchers in both psychology and anthropology have sought to bridge the gap between the nomothetic and the idiographic. For example, Brown and Seligman (2009) argue that ethnographic data from anthropology can be utilized in order to design experiments that will enable exploration of the interplay between universal human cognitive functions and culturally-specific environmental factors. Similarly, Astuti and Bloch (2015) have stressed the importance of ensuring that the questions that researchers ask participants actually manage to get to the heart of what the researchers are looking to understand. They argue that questions, for example, which assume that individuals are making moral judgements as isolated individuals rather than as individuals within societies can produce misleading results. Ginges, Atran, Sacheva, and Medin (2011) point out that in order to produce research that is relevant to real-world problems, psychology would benefit from moving beyond a strict focus on lab experiments conducted with university undergraduates, by expanding both its methods and its study populations (see also Henrich, Heine and Norenzayan, 2010).

While some researchers have sought to make a clear distinction between the roles of psychologists as being concerned with cognitive processes as universal, while anthropologists focus on cultural content, others take a more nuanced approach and argue that, as cognitive processes and cultural contexts interact recursively, there is much to be gained from addressing them together (Kral, 2007; Bender et al., 2010, Astuti & Bloch,2012). Tyson, Jones and Elcock (2011) describe the use of mixed methods, based on the understanding that although humans share universal cognitive processes, these are marshalled in unique ways depending on specific contexts, as "epistemological pluralism." Similarly, Kral (2007) advocates the benefits to researchers of being open to combining divergent epistemological positions within research through the use of mixed methods. Doing so requires the understanding of individuals or groups as being made up of "contextualized particularities" and enables researchers to address how these may affect and even modify current psychological categorizations of cognitive processes. Epistemological pluralism thus provides the opportunity for the respective strengths of both nomothetic and idiographic research approaches to compensate for each other's respective weaknesses, thereby enabling the possibility of transcending what advocates of either epistemological position would be able to achieve in isolation (Bender & Beller, 2011).

2.1.2 My epistemological/methodological position

The current research adopts a position of epistemological pluralism. From the outset, the overarching design plan for my PhD research was to conduct semi-structured interviews constructed so as to explore (a) the meanings that the participants constructed around concepts of ingroup and outgroup identity, their

perceptions of the nature of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and of the prospects for peace, and (b) dynamics of moral judgment of reserve soldiers and conscientious objectors within a Moral Foundations Framework, with an eye to identifying the role of cognitive dissonance in their experience of, and strategies for dealing with, moral dilemmas. By addressing issues around identity, including family and personal history, ethnicity, politics, and religion, the interview questions would enable me to situate the data relating specifically to moral judgment into the socio-cultural contexts of the interviewees. The plan was then, following analysis of the interview data, to design an experimental protocol which would draw from the qualitative findings in focusing on one aspect of the interviewees' judgment making processes which appeared amenable to experimental analysis. I would then apply the findings of this experimental research to further analysis of the interview data.

It was important to me to conduct the interviews in a way that (1) systematically ensured that each interviewee was asked the same key questions, but also (2) allowed space for them to talk about things that they deemed important that I had not anticipated. Although my research focus was on how the application of moral intuitions varies across the political spectrum in situations of ingroup-outgroup conflict, and the role that cognitive dissonance might play in this, I wanted to be receptive to other relevant phenomena that the interviews might reveal.

In doing this, I remained open to useful "noise." To employ a metaphor drawing on my experience as a filmmaker, I view the dynamics between the nomothetic strategy of isolating the phenomenon of interest, and the idiographic commitment to situating phenomena within a rich cultural context, in terms of vision (nomothetic) and sound (idiographic). When filming, one is able to focus one's

vision precisely onto the object of interest, framing out all other elements so that the world, according to what is inside your frame of vision, exists exclusively of the object of your interest. Vision is very amenable to such focus. Sound is not. To anthropomorphise for a moment, sound does not care if you are only interested in the specific thing at which you are pointing the camera: sound is anarchic, and will intrude regardless. You may be filming a scene that, visually, is the epitome of a rural idyll, but if your location is near a motorway, the noise from the traffic will not politely stop at the edge of your visual frame. This may prove very frustrating if you aim to analyse the world only in terms of what you are specifically looking at. But if, instead, you wish to understand the world in all of its often contradictory complexity, then sound's intrusiveness is a gift. With this in mind, I listened out for useful "noise" during the course of the interviews. And, as will become clear, what I heard became the basis of my experimental designs.

2.2   Methods: Semi-Structured Interviews

This section provides details relating to conducting the qualitative phase of the research. I describe, in turn, why I chose to conduct semi-structured interviews, how I recruited participants, the materials I used, and the type of data produced. I also discuss relational and ethical considerations.

2.2.1 Semi-Structured Interviews: Choice of Method

I chose semi-structured interviews for the qualitative element of my research as this method allows a great deal of freedom for the interviewees to take the discussion into areas that I had not anticipated, and to introduce themes and concepts that more restricted methods would miss. In this way, semi-structured interviews introduce

both breadth and depth to the research, and can help to guard against a researcher simply finding what they were initially looking for. There are limitations to this approach as well. Interviewees will only tell the interviewer what they are both aware of and feel comfortable revealing. Interviewees may also be influenced in their answers by social desirability bias (Fisher, 1993). However, if participants differ in their understanding of what constitutes morally acceptable behaviour then this will affect how they perceive social desirability, and these differences will be reflected in their answers. As I was interested in identifying variations along the liberal-conservative continuum in attitudes and perceptions relating to moral dilemmas, such differences provided useful data.

One limitation of the study was that the interviews were conducted in English, which reinforced my status as an outsider. Some of the interviewees said things during the course of the interviews which made it clear that they assumed that I was not Jewish, while others asked me if I was Jewish after our interviews had concluded. My status as non-Israeli and non-Jewish was likely to have a greater impact on the openness of more right wing interviewees, who disapprove of speaking critically of Israel to the outside world, than on the more left wing interviewees. One obvious downside of conducting the interviews in English was that I was only able to interview English-speaking Israelis. Fortunately, English is widely spoken within Israel and I was able to recruit sufficient numbers of people, including from minority ethnic groups. But I was aware that this criterion effectively functioned as a filter eliminating everyone who either did not speak English at all, or did not feel sufficiently confident in their English to participate in an interview. I have only very basic Hebrew language skills, so conducting the interviews in Hebrew was not an option. I considered the possibility of using an interpreter in the

interviews but, especially when dealing with sensitive topics, it is important to be able to build trust and rapport with one's interviewees, and having a third person acting as intermediary inevitably makes this more difficult.

2.2.2 Semi-Structured Interviews: Participants

I recruited 40 Jewish reserve soldiers and conscientious objectors in Israel for the interviews, which were conducted in two tranches. The first tranche was conducted during March 2012, and the second during May-June 2013. Each interview was conducted separately. At the time of the first set of interviews I had been focused on identifying differences between left wing conscientious objectors as one category, and serving soldiers as another. To that end, I initially interviewed 24 people: 10 conscientious objectors, and 14 serving soldiers. In the following year, having adjusted the research design to analyse differences more evenly along the liberal-conservative continuum, I conducted 16 further interviews, giving a total of 40 individuals. As the interviews formed the basis of the idiographic elements of the research project (involving interpretative phenomenological analysis and discursive analyses), the 40 interviews provided a satisfactory sample size. Although my priority was to ensure similar numbers of interviewees from each of four political categories—left wing, centre left, centre right, and right wing—this additional tranche of interviews also enabled me to ensure that I recruited a more representative mix of ethnicities than I had managed during the first tranche.

I used a form of purposive sampling to recruit interviewees, specifically snowball sampling, with four starting points: left wing, centre left, centre right, and right wing political affiliations. I operationalized the definitions of the political

categories as follows. "Left wing" included both explicit and "grey[5]" conscientious objectors who oppose Israel's military activities in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT)[6] on moral grounds; "centre left" includes those who oppose the military activities in the OPT but continue to do their military service there; "centre right" individuals do military service and consider the military operations in the West Bank and Gaza as necessary and justified; and "right wing" individuals support and serve in IDF operations in the West Bank and Gaza except when operations conflict with the settlement project[7], as occurred during the Disengagement from Gaza[8].

Some groups were easier to access than others. From my previous research on conscientious objectors I already had contacts among left wing Israelis, which made recruiting people from this group straightforward. Centre right individuals also proved relatively easy to access. But it took time to establish trust with individuals from the right wing and from the centre left who, for different reasons appeared wary of speaking with a non-Israeli researcher. For the right wing, this was due to suspicions that I might prove to be hostile towards Israel. For the centre left, there was the fear that an outsider would not be able to understand the apparent contradiction of their continuing to serve in the army enforcing a military occupation

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[5] "Grey" refusers find ways of avoiding military service, rather than openly becoming conscientious objectors.

[6] Terminology regarding these geographic areas is contentious, and varies across the political spectrum. Right wing religious Israelis refer to Gaza and frequently use the biblical names Judea and Samaria when referring to the West Bank, centrists generally refer to Gaza and the West Bank, and those further left politically tend to refer to the Occupied Palestinian Territories collectively, or to Gaza and the West Bank separately.

[7] Under international law, the Jewish Israeli settlements in the West Bank including East Jerusalem, (and previously also those in Gaza) are illegal. Attitudes towards the settlements varied along political lines. The left wing and centre left saw them as constituting an illegal military occupation, the centre right and right wing saw them as necessary for Israeli's military security. The right wing also believed the settlements represented the fulfilment of a religious obligation to provide a homeland for the Jewish people.

[8] In 2005 the Israeli government ordered the evacuation of the Jewish Israeli settlements in Gaza. The evacuation was enforced by the IDF.

of which they disapproved. It also took time to make inroads into the Ethiopian community as I had no previous contacts from this group.

In order to make the interviewees as comfortable as possible with talking about sensitive topics, I encouraged them to select where we would meet. Some were happy to be interviewed in public spaces such as cafes or parks, while others preferred to speak with me in their homes or offices. Each interviewee signed a release form, and was advised that if at any time they did not feel comfortable with my questions they could end the interview (none of them chose to do so). I also confirmed that all interviews were confidential, and that participants' identities would not be revealed either explicitly or through identifying details. The interviews lasted from 50 minutes (sufficient for covering my planned interview questions) up to nearly two hours, depending on how much the interviewees wanted to discuss[9]. The interviews took me across Israel from Tel Aviv, with its reputation as secular and hedonistic, through more traditional and conservative towns and cities, including Jerusalem, as well as to a tiny outpost inhabited by ideological right wing settlers, consisting of 30+ caravans on the top of a hill in the West Bank.

The final demographic breakdown for the interviewees was as follows:

- Politics: Left Wing = 25%, Centre left =27.5 %, Centre right = 25%, Right Wing = 22.5%;

- Gender: Male = 85%[10], Female = 15%;

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[9] Word counts of interviews with each political group. Left wing: M=8251.00; Centre Left: M=7195.36; Centre Right: M=8243.60; Right Wing: M=12,110.11. A univariate ANOVA revealed a significant difference between the political categories' mean word counts, $F(3, 36) = 4.23$, $p = .012$. However, a post hoc Tukey test showed that none of the groups differed significantly from each other except for the centre left and right wing at $p = .009$

[10] The IDF conscripts women as well as men, but it is easier for women to be exempted from service, for example because of being married, or having children, or on religious grounds. In 2011 women made up only 3% of combat soldiers, 15% of technical personnel, and 33% of all soldiers ("More female soldiers in more positions in the IDF," 2011).

- Ethnicity: Ashkenazi = 62.5%[11], Mizrahi = 2.5%, Sephardi = 5%, Russian/FSU = 15%, Ethiopian = 10%, Mixed = 5%;

- Religion: Secular = 70%, Religious = 30%;

- Age range: 22 to 77 (M=33.4).

2.2.3 Semi-Structured Interviews: Materials

The interviews needed to provide data for three separate forms of analysis. First, interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) was used to gain insights into the interviewees' own understandings of ingroup-outgroup identities, and of the nature of the ongoing conflict with the Palestinians. Second, a moral foundations theory (MFT) framework was used to analyse how the interviewees differed across the political spectrum in their selective application of moral foundations relating to Harm and Fairness with respect to perceived ingroups and outgroups. And third, embodied discourse analysis was used to understand how the interviewees' lived experiences of military service embodied nationalist discourses in which competence had become conflated with morality.

Therefore, I needed to devise an interview framework which would address theory-driven questions relating to moral judgment, provide information about each interviewee's unique history and context, and allow space for emergent themes arising from the interviewees' descriptions of their experiences and of the meanings they attached to these. To that end, I prepared open questions relating to: (1) how the interviewees viewed the relationships between their personal, family, religious, and national identities, (2) how their perceptions of Palestinians from the West Bank

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[11] The primary goal of the sampling was to ensure an even mix between political categories. The first tranche of interviewees was almost exclusively Ashkenazi. In the second tranche I ensured that other ethnic groups were also represented.

and Gaza, and of Palestinian citizens of Israel, correlated with their understanding of the ongoing Israeli/Palestinian conflict, (3) their childhood perceptions of the military and of the conflict, (4) their personal experiences of military service, including any moral dilemmas related to military service, (5) their perception of the purpose of the IDF, (6) their loyalty to the IDF, (7) their identity as Jewish and as Israeli, (8) the nature of their interactions with Palestinians, (9) how/whether the conflict affected their daily lives, (10) their perceptions of agency relating to the continuation or ending of the conflict, and (11) their perceptions of the morality of different Jewish Israeli groups. I was careful to phrase questions in an open manner that did not impose expectations of any particular answer. The framework for the questions I used can be found in Appendix 1. I collected basic demographic data relating to age, ethnicity, religion, politics, if/where they served in the military, education, occupation, and marital status/children at the end of each interview.

I also introduced the "Moral Continuum Exercise" as part of the interview process. In this exercise participants were presented with blank examples of a "moral continuum," as in Figure 2.1 below.

Figure 2.1: Moral Continuum structure

Participants were given coloured dots each representing different group behaviours, which correspond with my operationalized definitions of left wing, centre left, centre right, and right wing:

- Red = conscientious objectors who refuse to serve in the military in the West Bank and Gaza on moral grounds

- Black = soldiers who protest against the occupation on moral grounds, but continue to do their military service in the West Bank and Gaza

- Green = soldiers who serve in the West Bank and Gaza and who perceive the military activities there as necessary

- Yellow = soldiers who refuse to evict Jewish settlers from their homes, as occurred during the Disengagement from Gaza.

Participants placed the dots along the continuum, ranking these different behaviours according to how moral they perceived them to be. They were then asked to fill in the remaining identical scales but from the point of view of the groups of other political persuasions. As a small-n exercise in which participants were allowed to assign the same colour dot to more than one place, or to leave it off entirely, the moral continuum was not intended for quantitative analysis.

The purpose of this exercise was to move the discussions away from abstract concepts of morality within military service and to introduce a more concrete assessment of specific behaviours, of the interviewees' perceptions of the motivations of the actors involved, and of their understanding of how Israelis with different political beliefs perceived these actions and motivations. Most of the interviewees stated their views about the specific moralities of different political groups fairly confidently during the main parts of the interviews, but when I introduced the Moral Continuum exercise, which required them to rank particular behaviours against each other in a more concrete way, the confidence displayed

during the more abstract discussions often vanished, and the discussions took on greater depth.

The necessity of locating dots not only along the moral continuum itself, but also in relation to other dots, effectively created a series of ranking orders of perceived morality of different behaviours: one order relating to their own judgments, and three relating to how the interviewees viewed the judgments of their compatriots from other political categories. This could prove illuminating not only to me as a researcher, but also to the interviewees as participants. For example, one interviewee, who described himself as centre right politically, became uncomfortable when he realised that he had placed the dots representing his own views almost identically to where he had placed the dots representing his understanding of right wing Israelis' views. Although the moral continuum is extremely simplistic in design, the concreteness of having to place dots along a scale resulted in useful, in-depth discussions that transcended abstract generalities.

2.2.4 Semi-Structured Interviews: Data and Analysis

Each interview was recorded using two small Olympus USB digital recorders. I used two in case either of them developed a technical fault or ran out of battery power during an interview. I then transferred the recordings onto my laptop where I manually transcribed them using Express Scribe software.

For analysis and reporting, I assigned each of the 40 interviewees a unique identifier indicating their political categorisation: L1– L10 (left wing), CL1 – CL11 (centre left), CR1 – CR10 (centre right), and R1 – R9 (right wing). I employed two separate qualitative methods of analysis. As I planned to do three separate qualitative analyses of the data—interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA),

thematic content analysis, and embodied discourse analysis—I needed to develop a coding framework which allow for all three types of analysis. IPA focuses on how interviewees understand and construct meanings from their experiences (Smith & Osborn, 2003; Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). Therefore IPA coding involves the researcher identifying specific themes which emerge from the interviewees' discussions in answer to questions based on broader themes. This approach involves a double hermeneutic in that the researcher is interpreting the interviewees' interpretations of their own experiences (ibid.).

In contrast, the approach of thematic content analysis (Guest, MacQueen & Namey, 2012) is more researcher-led. In this case, it allowed me to address my broad analytic objective of analysing how the interviewees experienced and dealt with moral dilemmas through a pre-defined theoretical framework, as well as situating their experiences within their unique socio-cultural contexts. Thematic content analysis involves creating families of thematic codes, which when applied to the text of the interviews, enables the researcher to link these themes to theoretical models. Similarly, discursive analysis involves creating theory-driven codes. For the current research the embodied discourse analysis required coding for elements which also appeared in the thematic content analysis: themes relating to competent performance and assessment of morality. Although the mode of analysis between IPA, thematic content analysis, and embodied discourse analysis differs, the actual process of coding the necessary data was complementary.

Using NVivo 10 software, I developed a coding framework divided into two major sections: theory-driven codes and ethnographic data codes. Theory-driven codes relating to moral intuitions and to theories of cognitive dissonance, essentialism, causal attribution, and sacred values had been planned from the outset

and represent a deductive approach to the data. But inductive analysis of the data suggested a relationship between competence of performance and assessment of morality, so it was necessary also to include theory-driven codes relating to models of competence and morality in the coding framework. These would be used in both the thematic content analysis and the embodied discourse analysis. Coding of ethnographic data was categorized according to demographic data, and to the broad analytic themes identified within the interview questions. During coding, these analytic themes were segmented into specific sub-themes emerging from the interviews, allowing for both a richer thematic content analysis, and also for interpretative phenomenological analysis. Coding was exhaustive but not exclusive, with specific elements frequently fitting into more than one interrelated category.

For the IPA, I was primarily interested in finding points of convergence and divergence relating to broad analytical themes (ingroup and outgroup identity, perception of the nature of the conflict, and perceptions of the possibilities for peace) within and between the four different political groups. However, to provide a richer idiographic perspective regarding perceptions of identity, I also analysed these themes within a framework in which the political categories served as sub-divisions of ethnic categories. Coding for the IPA involved identifying recurrent themes within each political or ethnic sub-grouping. Themes were classified as recurrent if they appeared in at least half of the relevant interviews. This allowed me to identify themes that were broadly representative of the different political/ethnic groupings. I also identified anomalous themes which were interesting for their distinctiveness, and identified these as such in the analysis.

For the thematic content analysis, the coding framework allowed for cross-referencing between different aspects of theory-driven and ethnographic data codes

in order to fully engage with my research questions. In Figures 2.2, 2.3, and 2.4 I use the example of right wing interviewees' experience of the Disengagement from Gaza to illustrate how the coding framework enabled me to situate interviewees' descriptions of specific lived experiences of military operations within a theoretical framework grounded in moral foundations theory, and within a conceptual framework of "ingroup"-facing versus "outgroup"-facing moral dilemma triggers.

Figure 2.2: Partial Theory-Driven Coding Framework
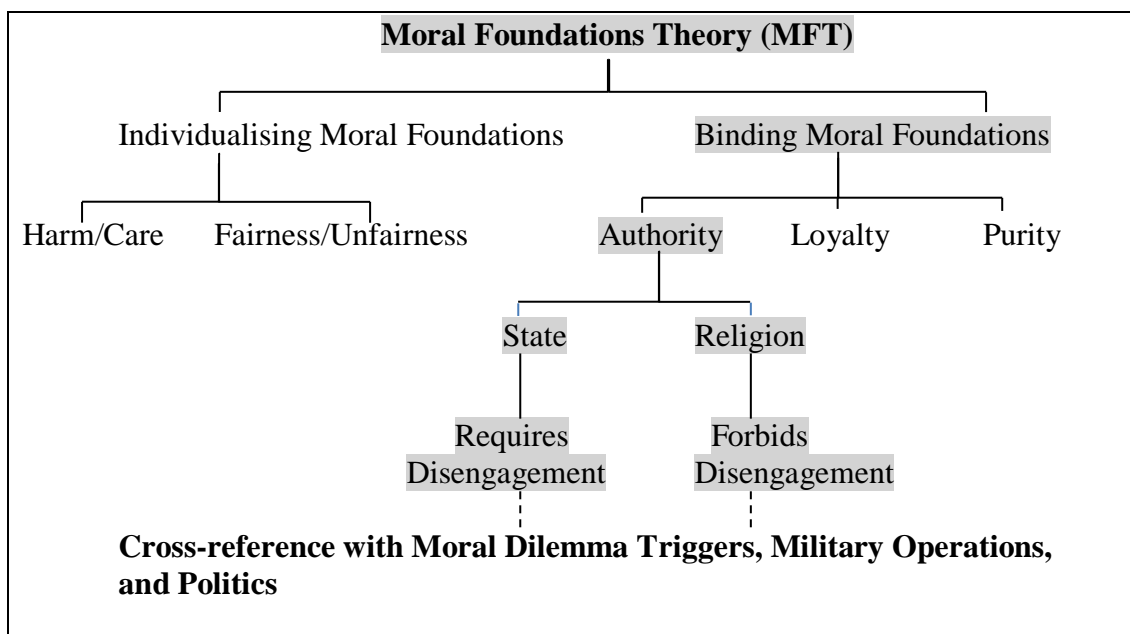
Figure 2.3: Partial Ethnographic Coding Framework
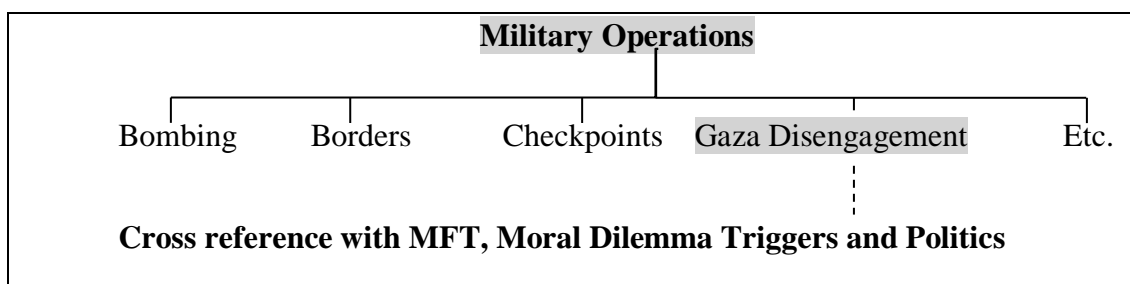
Figure 2.4: Partial Conceptual Framework (sub-set of Ethnographic Framework)

Moral Dilemma Triggers

"Ingroup"-facing Dilemmas   "Outgroup"-facing Dilemmas

Gaza   Ethical Code   Ceding land   Etc.   General   Civilians
Disengagement   ties hands   makes Israel   Population
                                  less secure   Adults   Kids

Cross reference with MFT, Military Operations and Politics
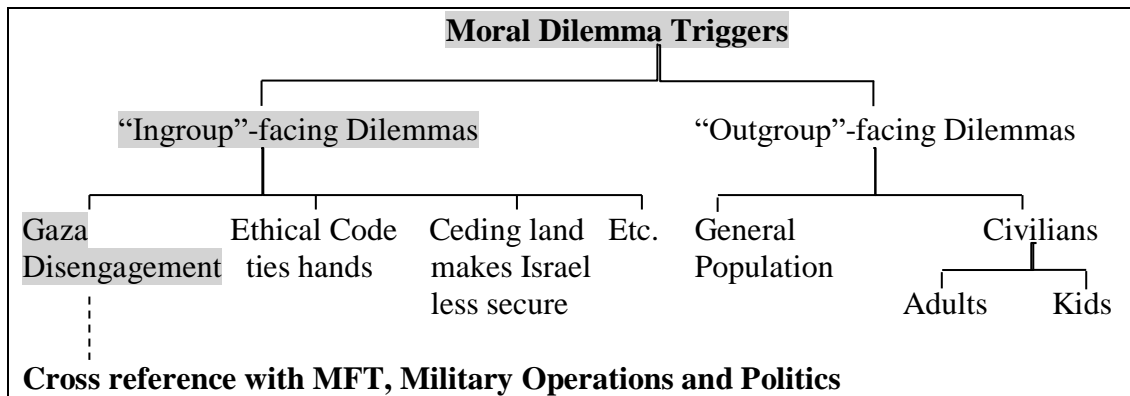
For the embodied discourse analysis I needed to identify instances where, (a) in response to questions about moral judgment and moral dilemmas, the interviewees answered by describing incidents in terms of either competent or incompetent performance, and (b) where interviewees spoke of morality and competence in the same breath when describing experiences relating to military service. As the thematic content analysis coding included themes of both competence and morality, identifying relevant data for the embodied discourse analysis was straightforward.

Coding the second tranche of interviews provided a useful opportunity for reassessing the original coding framework in terms of the applicability and usability of its design structure, as well as on how effectively it provided space for interviewee-led data categories. At this point, in order to check reliability of the initial coding, I also re-coded four interviews, one from each political category, from the first tranche. The only changes between the first and second codings related to "splitting" and "lumping" (Guest et al., 2012): in the second coding I was able to include a small percentage (less than 7%) of codes within higher level codes. New codes were also introduced in the second tranche of interviews specific to the experiences of ethnic minorities who had not been represented in the first tranche.

Once these changes had been made I enlisted a second coder to code extracts relating to three key thematic areas: how fixed or fluid the interviewees considered Jewish and Arab identities to be; which segments of the Palestinian population triggered moral dilemmas for the interviewees; and what they perceived as possible solutions to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Two interviews from each of the four political categories were chosen at random for each of these three themes, producing 24 extracts. Inter-coder reliability was 95.5%.

Remaining open to "useful noise" allowed space for the emergence of an additional analytical theme: that of the dynamics between competent performance and moral judgment. In response to my questions relating to morality, the interviewees often responded in terms of competence. For example, left wing interviewees sometimes cited failures in competence, rather than some new moral outrage, as the final straw which led to them to becoming conscientious objectors. Centre left interviewees sometimes described focusing on doing their particular tasks as professionally and competently as possible as a means of reducing the disquiet they felt about participating in a military project of which they disapproved on moral grounds. Interviewees further to the right along the political continuum would refer to Israeli and/or Jewish competence in unrelated areas when discussing the morality of specific state policies or military strategies. To me, this suggested the possibility of the existence of a cognitive bias by which competent/incompetent performance can affect moral judgment. I next set out to design experiments in order to test this hypothesis.

2.3   Methods: Discursive Analysis of Nationalist Narratives

In support of the embodied discourse analysis of the semi-structured interviews in Chapter 5, I first conducted discourse analysis of nationalist narratives within Israel which incorporated themes of competence and morality, and demonstrated how these narratives informed (a) perceived inherent differences between Israelis and Palestinians, and (b) a discourse in which Israel was perceived as destined to fulfil a unique role among the nations of the world. The three narratives which I chose for this analysis were that of *or lagoyim* (Israel serving as a light unto the other nations), of Jewish Israelis reclaiming the desert and making it bloom, and of Jewish genius.

These three narratives, as well as being in prevalent use within Israeli society today, were also selected by Israel's first Prime Minister, David Ben-Gurion, as integral to the project of unifying Jewish immigrants from around the world into a unified Israeli nation (see Tzahor, 1995). Unpacking how these narratives supported a nationalist discourse in which themes of competence and morality were interwoven and sometimes became conflated was a necessary precursor for the embodied discourse analysis of the semi-structured interviews.

Discursive analysis is a broad and varied field, a comprehensive summary of which is beyond the scope of this thesis. The term "discourse" can be interpreted in a variety of ways, ranging from definitions in which it is understood in terms of societal influences on spoken or written language (e.g., Barthes, 1988; Fairclough, 1989; Van Dijk, 1993) through broader definitions influenced by post-structuralist thought focusing on power dynamics inherent in the construction of meaning (Foucault, 1977; Foucault, 1980) and incorporating non-verbal practices as forms of discourse (e.g., Sampson, 1996; Mehta & Bondi, 1999; Weiss, 2001).

The purpose of the current research is to unpack how narratives of competence and morality are interwoven in Israeli nationalist discourse, and how the embodiment of competence narratives through military service affects perceptions of morality. I therefore employ discursive analysis (a) to examine both content and function of relevant nationalist narratives, and (b) engage in analysis of a specific form of discourse—embodied discourse— to examine dynamics between nationalist discourse and individuals' lived experiences of military service.

Like Foucauldian discourse analysis, embodied discourse analysis explores the interplay between structures of power and the agency of individuals, but it also draws upon Bourdieu's notion of "bodily hexis" as "political mythology realized, em-bodied" (Bourdieu 1990:69), in which the body serves as a means not only of enacting, but also of constituting, dominant narrative discourses. Individuals are able to realize political and cultural identities through their own behaviors (Guthrie, Raymond, & Stivers, 1997), thereby gaining non-linguistic, practical knowledge, which is difficult to untangle from discursive knowledge (Mehta & Bondi 1999).

Embodiment of nationalist discourses can materialize through routine, ordinary activities, such as attending sporting events with teams representing "us", or by distinguishing between national and international news. Such "flagging" of "banal nationalism" becomes so familiar that we largely do not recognize it as such (Billig 1993). But Weiss (2001) describes a different mode of embodiment—"deep nationalism"—in which non-ordinary, critical events emphasize the contours of nationalist discourse. Weiss describes deaths of Israelis from suicide bombings as events through which the national territory of Israel becomes equivalent to individual bodies: "the body politic and the citizen become one" (Weiss 2001:38).

In Chapter 5 I propose that participation in military service in Israel involves embodiment of nationalism which incorporates elements which are both "banal" and "deep." With near-universal conscription of Jewish Israelis, military service functions both as a familiar rite of passage, but also as a field of experience which may involve events which are critical in the extreme. Regardless of their political leanings or their moral interpretations of the government policies that the IDF enforces, young people are compelled to leave home, put on a uniform, and "become" soldiers. Whether or not individuals' perceived motivations to participate in military service conform to nationalist discourses, or whether they are instead motivated by other factors—such as the opportunity to gain skills and connections which will eventually help them to succeed in the business world, or simply because they fear the reprisals that refusal to serve would invite—their physical participation in the military project means that they effectively embody a nationalist discourse to which they have been systematically exposed since childhood.

2.4   Methods: Online Experiments

This section details the process of the design and implementation of the quantitative phase of the research. Here I describe the pilot phase, the design strategy, recruitment of participants and, briefly, data processing.

2.4.1 Online Experiments: Pilot Phase

The research questions for the online experiments emerged from inductive analysis of the interview data. This analysis suggested the presence of a cognitive bias that could affect moral judgement: the influence of competence of performance on assessment of actor morality. My first attempt at finding a way of testing for this

through the use of experiments involved designing scenarios drawing directly from the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict so that the experiments would have ecological validity (see Brown & Seligman, 2009). However, I soon realised that such an approach would be problematic in this case as I needed to find a way of moving participants away from well-practised responses relating to the conflict reflecting their political opinions.

To that end, I developed scenarios for two experiments which, on the surface, were completely unrelated to the conflict, but which contained dynamics relating to competent or incompetent performance, pressure to conform to social norms, morally problematic actions, and for the second experiment, one's national ingroup being judged on moral grounds by outsiders. These were dynamics which had emerged strongly during the course of the interviews. The scenario design was, effectively, a hybrid between a strictly nomothetic approach which could be meaningful to participants beyond the Israeli context, and a more idiographic approach seeking to simulate, albeit metaphorically, underlying dynamics relating to moral dilemmas as described by the interviewees.

The scenarios were piloted and fine-tuned with US participants recruited via Mechanical Turk (MTurk) in several iterations between January and April 2014, with an additional iteration in November 2014. The largest pilot study contained 392 participants. I planned to run the full studies as large-scale online experiments in Hebrew with participants in Israel, with equal numbers of participants from the political left wing, centre left, centre right, and right wing. But I chose to conduct the piloting phase of the research in English with participants in the US recruited through MTurk for two reasons. First, running the pilot studies in English would enable me to improve and modify the designs without having to use translators.

Second, the population of Israel is small, the population of Israelis who participate in online experiments is smaller, and the population of left wing Israelis (who form a minority of the population) participating in online experiments is smaller still. I did not want to reduce the number of available left wing Israelis during the piloting phase of the research.

2.4.2 Online Experiments: Design Strategy

Once the initial experimental design was finalised, the main studies in Hebrew were conducted in two separate tranches. This reflected an iterative approach to the design process. After analysing the first tranche of data from Israel, I formulated further hypotheses, which I then tested in a second tranche of experiments using different participants. The first tranche went online on 9 July 2014, just as an incursion by the Israeli military into Gaza known as Operation Protective Edge was launched. The second tranche was run on 12 December 2014, four months after the end of the Gaza incursion. Concerns about how the time and situational differences might affect the results of the experiments were assuaged by the fact that the Israeli results in both tranches duplicated the patterns identified in the US pilot studies.

The experiments were designed to address the following research questions. Experiment 1: When performing a morally problematic action, does competence of one's own performance affect self-assessment of morality? Is this affected by whether or not one is conforming to social norms, and whether the victim of one's actions is perceived as an ingroup or outgroup member? Experiment 2: When members of a perceived ingroup perform a morally problematic action which targets perceived outgroup members, does competence of their performance affect how individuals assesses their morality? In such a situation do conservative individuals

assess the perceived ingroup members as more moral than do more liberal individuals? Is this different when assessing the morality of perceived outgroup members targeting one's ingroup? And for both experiments: where competence has been shown to affect assessment of morality, what is the role of cognitive dissonance in this process?

The final designs of the experiments were as follows. Experiment 1 was a 2x4 between-subjects design which required participants to read a 2nd-person scenario and to imagine themselves as the main character—a competent or incompetent counterfeiter attempting to cash a cheque which they had fraudulently produced. Still imagining themselves as the counterfeiter, they then filled in a Feelings Thermometer designed to elicit how competent and moral they felt, and how much cognitive dissonance they were experiencing. They then answered questions relating to their own personal beliefs about the morality of the actions presented in the scenario, and about the responsibility of the main characters for performing these actions. As this was a between-subjects design, each participant read a scenario in which their character was either (1) competent or incompetent, (2) conforming to social norms in the form of family pressure, or acting on their own, and (3) defrauding people within their own country, or in a foreign country.

Experiment 2 was a 2x2 between-subjects design in which participants read a 3rd-person scenario about a group of competent or incompetent international spies who were attempting to place a surveillance device in the office of a friendly ambassador from an allied country. After reading the story, the participants filled in a Feelings Thermometer in order to reveal how competent and moral they judged the spies to be. Each participant read a scenario in which the spies were either (1) competent or incompetent, and (2) from the participant's own country spying on a

friendly ally; or from an allied country spying on the participant's country. Full details of the experimental designs can be found in Chapter 6.

The experiments were run in Hebrew, using the Qualtrics online survey platform. I created separate links for each of the four political categories of participants (see next section for details), and separate versions within each link for males and females. In Hebrew, the word "you" is not gender neutral. It is either male "*atah*," or female "*at*." The 2nd-person scenarios of Experiment 1 were designed so that participants would identify with the main character. For example, "It is a cold afternoon in November and you have just walked in to a small town store in upstate New York that offers a cheque cashing service." This meant that I had to create separate versions for males and females of each of the scenarios and of the Feelings Thermometer.

In the first experimental tranche I also included the Moral Foundations Questionnaire (moralfoundations.org, 2008a) after the competence/morality experiment. I needed this data for Chapter 4 in order to confirm whether moral foundations theory, which was developed in the US, could appropriately be applied to analysis of differences in moral intuitions across the political spectrum in Israel.

2.4.3 Online Experiments: Participants

I recruited 1,207 Jewish Israeli participants through the Midgam Project, which provides infrastructure and participant panels for online psychology research within Israel. For these experiments, the Midgam Project provided only people who had already established good reputations based on their participation in previous projects.

In order to test for any differences across the political spectrum in the competence/morality dynamic and for the Moral Foundations Questionnaire, I needed equal numbers of left wing, centre left, centre right, and right wing participants. The Midgam Project has detailed demographic information for everyone registered with them, including their self-reported most recent voting behaviour, so we were able to control for this in the recruitment phase by sending equal numbers of individuals to a separate link matching their political categorisation. I also included a question about most recent voting behaviour in the demographics section at the end of the experiment, and used these answers (where provided) to assign a political category to each participant. In the few cases where participants did not answer this question, I used the categorization provided by the Midgam Project.

The political parties which participants reported voting for were categorized as follows:

Left wing: *Meretz; Eretz Hadasha; HaYerukim; Da'am*

Centre left: *Yesh Atid; HaAvoda; Hatnuah; Kadima*

Centre right: *Likud; Shas; Yahadut HaTorah Hameukhedet; Am Shalem*

Right wing: *HaBayit HaYehudi; Otzma LeYisrael*.

2.4.4 Online Experiments: Data

Once the required number of participants from each political category link had been obtained, I collated this data into separate files for Experiments 1 and 2 using SPSS statistical analysis software. Details of the statistical analyses I conducted and how these relate to my research questions can be found in Chapter 6.

2.5   Reflexivity and Epistemological Pluralism

To date, actively engaging in and reporting on reflexivity has been almost exclusively the preserve of qualitative researchers. But the value of, and necessity for, reflexivity in quantitative research is beginning to be addressed within the academy (see for example, Ryan & Golden, 2006; Pearce, 2015). For researchers using mixed methods it would indeed seem strange to engage reflexively only with the qualitative elements of their research. To address the relevance of reflexivity for both the quantitative and qualitative elements of my own mixed methods research, I need to first acknowledge the power relationships inherent in the relationships between individuals and groups as the objects of research on the one hand, and the academy as an institution, and not just of myself as an individual researcher, on the other.

Qualitative research in the form of ethnography emerged in a western world dominated by Enlightenment thought and colonial politics, with their corresponding notions of positivist rationality, progress and hierarchy. The authority of early ethnographers such as Malinowski was based on their ability to view "primitive" societies objectively and scientifically, and to apply positivist empirical techniques in categorising and analysing them. Malinowski (1922) pioneered the technique of separating out the ethnographer's subjective views, in the form of a personal diary, from the ostensibly objective, scientific fieldwork data. Over the following decades his methodology became the gold standard of ethnographic research. But in the late 20th century such epistemological claims to objectivity became subject to intense criticism in the wider discourse in the social sciences, with thinkers such as Foucault (1972) arguing that knowledge and power are mutually constitutive and that therefore knowledge can never be wholly objective.

As part of this radical paradigm shift, the reflexivity debates in the 1970s and 1980s began to focus on the previously unexamined impact of politics on the relationships between western ethnographers and the colonised peoples they studied. Asad (1973) challenged the claims of neutrality of colonial-era ethnographers and argued that, in failing to recognise the mutually constitutive nature of power and knowledge, ethnographers inadvertently reinforced the views and assumptions of their own dominant cultures, and in particular those of the powerful institutions supporting their research. Instead of representing cultures as contingent, contested, and affected by historical changes in the wider world, these ethnographers presented a fiction of other cultures as homogenous, bounded wholes existing in a timeless ethnographic present.

It is, of course, difficult for ethnographers—as for all researchers, working qualitatively or quantitatively—to unpick the power dynamics involved in their own research, embedded as they are in social and political relations that may well go unrecognised. Indeed, Clifford (1988) argued that one day the ethnographic accounts of our own time that we consider to be complete may also be considered partial, and that modern perceptions of the failings of earlier ethnographers simply indicate the historical contingency and movement inherent in readings of research.

It was Bourdieu who perceived the importance of the position not only of the individual ethnographer, but of the very discipline of research within the wider field of power relationships that underpins the formation of methodological categories that the early reflexivity debates found problematic such as "culture," "community," "self," and "other" (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). By this reading it is the processes inherent in the field of power relations that need to be addressed and not just the

categorisations that result from them if one is going to tackle the concerns raised in the reflexivity debate effectively.

These power dynamics are not, of course, restricted to qualitative research. One might argue that they are even more entrenched within quantitative research. Research that produces results which can be presented in terms of numbers, statistics, charts and graphs—in short, which appears to provide conclusive, clear-cut answers grounded in objective scientific analysis—conveys an air of authority not available to qualitative research. But it is this very "objectivity" which needs to be questioned if researchers are to avoid falling prey to reinforcing not only their own individual prejudices, but also the power dynamics inherent in the systems in which their prejudices have emerged.

As the wider social discourse has moved away from a notion of culture, identity and meaning as constituting reifiable, bounded wholes, to one of historically contingent ongoing processes, so has the concept of knowledge itself. If we accept that knowledge is historically contingent, the role of research practice shifts from one of pinning down "solid," concrete meanings to one of identifying "liquid" processes of constituting meaning. To work reflexively we should be seeking to understand the processes involved in defining subjective social "truths," rather than seeking to focus objectively on the "truths" themselves. This is as true for researchers conducting quantitative research as it is for those working qualitatively.

In acknowledgement of this, I will engage reflexively with my current research as follows. First, I will address my role as an individual researcher engaging with the topic of morality in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Next, for both the qualitative and quantitative studies, I will examine inherent power

dynamics between the research participants and myself as both a product and a representative of the academy.

As an individual who is neither Israeli nor Jewish I am frequently asked, and sometimes with a good deal of suspicion on the part of the person asking, why I have chosen to conduct research within Israel on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. There is a narrative commonly heard within Israel that the international community unfairly singles out Israel for criticism, and that this is the result of widespread anti-Semitism. The impacts of such a narrative on research projects such as mine are twofold. First, it can make potential participants wary of engaging with the researcher; and second, it can make the researcher very (and potentially overly) cautious about saying or doing anything that might possibly be misconstrued by people searching for signs of anti-Semitism. For a universalist liberal such as myself, the possibility that anyone might think I was anti-Semitic is deeply disturbing. Therefore, when engaging in, and when discussing, my research I frequently feel as if I am navigating a minefield. But there is no point in undertaking any research unless one is willing to grapple with such complexities. I do my best to ensure that I ask the questions that need to be asked in order to make the research meaningful, and that I do this in a way that makes it clear that my motivations are honourable and transparent.

So, why did I choose the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as a topic of research? And why does the research presented in this thesis focus only on Israelis? I came to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict via a rather circuitous route. In the late 1990s, at a time when the anti-globalisation movement was emerging, I became interested in the dynamics of interactions between grassroots networks and powerful institutions. During this time I read about one such grassroots network—Women in Black—

which had been formed by Jewish Israeli women who were actively opposed to the military occupation of Palestine, and which had expanded into other countries, including the UK. In December 2001, during the second intifada, I travelled with London-based members of Women in Black to the West Bank to make a documentary film about their participation in non-violent direct action against the occupation. I made further filming trips to Israel and the West Bank, travelling through Israel at a time when suicide bombings were common, and I was on the ground during the siege of Bethlehem, and in the aftermath of the attack on Jenin in 2002.

I came to realise that the questions I had about the nature of intergroup conflict in general, and of this conflict in particular, and of how such conflicts might eventually be overcome, were not going to be answered through documentary filmmaking. It was at this point that I entered academia as an undergraduate studying Social and Political Sciences. Since that time I have conducted research among both Israelis and Palestinians. The current research focuses only on Israelis for two reasons. First, to conduct detailed analysis of how individuals from both societies experience and deal with moral dilemmas relating to the conflict is beyond the scope of this thesis. Therefore I needed to choose either Israelis or Palestinians for the present research. I chose Israelis because, as the more powerful actor in this conflict Israel has, I would argue, more scope at present to alter the nature of relations between Israel and the Palestinians. I am very aware that not all of the people I interviewed during the course of this research would agree with that assessment, but this is how I came to focus on moral judgment among Israelis for the current research. I am fortunate to have both Israelis and Palestinians among my close friends. I have no interest in mythologizing or demonising either community.

Moving beyond reflexivity relating to the personal to that of the structural, my role as both a product and a representative of the academy becomes evident in several ways. First, I feel that my research is meaningful and of value, and that therefore it is reasonable that I should ask people to participate in my research as interviewees or in online experiments. Is this assessment justified? Given that the academy is funding the research, I have spent four years conducting the research, and numerous individuals have agreed to participate in the research, it would seem that the general consensus holds that the privileged position of the academy in the construction of knowledge is respected, or at least tolerated. The fact that individual PhD researchers can travel the world in the pursuit of knowledge and find countless numbers of people willing to help them in their projects is testimony to a well-established dynamic in which the authority of the academy is fairly widely accepted. That in many instances, including in my qualitative research, it is also acceptable for the research to be conducted in English even though this is not an official language of the country in which the research is being conducted, is further evidence of power dynamics in play.

However, as the quantitative phase of my research involved running online experiments, it was possible to transcend my limited Hebrew language abilities by engaging translators to produce Hebrew versions of my research materials. Using translators, no matter how talented and conscientious they may be, always entails relinquishing a certain amount of control on the part of the researcher. But I was grateful that in this phase of the research I was able to avoid imposing my native language on the research participants.

It would be naive, however, to assume that the researcher-participant relationship is a one-way street in terms of achieving goals. It is possible for

individuals to gain all manner of benefits from participating in research projects. For example, some are paid, some enjoy the chance to talk about themselves to an appreciative audience, and some find the opportunity to reflect on the topics covered in the research useful. But it is also possible for participants to benefit in ways that challenge the perceived power dynamics of research. At the end of their interviews, two of the right wing individuals I spoke with each stated that they had found the interview "good experience" for learning how to present their views of Israel and of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to an international audience. In a situation in which the battle for international public opinion is viewed as an integral element of the conflict, and university students are actively encouraged to engage in *hasbara*[12], academic researchers may find themselves in an unexpectedly recursive power dynamic.

Similarly, the requirement to communicate one's research findings as particular types of product favoured by the academy involves power dynamics which can prove complex. Much has been written about the impact of conveying ethnographic data through written text. It has been argued that the bounded form of the text implies that the society represented within it is similarly a bounded whole (Marcus, 1998), and that authors are likely to create a false sense of order in an effort to produce the coherence that the textual form requires (Clifford, 1988). In this way the very forms that research products take—textual, linear—effectively misrepresent the complexity of the subjects of research. This is problematic. But the requirements of academic publication culture can also produce a misleading version of the research process itself, particularly if that process has embraced

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[12] *Hasbara* is a term which can be translated as propaganda, or as clarification. Since 2013 the Israeli government has offered scholarships to students for engaging in online *hasbara*, that is, for countering online information considered critical of Israel by providing alternative analyses (Ravid, 2013).

epistemological pluralism. Although this situation is changing, some academic journals still tend to favour publishing research that is presented as falling neatly into one epistemological/methodological camp or another, rather than as crossing disciplinary boundaries. Although I consider one of the main strengths of the research presented in this thesis as the interplay between induction and deduction, between the idiographic and the nomothetic, in order to maximize my chances of getting the research published I will be isolating these processes within separate journal articles. I am grateful to have had the chance, in this chapter, to engage with a more holistic discussion of the methodology and methods which contributed to this research.

2.6   Conclusion

Taking an epistemologically pluralist approach to my research design, I integrated qualitative research in the form of semi-structured interviews, and quantitative research in the form of online experiments. In doing so, I employed methods favoured by both experimental and constructivist social psychologists.

Although I approached the semi-structured interviews with research questions grounded in specific theories, I also remained open to "useful noise" in the form of themes relating to moral judgment which emerged from the interviews. Through an inductive approach to the interview data I identified evidence of what I hypothesized to be a cognitive bias not currently in the psychological literature, and designed online experiments to test for this. Following analysis of the experimental data, which provided support for the cognitive bias hypothesis, I then applied this to further analysis of the qualitative data. In this way, the research design travels from

the idiographic, to the nomothetic, and back again, with each phase of the research informing the design of the subsequent phase. Without this integrated approach, the original contributions of the thesis relating to the identification of the proposed competence/morality cognitive bias, and the analysis of how this might affect perceptions of ingroup morality and outgroup competence within the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict would not have been possible.

This thesis is grounded in questions involving individuals' perceptions of ingroup-outgroup identities pertinent to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In the following chapter I use interpretative phenomenological analysis to gain insight into the meanings that the 40 Jewish Israeli interviewees attach to issues relating to these identities, to the nature of the ongoing conflict with the Palestinians, and to prospects for peace.

3 "Us," "Them," and *Hamatzav*: an Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis of Semi-Structured Interviews

3.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to provide insight into the complexities of how the 40 Jewish Israeli interviewees perceive ingroup and outgroup identities relevant to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and how they perceive the nature of the conflict itself and the prospects for peace. I employ interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) to examine points of convergence and divergence, within and between different ethnic and political groupings, regarding the meanings that individuals attach to events and experiences relating to these topics. The use of interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) is appropriate for this task as IPA embraces an idiographic, phenomenological, and heuristic approach which prioritises individuals' interpretations of their own particular, context-specific experiences. This process has been referred to as a "double hermeneutic" as it involves the researcher interpreting the narratives produced by the interviewees who are, in turn, interpreting the meanings of their own experiences (Smith et al., 2009).

I would add to this assessment of the interview process that participants may also be engaged in their own form of multiple hermeneutics: they may at times try to present their interpretations in a way that they think the researcher will approve of, in effect attempting pre-emptively to interpret the researcher's interpretation of their interpretation. When interviewing individuals about a topic as contentious and sensitive as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, such efforts on the part of interviewees may indicate more than simple social desirability bias. As described in Section 2.4, during the course of the interviews, two of the right wing interviewees stated that the

interviews had been "good experience" for learning how to present their interpretation of events to an international audience. Although such strategies on the part of interviewees (and I am not suggesting that only right wing interviewees were motivated to try to make a "good" impression) may to some extent gloss their true feelings, their answers do provide insights into what they consider to be socially acceptable to outsiders. As there were clear differences across the political spectrum in interviewees' reported interpretations relating to the analytical themes, useful data was provided in spite of any such strategies.

I begin this chapter with an analysis of the interviewees' family histories, categorised by the primary ethnic groupings salient within Israeli society: Ashkenazi, Mizrahi/Sephardi, Russian/FSU, and Ethiopian, and discuss these in relation to the political affiliation of the interviewees. See Figure 3.1 for a demographic breakdown of the interviewees' ethnicity by political category.

Figure 3.1: Political Category x Ethnicity
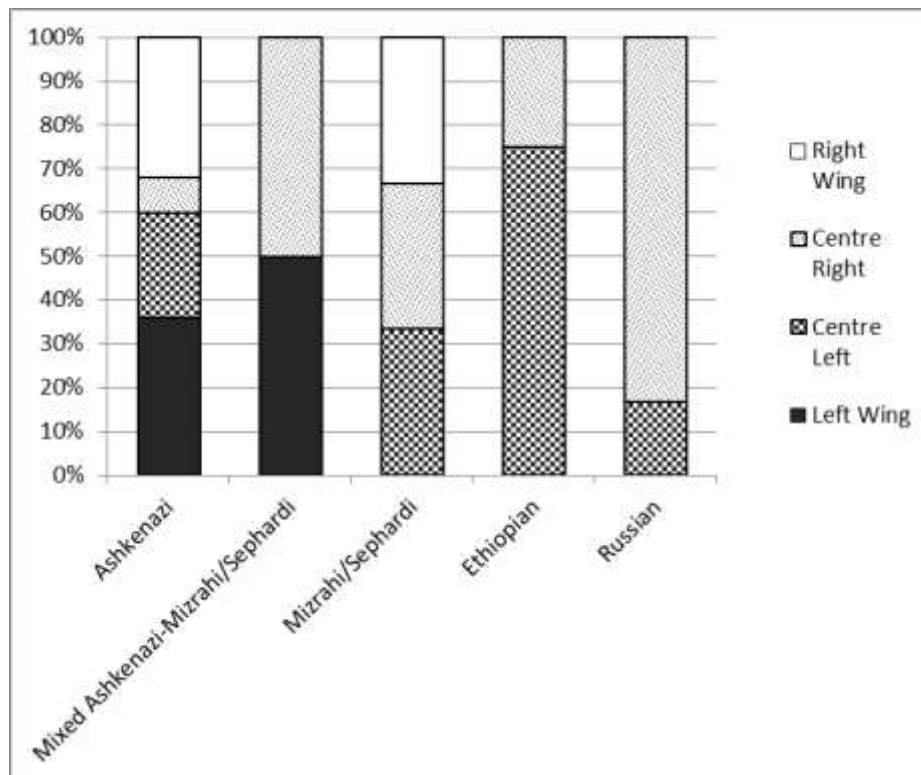
3.2 Perception of Identity: Family History

I started the interviews by asking each person to relate how they or their family had come to live in Israel. This question allowed space for the interviewees to engage with the meanings they construed from the interrelation of personal, family, and historical events. Each interviewee is identified by a code indicating their political affiliation: L1– L10 (left wing), CL1 – CL11 (centre left), CR1 – CR10 (centre right), and R1 – R9 (right wing).

3.2.1 Ashkenazim (N=25)   (CL1 - CL6, CR1, CR3, L1, L3 - L10, R2 - R9)

Not surprisingly, the spectre of the Holocaust looms large in the family histories described by all of the Ashkenazi interviewees, except for two whose families had been in Palestine before the rise of Nazism. The degree of separation from these events varied depending on the age of the interviewees. L1, born in Germany in the 1920s, described his childhood experience of Kristallnacht and of how his father, a doctor, had his medical licence revoked because he was Jewish. Other interviewees had parents or grandparents who had either escaped from Europe when they saw the writing on the wall, or who had survived concentration camps. All but two the Ashkenazi interviewees had lost extended family members in the Holocaust.

Across the political spectrum a theme emerged of individual family members who had tried to convince others that it was unsafe to remain in Europe, but who were not listened to, and who were thought to be unnecessarily alarmist or even deluded. The sense, among interviewees describing these events, of these individuals having survived a near miss was palpable, as was the sense of frustration that others had not listened and had therefore perished.

My father's father came to Israel, he was born in Germany. And when Hitler took, the, how you say, took the government in 1932, he started to understand that something very bad is going to happen. And then for about 6 months he was travelling in Germany trying to convince Jewish to run away from Germany. And then 1934 he understood that no one, that everyone looks at him like a lunatic. So he just left everything, he left his family and went to Israel. *L10*

From my mum's side, they were in Poland and belonged to a Hassidic sect. And they saw the writing on the wall so-called back in the 1920s or the late 20s, 30s that there's gonna be some problems for Jews. So he tried to convince as many people, obviously. They thought he was crazy to come to Israel, the swampland, nothing much happening here. I mean there were people obviously coming from the 1900s, returned from the mid-1800s, but not in massive waves. And they, because of that they saved my whole family. *R4*

Differences emerged between the political groups relating to the lessons learned from the Holocaust, with right wing interviewees stressing the importance of protecting the Jewish ingroup and expressing a belief in the ubiquity of anti-Semitism. For these interviewees, Jewish people would be identified and persecuted as Jews regardless of how they viewed their own identity or of how well-integrated they were within societies in which they were a minority group. To think otherwise would be dangerously naïve. They described the land of Israel as inextricably linked with the concept of security for the Jewish people: without a Jewish homeland which was able to provide a safe haven for Jewish people facing persecution from anywhere in the world, another Holocaust was highly probable, if not inevitable. Military service in defence of Israel was therefore the responsibility of all Jewish people.

I don't care where you live, this is a Jewish army. It's finally after all these years…And I believe that every Jew at 18 has to come here, even if he doesn't want to live here later". *R4*

[Israel] was founded to be a Jewish state, it was founded to be the safe haven for the Jewish people, and not coincidentally, in the Jewish homeland…as a Jew, anywhere in the world, in the United States, in England, in Iran, or in China, you know that whatever happens, anti-Semitism, you have a home in the state of Israel. *R9*

In contrast, left wing interviewees saw the lessons of the Holocaust as indicating the need to ensure universal human rights: their focus was on the need to protect all people in vulnerable situations, not only Jewish people. This difference was most acutely demonstrated by L1, who described how, as a 17-year old high school student, when news broke of the Kurds being gassed by Saddam Hussein's regime, he expected to be taken out of high school early to serve in an IDF task force sent to rescue the Kurds. He laughs now at how naïve he was at the time to believe this, and described a process by which he gradually came to understand that the Israelis were no more likely to act selflessly in the face of the suffering of others than any other nation, in spite of the experience of the Holocaust.

For left wing interviewees, the right wing's strategy of circling the wagons re the Jewish ingroup, and of prioritising their own desire for a Jewish homeland at the expense of the rights and desires of the Palestinian Arabs living in the region, took the "wrong" lesson from the Holocaust and put Jewish people—both within Israel and abroad—at greater risk of anti-Semitism and attack. The difference in attitudes between the risks and benefits of "groupishness" between the left wing and right wing were very clear in this regard.

3.2.2 "Russians" from former Soviet Union countries (N=6) (CL7, CR5 - CR8, CR10)

While the Ashkenazi interviewees were represented across the political spectrum, the six interviewees in this study from countries from the former Soviet Union (FSU), commonly referred to in Israel as "Russians," were all political centrists. Data from the 2003 and 2009 Israeli national elections indicates that, within the population as a whole, Israelis from the former Soviet Union largely support centre right and right wing political parties (Arian & Shamir, 2003: Philippov & Knafelman, 2011). Immigrants from the former Soviet Union were allowed into Israel according to the Law of Return, which allows individuals with Jewish ancestry, or who have a Jewish spouse, to become citizens of Israel. However, these criteria are different from *halakhic* rules (based on the Torah) which state that to be Jewish an individual must either be the child of a Jewish mother, or have undergone an Orthodox Jewish conversion process. Therefore, the Jewishness of many of the FSU immigrants has been called into question (e.g., Kravel-Tovi, 2012; Maltz, 2014).

The FSU interviewees had all come to Israel as children, brought by their parents following the break-up of the Soviet Union. Prior to this event, emigration from the USSR was extremely difficult if not impossible, and interviewees described their parents taking the "opportunity" to emigrate based on a combination of financial incentives, for example, the search for a better quality of life, as well as in response to varying levels of anti-Semitism.

> And how we came to live here? Because of financial aspects, not because of Zionism or something, for my parents at least, not because of Zionism or something like this. Mostly from financial aspects, and a little bit for anti-

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Semitic aspects there. But the most aspect was, the heaviest aspect was the financial. *CR8*

I think it was, there were 2 parts. One of it was a better, the Soviet Union in the 90s started to fell apart and the things were very bad. So they came to Israel to upgrade their situation. *CR5*

They all described themselves as secular, and they expressed no strong ideological connection with the land of Israel. But those from the centre right were concerned about the security implications of dismantling the settlements in the West Bank. They expressed views about the land of Israel that were more pragmatic than emotional.

Without the West Bank, the strip, the beach strip is very thin. And having regular Arab armies on the border, they can cut Israel to half. They can fire rockets to Tel Aviv even in the centre. It's unacceptable. You have to have the border farther. Is term of defendable borders, there is such a term? Defensible. *CR7*

Some of the FSU interviewees, such as CL7 from Moldova, had family members who had survived the Nazi concentration camps, while others described persecution by the Soviets. CR10 described a growing sense of nationalism within former Soviet states such as Lithuania, where he was born, and a fear that this nationalism would result in greater antagonism towards the Jewish population.

A strong theme running through the FSU stories of emigration was that of "get out while you can," which in some ways echoes the theme found in Ashkenazi reports of the tragedy that ensued for family members who did not leave Europe in time, but also reflects a sense that the political situation in their home countries was volatile enough that the policies towards emigration might change at any time.

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Well, up until a certain time in the Soviet Union you couldn't really decide that you can leave, so I think they use the, once it was possible they took a chance to leave. *CR10*

But by far, the strongest motivating force as described by the interviewees was that of the opportunity to benefit financially from emigration to a country seen both as economically more stable, and providing more opportunities for Jewish people, than those of the former Soviet Union. For these interviewees, Israel offered the opportunity to work hard and to make a better life for themselves.

3.2.3 Ethiopians (Beta Israel) (N=4) (CL9 - CL11, CR9)

The secular, largely financial, emigration incentives described by the FSU interviewees could not be more different from the motivations for making *aliyah*[13] of the families of the Ethiopian interviewees. Like the FSUs, this group of interviewees were also all political centrists, and the wider Beta Israel population has tended to vote for centre right and right wing parties (Yemini-Anteby, 2005). Also like the FSUs, their Jewishness has been called into question (Schwarz, 2001), but their collective history is very different.

All of the Ethiopian interviewees came from religious families who felt strongly that, because they were Jewish, they belonged in the land of Israel. Although none of these interviewees related any personal stories of discrimination in Ethiopia due to their religion, they described a group of people who were very aware of being a minority group within a largely Christian population.

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[13] *Aliyah* (in Hebrew, "ascent") is the term used to describe Jewish people immigrating into Israel.

> We are Jewish and we always dreamed to come to Israel. In Ethiopia from your first day in the world you hear about Jerusalem, Israel. Our dream is to come to Israel and to be in one place with all Jewish nation. *CL9*

CR9, who was born in Israel after her parents made *aliyah*, describes how her family had always dreamed of going to Jerusalem, and were prepared to walk there, but were ignorant of the distance and dangers involved in making such a trip.

> They don't know to make the operation. They just thought if they go and go and go it will be ok...They was believing that God will be always with them. And it will be ok because God want them to come to Jerusalem. *CR9*

She described how her family, in a group with other families, spent eight months walking through the desert in their quest to reach the Jewish homeland. Inadequate supplies of food and water, and the presence of disease led to the deaths of many in the group, including three of CR9's siblings. Although her father will sometimes talk about this journey, her mother finds it too upsetting.

CL11's experience of the journey across the desert was first-hand, as he and a group of friends made the crossing when he was 16. He describes how one of his friends was shot and killed by the Sudanese military as they were crossing through Sudan, and echoes CR9's descriptions of hunger, thirst, and disease. His gratitude towards the State of Israel for providing him with the opportunity to live in a developed country, to attend university, and to attain a high status position within Israeli society through his work, concurs with other Ethiopian interviewees' sense of gratitude and good fortune at having the chance to live in Israel.

> I was given everything by the Jewish Agency and the Youth Aliyah. And then I do go to study a BA in Social Work and then I become independent. *CL11*

I can say that it's not easy, but my parents feel very blessed to be here. And my grandmother is living with us and she's, she's always grateful for being here and not there. Because they thought about Ethiopia as temporary. Not their land. *CL10*

Such feelings were expressed by all of these interviewees, regardless of whether or not they identified as religious: the hardships endured by either themselves or their parents, both while living in unmodernised communities in Ethiopia, and during the exodus to Israel, stand in sharp contrast to the lives they currently lead, and the reality of this contrast is particularly salient for this group, making them very loyal to the state.

3.2.4 Mizrahi/Sephardi/Mixed (N=5) (CL8, CR2, CR4, L2, R1)

Although they have distinct histories, with Mizrahim originating from Jewish communities within Muslim majority countries in the Middle East, and Sephardim descended from Jewish communities who lived in the Iberian Peninsula until the 15th century, the two groups are frequently conflated in mainstream Israeli narratives, and the terms are often treated as synonymous. The salient aspect of these ethnic groups in terms of mainstream Israeli discourse, is their 'otherness' from the Ashkenazim and their perceived ethnic and cultural similarity to Arabs (Khazzoom, 2003; Shabi, 2008). Khazzoom (2003) argues that, over the last two centuries, Ashkenazi Jews in Europe had embraced westernisation as a form of self-improvement, and subsequently felt threatened by aspects of traditional Jewish life which they perceived in negative terms as "oriental" and unmodern. In order to distance themselves from their "oriental" history, they drew distinctions between themselves and the Mizrahi and Sephardi Jewish communities. Today the Mizrahim and Sephardim have a lower social and economic status than the Ashkenazim (Yiftachel,

2000), and although among this study's interviewees they are represented across the political spectrum, in the wider population they have tended to support nationalistic centre right and right wing political parties (Zanotti, 2013).

> All right, so the Sephardi Jews, I personally think that a lot of their culture is very fundamental and not progressive enough. And I can even see this in my wife's mother, for example, who's from Iraqi descent. And you see the difference between how she thinks and how my parents think. *CR1* (Ashkenazi)

The lower position on the ethnic hierarchy of these groups was keenly felt by R1, who explicitly distanced himself from his Sephardi heritage, stating not only that he identified as Israeli rather than Sephardi, but also emphasising that his Sephardi roots "certainly do not come out in my personality." R1 had emigrated from Australia, and focused on this rather than discussing how and when his family had migrated from Spain to Australia. His own personal motivations for emigrating to Israel were rooted in Zionist ideology. Like the right wing Ashkenazi interviewees, R1 described the land of Israel as the destiny of the Jewish people, the place where Jews belonged, and the place where the Jewish identity was being "fermented." He advocated the view of Israel as a melting pot, in which ethnic differences disappear in an overarching Jewish identity.

In contrast, CR2 was comfortable with his Sephardi and Mizrahi roots. He described his mother's family as having come to Israel from Spain in 1492 as "part of the banishment," and his father's family as having come from Egypt when, following the announcement of the formation of the State of Israel, riots broke out in protest. He described the financial losses suffered by the Egyptian side of his family, who went from being wealthy bankers to working in a variety of jobs that were less

well-paid, but which allowed them to support the family and contribute to nation-building. As with many interviewees from across the political spectrum, CR2 had a strong sense of the link between his family's history and the history of the nation.

> …growing up here makes you part of the wider national story. . . you grow up with all the war stories and the army mythologies and whatever. So it makes you feel part of Israel. Very much like a part of it. *CR2*

Although Mizrahi Jews also faced instances of historical persecution and expulsion, none of the interviewees gave indications of having an emotional involvement with this history anywhere near the level described by Ashkenazi Israelis in relation to European persecutions of Jews. Indeed, L10, himself Ashkenazi, asserted that the history of the Mizrahi and Sephardi Jews was not widely spoken of in Israel. His feeling was that this was partly due to "the western world" not having as much engagement with countries such as Egypt as it has with Germany, and that the European population of Israel therefore was less interested in this aspect of history. But he also suggested that the character of the Mizrahi Jews was different from that of European Jews in that the Mizrahim were more "joyful" by nature and were able to put the persecutions of the past behind them and to focus on living in the here and now. A sense of significant cultural differences between Jewish Israelis of different ethnic and national backgrounds was a common theme arising from the interviews. This contributed to the complexities inherent in the concept of a "Jewish identity."

3.3 Perception of Collective Ingroup Identity: What makes someone Jewish?

3.3.1 Left wing (N=10)

All of the political groups described shared history and shared culture as important elements of what makes someone (feel) Jewish. These commonalities were reinforced through practice in everyday life, through speaking Hebrew, celebrating traditional holidays, acknowledging historical events through public ceremonies, and for most, through military service. However, there were also clear differences across the political spectrum regarding what it meant to be Jewish, with concepts relating to social construction of identity more prevalent among the left wing, and with more emphasis on religion, strong group ties, and genetics coming to the fore as one moved towards the right politically (see Figure 3.2).

Figure 3.2: Jewish Identity
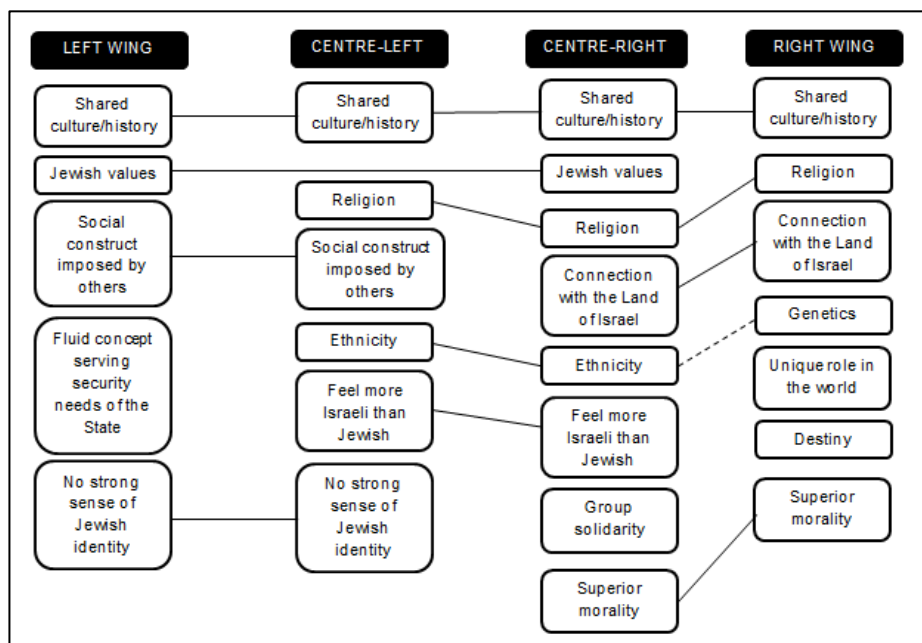
The "melting pot" analogy commonly used in Israeli mainstream narratives to describe the Jewish population of Israel in terms of one unified group tended to be rejected by left wing interviewees. L5 acknowledged the differences in historical/cultural circumstances of the different Jewish ethnic groups.

> You could ask a more difficult question, you could ask is there a difference between a Yemenite Jew and a Jew from Eastern Europe? Are they the same thing? So, from that perspective maybe I can only consider myself an Eastern European Jew and not just a Jew, you know, something more specific. *L5*

In this way, L5 acknowledges the plurality of identities of Jewish Israelis, rather than foregrounding a common, unifying concept of Jewishness.

Left wing interviewees were not comfortable with a national/religious narrative of Jewishness that they perceived to be grounded in ethnicity and blood ties and which systematically privileged those considered Jewish over, for instance, Palestinian citizens of Israel. The tensions inherent in the description of the State of Israel as a "Jewish democracy" were problematic for this group, and some described such a definition as being at odds with what they saw as Jewish values.

> So I like the tradition, the ideas, the good ideas of the Jewish tradition, and there were a lot of moral ideas. You can find a lot of good things. If we didn't occupy the Territories everything was different. *L4*

They also had a consistently cynical perception of the State as employing a flexible definition of Jewishness when it came to allowing certain groups to immigrate to Israel in order to serve in the IDF.

> So I really think it doesn't have to do with any religious, obviously there's religious things there on a different level, but we're talking security ones, how the IDF is looking at it, so either you're an Arab or you're a Jew, and if

you're Russian then you're a Jew. It really doesn't matter if you're a *goy*[14].
L8

The left wing's frustration with what they saw as unethical government policies based on ethnicity and religion had resulted in several of the interviewees distancing themselves from identifying strongly as Jewish, and they resented having Jewishness deemed a salient part of their identity by others.

> I had a few years where I did a lot of deep research into ethical issues in Judaism, and the conclusions that I came to were a little bit radical. And today I hold the position that orthodox Judaism is a racist religion. It's derogatory for women, for homosexuals, for non-Jews, for non-religious Jews at its core. And because in Israel we don't really have—I'm an atheist—we also don't have a religious plurality here, so it's basically orthodox or nothing. Even the secular Jews in Israel here are orthodox. So, I just don't affiliate with Judaism. I deny the right of other people to decide for me what my religion is or what my identity is. *L6*

> It's not my first identification. I guess I am Jewish, but it doesn't, it doesn't, it doesn't matter much for me. *L2*

But there was also recognition that, regardless of what an individual Jewish Israeli citizen might feel about being identified as Jewish, this identity was highly salient with regard to how they were treated by Israeli society: even individualists have to recognise that they live within groups.

> Society makes me Jewish. The first part of it is that is what I'm seen as from the outside. That is my role here. And it is important to say that people in this country have a role. And being Jewish means that I am part of the Occupying power, I am privileged by definition, and so I can't say that I'm not Jewish because I don't feel like it. It doesn't matter. I get treated as one. *L7*

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[14] *Goy* is a term meaning a person who is not Jewish.

3.3.2 Centre Left (N=11)

Like the left wing interviewees, those from the centre left also cited a shared history and culture as key to their sense of Jewish identity, and many of them also indicated that identity was at least partly a social construct imposed by others. Also similar to the left wing, some of the centre left interviewees also described having no strong sense of Jewish identity, but this group introduced the concept of feeling more Israeli than Jewish.

> I guess I'm sort of an atheist, ok? I'm not that, I'm much more Israeli than I am Jew. I am Jewish, technically. I observe Jewish holidays. We celebrate Passover and Hanukah, and I will probably do that with my children as well. And teach them Jewish history and tradition, but being Israeli means a lot more to me than being Jewish. *CL1*

> Um, for me it's more a national thing than a religious thing, but I think most of the people would not agree with that. It's also a religious thing, but in this time, in the 21st century, it's more national. *CL8*

The concepts of citizenship and democracy hold great importance for this group, so it is not surprising to find that many of them prioritise a national element of identity. However, some of the centre left interviewees can be seen as distanced from their more left wing compatriots through their embracing of religious traditions as integral to Jewish identity, even for those who are not religiously observant.

> I keep a kosher home, but as long as it doesn't get back to my parents, I don't keep kosher. But my house is kosher. I'm getting married in October but it's (pause) I grew up in a conservative house, so tradition's very important to me. It's important to me to marry someone Jewish, it's important to me to do something for the holidays. But do I go to the synagogue? Not necessarily. But I do the meals, it's a key part of who I (pause) do I feel like I have a connection with Jews across the world? Yeah. *CL5*

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A sense of Jewish cultural solidarity was described as persisting even between interviewees with very different cultural backgrounds: the deeper cultural connection stretching back to biblical days held more sway than the cultural differences experienced by individual Jews from different countries.

> I mean somebody who's Ethiopian, on the one hand you can say we have different ethnicities. On the other hand, we have a shared, we have parts of our collective memory are the same, parts of our practices are the same. And other parts are very different. But just because two people look alike doesn't mean they think alike. I have, you know, somebody who's Moroccan or whatever background, there's things that I'm going to have a lot more in common with him than I'm gonna have with my Irish Catholic friend that I grew up with at home. *CL5* (originally from the USA)

This perception of "collective memory" indicates a strong sense of "the group" which transcends individual experience and allows for a fixedness in the concept of group identity which can become conflated with biological difference.

> You know, biologically you cannot convert yourself to either direction. It's happy that people that are not biologically part of this chain want to become part. I do not think or will say that they are no less good, worse from us in any aspect. But there is difference. The biological difference. Yeah. *CL3*

A perceived biological difference between Jews and non-Jews and converts was described either in terms of ethnicity or of genetics by all groups apart from the left wing. Particularly for the centrists, there was often a conflation between culture and ethnicity when describing salient points of identity. In this way, their concept of Jewish identity wavered between social construct and innate uniqueness. Indeed, some of the centre left interviewees explicitly referred to ethnic and cultural differences creating what they saw as insurmountable gulfs between people. These

differences became salient when describing their sense of connection with people who convert to Judaism.

> I guess it [conversion] works to a certain extent. I think the basic thing is for me of feeling, I don't know, close to someone, in a, in that aspect of he's Jewish and I'm Jewish. For someone that wasn't born Jewish or wasn't born into this culture, it's less. I would feel less close to him. *CL4*

3.3.3 Centre Right (N=10)

The concept of Jewish identity was problematic for some Ethiopian and FSU interviewees, whose religious identity has been called into question within Israel. For these interviewees there was a tendency to prioritise a concept of Israeli identity over Jewish religious identity.

> [Re Ethiopians being required to convert to Judaism] This is a process that my community have to do… I don't agree about it. Because in Ethiopia everyone is, everyone consider themselves as Jewish. *CL10* (secular Ethiopian)

> I think I'd rather be Israeli than Jewish because I know that I gave my time to the IDF, I do my time after the 3 years, I pay my taxes, I go to the university, so as far as I'm concerned, I'm Israeli. The Jewish is a bonus, it's not really something that I have to be. To be proper Jew you have to be Jewish on your mother's side. So you're like not authentic Jew. So I won't look, I really don't want to look at myself as not authentic Jew, I look myself as [authentic] Israeli.
> *CR5* (Russian/FSU)
> The FSU Israelis described a shared a history of persecution based on Jewish

ethnicity. For them, whether or not they were religious was beside the point: Jewishness—and the need for a Jewish state—was not a matter of choice.

In terms of ethnic group only for me. All the other stuff, religion stuff, ok, it's maybe a little bit tradition and stuff, but for me, it's first and before everything else, it's your ethnic group. And people in other places in the world dislike you or hate you because of your ethnic group, so yeah, it's important that you will have a Jewish state in the ethnic term. *CR6 (Russian/FSU)*

For the centre right interviewees, the concept of "the group" was very strong. There was an acceptance that they, as individuals, would always be identified and treated as Jews by the rest of the world. The idea that loyalty to one's group is inherently good surfaced many times throughout these interviews.

I'm not religious Jewish whatsoever, but I still like to marry Jew and not non-Jew for example. Because it's important to me that my children will be Jew. *CR4*

I'm a Jewish person. It's part of my group, that's the group I belong to. That's enough. *CR3*

The topic of conversion to Judaism frequently muddied otherwise coherent arguments by secular interviewees of what constitutes Jewish identity: one can "become" Jewish through religious conversion.

I had an atheist girlfriend . . . And I remember it was very hard for me when she used to say that Jewish people, like it's just religion. Because I wanted to say that it's not just religion. It's something more, it's like a shared history, a shared culture. And then she would argue that, yeah but then you just accept other people, like everybody can become Jewish if he just does the right ritual. So, I don't know. It's hard for me to draw the line. *CR10*

And interestingly, while advocating the benefits of group solidarity CR10 also introduced the concept of Jewish moral superiority while simultaneously maintaining a sense of cultural relativism.

Judaism is like a dynamic experience that can change over time and over years, and it's more… And also it has some kind of a moral supremacy, which I don't necessarily think is a bad thing. I just think that supremacy has to be something that each party has for his own faith and for his own people. I think everybody should feel like they're the chosen people. And everybody should kind of make their decisions based on the fact that everybody else also thinks they're the chosen people. CR10

This acceptance that individuals, regardless of which ethnic group they identify with, will generally have a strong sense of group solidarity was a common theme throughout the centre right interviews.

3.3.4 Right Wing (N=9)

For the right wing, the sense of group solidarity remained very strong, but there was no corresponding sense of moral relativism. For these interviewees the Jewish people have been charged by God with a unique role in history, and this remains true whether or not individual Jews choose to recognise this. This was clearly spelled out by R3 when discussing left wing conscientious objectors.

I believe that this Jewish nation is really differentiated from other nations in the notion that the national identity of Jews ever connected to a destiny. Okay? It was, I mean it was from the very beginning of the Jewish nation. And I think, I'm sure, I mean, I can see that, when people are uncertain about their national destiny, if they don't want to take part in things that seems rude to them, seems against justice, this is it. So I think the origin of this weakness that the army is less and less within the consensus, I think that the origin of it is in a very high, very good place. Very moral place. Although I definitely disagree with them, but I understand the origin. *R3*

"National destiny" formed the basis of the right wing interviewees' understanding of their relationship with the land of Israel. As they believed that the

land was given to the Jewish people by God, it necessarily formed an important part of their identity as Jews.

> I think that the land and the Bible are kind of connected, meaning that without Israel there's just a lot of commandments that you can only fulfil within Israel. There's something inherently spiritual within the land. Obviously, it sounds crazy now that I'm saying it out loud, but religion is crazy. Obviously, it's not rational. So, yeah, in order to be the best Jew you can be, you have to fulfil the most commandments and the optimal is by living in Israel and by being in our holy places, not just Tel Aviv and Beersheva and those things. I think they go hand in hand, basically, that there's not one without the other. *R7*

The bond with the land was sometimes described in highly emotional terms.

> When we went to the Western Wall, the Wailing Wall for the first time, which was on the first day, I was in awe. I literally couldn't get my prayers out, I was just speechless. Because I felt something, an emotion I'd never felt before of awe. After that, every time I came back I just felt more and more like I belonged. And even though I didn't know which street connected to which street, or even the name of the street that I was standing on, I just felt at home. And that's something that I can't describe. And I feel at home in my parents' home, but this is a different kind of home. And I feel that this is a national home. *R8*

For these interviewees, the Jewish nation was understood not only in terms of shared history and religious destiny, but also in terms of genetics. Indeed, R1 spoke of genetics and morality in the same breath.

> I just think that it's somehow in the genetics of the Jewish people. A strong sense of right and wrong. . . I think that people generally are, you know, will always, you know, are level-headed, or reach out to the underdog, or are careful, you know. It's hard to finger. I think it's the genetics of the Jewish people, in a sense. Without trying to sound superior or anything. *R1*

But it was Judaism itself which formed the backbone of Jewish identity for the right wing.

Without the Torah there'd be no Judaism, there'd be no Israel, there'd be nothing. *R4*

These interviewees accepted the *halachic* definition of Jewishness, by which a person is Jewish if their mother is Jewish, or if they go through a process of religious conversion to Orthodox Judaism. Although they valued the shared culture and history of the Jewish people, it was religion that gave the culture and history meaning, and religion was not clearly differentiated from the biological.

It is by birth, it's definitely by birth. It's not "a culture" because we're all over the place and we're different. *R5*

Judaism is handed down by the mother. Now you can go into why, why, why is it that way, and that's another (pause) but there is a basic reason, a genetic reason. And the genetic reason is very simple. You know who the father is, I mean you know who the mother is, you don't know who the father is. So if you wanna be sure of something, so you can say, for a matriarchal from a religious standpoint, if I know the mother is Jewish, at least I know the child is Jewish. If you say the father is Jewish, I don't know. Maybe yes, maybe no. *R2*

So, from a technical specification it has to be the mother is Jewish or a person who converts. However, someone who is born Jewish is Jewish whether they are, they themselves are observant or not is irrelevant.

Q: So they remain Jewish no matter what.

A: Absolutely. *R1*

This understanding of Jewishness as innate and impervious to change was a far cry from the perception of Jewish identity as largely socially constructed which the left wing espoused. Differences between the political groups regarding fixed or fluid

concepts of ingroup identity were also echoed in their descriptions of Palestinians as a perceived outgroup.

3.4 Perception of Identity: Attitudes towards Palestinians

3.4.1 Right Wing (N=9)

For most of the interviewees, apart from those from the left wing who had become involved in joint Palestinian-Israeli activism projects, and CL4 whose mother had arranged for him to visit a Palestinian family when he was a teenager, the only times they met Palestinians from the Territories or Palestinian citizens of Israel were during military interactions (e.g. at checkpoints), or as low-paid workers. Opportunities to meet Palestinians as social equals were few and far between, and tended to involve programmes specifically designed to encourage interaction, such as conflict resolution conferences.

The unequal nature of most Jewish/Arab personal interactions was reflected in right wing attitudes towards Palestinians. These were consistently negative—even when the interviewees were clearly trying not to sound negative—and involved perceptions of Palestinians/Arabs/Muslims[15] as childlike, cowardly, deceitful, aggressive, and of having a "different morality" from Jewish Israelis. Given the deterministic correlation between group identity and morality expressed by right wing interviewees in relation to Jewish people, it is unsurprising that this also surfaced in their perceptions of Palestinians/Arabs/Muslims.

> I think there is something different in the genetics of the Arab people. I think they're very much educated on the weakest. If you show a sign of weakness then you will be destroyed. I think it's part of, maybe, maybe, I don't know,

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[15] I have grouped these three identities together, even though they refer to nationality, ethnicity, and religion respectively, because the terms were often used interchangeably during the interviews: the concepts of Palestinian, Arab, and Muslim were frequently conflated.

maybe it's part of Bedouin mentality of what it used to be to live in this environment. It's certainly the way Arab countries interact in their own regional scene. You can observe that any sign of weakness is translated as the ability to take advantage of that. So, unfortunately, I think they're very much dominated by fear and aggression. *R1*

It's hard to be ethical and moral when the other side is not. . . I think their extremes, they'll do anything at any cost, which means targeting, you know, innocent people, which I think we would never, I know me personally I would never do, and I think 99% of the people here would never do that. *R7*

Although R7 described Palestinians as inherently lacking in morality, he also felt that Palestinian anger towards Jewish Israelis was understandable. He describes the concept of inter-group conflict as normal and hostility on the part of Palestinians as to be expected.

It makes total sense. I mean if I was, if we were in their place, if any normal person was in their place (pause) obviously, except we wouldn't do suicide bombs and wouldn't kill civilians. But it's perfectly understandable to think that a regular Palestinian would think that we stole their land and they should do everything they can to take it back from us. It's normal. *R7*

This reflects an acceptance of intractable conflict between Jewish Israelis and Palestinians and Arabs which the right wing perceived as self-evident. But again and again they described, with some dismay, an international community which did not fully appreciate the danger posed by Muslim extremists.

Now, for example, in Pakistan, which is an all Muslim country, every year they have well over 200-300 bombs. Every single year. Which are the ones that are defused, outside of the ones that go off. And it's a Muslim majority country, where there's an alternate minority of Christians and one or two surviving Jews, who either call themselves Christian or Muslim to hide themselves. So I think the hatred in the Muslim world is of a different ilk.

Whereas you had Baruch Goldstein[16] in the double cave, and you had the one other person labelled recently the Jewish terrorist, I can't think of his name, who committed 5 different acts of bombings or attempts of terrorism. But those are 2 cases. Those are not 200-500 bombs a year in one country. Those are not thousands of cases. *R8*

I don't think the world has really grasped what's going on with the Muslim population. I don't want to, I don't want to, like, generalise, but there's a problem today. There is a problem. Of extremists, and the extremists are doing crazy things. And the extremist is not just the extreme. It's like, you know, I remember hearing in security briefings in the army a long time ago. And there was, you know, there's suicide bombers just lined up. It's not only one or two. There's hundreds. There's hundreds of people, you know, waiting to go. And people you don't hear about being caught. You know, with bombs strapped to themselves. Women and children and God knows. *R4*

The frustration expressed by interviewees such as R4 clearly echoed the frustration described by Ashkenazi Israelis when recounting family histories in which one of their ancestors tried in vain to convince other European Jews of the danger posed by Nazism. For the right wing, the world, including many of their fellow Jews, was turning a blind eye to an unpalatable but unmistakable truth: in their view Arabs were never going to be anything other than enemies of the Jews.

Plenty of them call for the extinction of all Jews. Whether they would actually be the ones to do it is a different story. But a lot of them believe that in their hearts. That Jews either don't deserve to live, or definitely don't deserve to live in the land of Israel. *R8*

Why nobody asks them [Palestinian citizens of Israel] to serve in the army? Why is they not serving with me within the same tank? Let's ask ourself. . . I

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[16] Baruch Goldstein was an American-born right wing Israeli extremist who opened fire with an automatic rifle on Muslim worshipers in the Ibrahimi Mosque in the Cave of the Patriarchs in Hebron on 25 Feburary 1994. He killed 29 people and injured 125 before being overpowered and beaten to death by survivors of the attack.

think that the answer is obvious. But not everybody wants to talk about it. Because they're enemies. That simple, because no one in Israel, not even the most left-hand [left-wing] people, they will not agree to give them tank in the hand. And if I go to the battle tomorrow against Syria I cannot be sure that they will not turn around the barrel against me. *R3*

Along with the theme of Arabs as eternal enemies, ran the theme of Arabs as childlike, governed by emotions to their own detriment, and of being better off under Israeli control.

Even when we pulled out of the Gaza Strip, we left everything for them and they turned it into training camps for their terrorists[17]. We left it to them for agriculture. We said, here, we were exporting agriculture to Europe. We'll leave it for you. So they came in in their hatred and just completely destroyed it. *R2*

Indeed, R4 argued that many Palestinians wanted Jewish Israelis to be in charge, as their quality of life was better under the Israelis.

I get people working in my fields, I mean the whole Judea and Sameria was built by Arabs. It's almost absurd to think about it in one way, because they want to live. There are people out there, they want [us to remain in] our role. They want us to be here because they know, you know, go interview people in Gaza. In Gaza today, I don't know how good it is there. I think they're begging for us to come back. No joke. I wouldn't be surprised. And I'm not surprised and I've heard it before. It's a pity. *R4*

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[17] The fate of the agricultural infrastructure of the Israeli settlements in Gaza has been the subject of debate. The interpretation put forward by R2 is widely heard within Israel. However, there has also been research which contends that during the disengagement most of the usable infrastructure was destroyed by the settlers or the military (e.g., Butler, 2009). Other analysis argues that greenhouses left intact were of little use to the Palestinians as, due to Israeli restrictions on travel and movement of goods, the Palestinians were unable to export 60% of what they were already growing: more infrastructure would not solve this problem (Zelnick, 2006).

Although these interviewees tended to be very clear about differences between Jews and Arabs in general, they were careful not to imply that the Palestinians had—or even wanted— a distinct national identity. To do so would risk giving legitimacy to the idea of a two-state solution.

> When you have somebody from Ramallah and somebody from Chen and somebody from Hebron, they will not marry, because they're all from different tribes. So a girl from Hebron will not marry, be able to marry a boy from Chen, because the family will say that's an outsider girl. They're not allowed to marry them because they come from a different tribe. That's how it is now…They want the Jews out, but they don't want a Palestinian identity. They want the Jews out and then let's fight it out to the death to see who's gonna be this new Palestinian nation. *R8*

In an interesting variation on the theme of Arabs as eternal enemies, R3 was adamant that the presence of the Palestinians was necessary for Jewish Israelis to understand their own identity: for him, the Palestinians/Arabs existed solely in order to serve this purpose.

> The Israeli-Palestinian conflict began in the Bible. [laughs] Actually, it's not a matter of a few tens years. Um, according to the Jewish religion, basically everything this, in this world has a target, has a goal that God gave it. Everything. Everybody. Every creature. Every man. And in my view, the role of the Arabs is different from the role of other nations that were, um, engaged with the Jewish people. . . I think that they have a role to cause us, to force us as Jewish nation to get to the point where we crystallise our identity, and through this identity we'll really deeply understand our connection to this land. So, I think that the question is not me against him, the question is who am I? And I think that this actually takes us to the first, or one of the first questions that you asked me: what is my Jewish identity. So I think that this Israeli-Palestine conflict is just a story. It's a kind of theatre, but the real question is, who am I as a Jew? *R3*

Throughout the interviews, the right wing participants described perceived differences between Jewish Israelis and Palestinian Arabs as innate. These perceived differences were presented as incontrovertible facts which indicated that the Palestinians were unsuited to governing themselves, and could therefore never constitute a reliable "partner for peace."

3.4.2 Centre Right (N=10)

Whereas the right wing's perceptions of Jewish identity was consistent in contrasting the perceived Jewish ingroup as inherently different from the perceived Palestinian/ Arab/Muslim outgroup, the same could not be said of the centre right. Within this group—and sometimes at different times by the same people—differing perceptions of Arabs were described. CR7's and CR1's views of Arab mentality, for example, would have seemed right at home with those of the right wing interviewees.

> We have totally different mind states than they are, and totally different culture, and I think most of the conflict is not about land or something like this. It's like clash of cultures. We don't think alike, I think. I don't know if they value knowledge and stuff like this. *CR7*

> There is this unwillingness to understand that the other side doesn't think the same way that we do. So there's a huge psychological boundary. . . And to say this in the nicest of terms, Arab culture and a predominantly Israeli culture that's fitting to this, but Arab culture is about respect. And a huge part of that respect is about power or force. And if you don't put your foot down, if you don't show how strong you are, you are weak. And if you are weak, then you can, then, you know, they can have their way with you. So on the one hand, we want to make peace. But the second we want peace, we are the weaker, the weaker position. And so, you know, either you are going to be a strong, powerful force that is going to demand peace. In which case you

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have to ready for, as we said earlier, cruelty. Or you're going to be submissive, and we are going to become another Arab nation. *CR1*

Another common theme was that of Palestinians as less educated and less progressive than Israelis. This was seen as both indicative of and contributing to entrenched differences between Palestinians and Jewish Israelis.

We are more progressive, so we put more the rights of the human rights at the centre. And more educated. Israel puts its high education really large place…It's very important for us. And they, for them, the country, not the country, the land is more important. *CR8*

Only if they're gonna start focussing their energy on educating their children for, like doing stuff for themselves instead of hating us…they're always gonna want more and find another excuse. Because if they wanted to focus (pause) I think if they wanted to focus on creating jobs or building their life they could have done it already. There's no Israelis in the Gaza Strip. And it's true even that the settlements over there that have been evacuated, they are still in ruins. No one is going there. They're not building any settlements there, the Arabs themselves, they're not doing anything with it. It was just, uh, a reason. An excuse. So right now it's also, they can do, if they would focus like 20% of the energy they focus on smuggling arms into creating jobs or whatever, I would assume that their situation would have been a lot better[18]. *CR2*

But other centre right interviewees were interested in discussing similarities rather than perceived essentialist differences. Here, CR6 sounds positively left wing in his description of being taught to judge people as individuals, and not by their ethnic group.

When I was growing up, my parents always taught me that you cannot judge a whole population by a few people. They used to say it about the Jewish

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[18] Long-standing Israeli government restrictions on importing goods and materials, including building materials, into Gaza were not mentioned by right wing and centre right interviewees.

people, about everyone. Especially as Jews we need to know that. So that was very clear when I was growing up. There was never, I don't know, hatred towards or hatred in my home against Arabs, even during the terror acts. I remember my dad and my mom always saying to me, ok, there are a few bad persons, bad men in the Arab population like in any other population, but you can't judge the whole Palestinian…That was the view more or less, but we didn't talk much about politics, I think. *CR6*

Similarly, CR5 refutes group-level differences between Palestinian Arabs and Jewish Israelis, while CR7 expresses the hope that in time any such differences may diminish.

Everyone is pretty much the same, the inner shells. The outer shell is what you believe, what you do, if you drink, if you smoke. So it's not really important because in the end of the day if I have a job and you have a job everything will be ok. Because everyone comes home to their families at the end of the day, minds their own business, and carry on with their life. No one really wants to pick up a rifle and start shooting everyone else. *CR5*

I think with the globalization, there will have to be some coming, some equation between us and them. Maybe we will get closer to them a little bit and they will get closer to our state, way of thinking. I hope someday we will be more equal. *CR7*

These quotes demonstrate that there was more variation in views expressed towards Palestinians/Arabs/Muslims among the centre right interviewees than was the case with the right wing. Although the centre right had primarily described the perceived outgroup in negative terms, for some in this group finding common ground with the Palestinians was not completely out of the question.

3.4.3 Centre Left (N=11)

Like the centre right, the centre left interviewees expressed widely differing views relating to Palestinians/Arabs/Muslims. Indeed, some of the attitudes described by the centre left were indistinguishable from those of the centre right. The following quote describing working with Bedouin soldiers in the IDF dovetails neatly with CR1's description of Arab culture as inherently aggressive described in the previous section.

> Um, there is a certain violence in the way that they lead their life. And the way interactions are made. In everything. If I wanted a soldier of mine to do something, I had to shout at him to do that. If I wanted an officer of mine, above me, to do something for me or for someone else, I had to shout it out. I had to show (pause) or if I was new in some place, I had to attack someone publicly, humiliate them, in order to gain respect, in order for me not to be attacked. . . . It's just the way things work there. And these are unbearable for a Western person who wants to live his life with Western values and Western ways. *CL4*

This perception of inherent differences between Jews and Arabs, and the implications of this regarding attitudes to the ongoing conflict, was discussed by CL2.

> When you're fighting terrorists who target your civilians, it's very difficult for you to say, you know what, we were wrong as well, because you still feel like, ok, no matter what we've done wrong, they're worse. And that, to me, is very problematic. Because I don't think that we can break our moral codes. It uses an excuse of (pause) we can't excuse our moral, um, what's the word I'm looking for…mis-steps, ok? We can't excuse those just because other people don't have, don't uphold the same ones we do. We may be fighting people who are fighting on a level which is far below the level that we are allowing ourselves to act, but that doesn't mean we can do whatever we want. And the truth is that when it comes to actual warfare, I

think there's actually very little which doesn't fit in with our ethical code. *CL2*

For CL4, another key perceived difference between Palestinians and Israelis centred upon the ability to make good political judgments. Because of this, he felt that the Israelis might have to take on the responsibility of unilateral action regarding the conflict.

> I also think that the conflict is (pause) one of the things that makes it very hard is the fact that the Palestinians don't always carry on in a very, in the smartest way. And we can't always count on their decisions, I don't think, so even. And anyway, we have to (pause) I think generally in life you can't (pause) not everything is dialogue. You sometimes need to know the right thing and do that. Maybe the other side doesn't know the right thing…So, yeah, even just from one side making this decision, I think that would be better than this situation. And if there could be an agreement, ok, but I wouldn't count on their ability to make a good agreement. Now, or at any time. *CL4*

But for other centre left interviewees, a lack of understanding by Israelis for the perspective of Palestinians was seen as contributing to the continuation of conflict. CL1 describes being an officer in charge of a checkpoint in the West Bank when a young IDF officer asked a Palestinian in the queue for a cigarette.

> Now this is something when you're 19 years old you don't really realise how acute and bad is what you've just done. Because you're holding a weapon, you're [laughs] you're in like a roadblock, you're stalling people from getting to the other side…And you don't really see the whole picture. But what you're causing is pure hatred on the other side. And the other side, that Palestinian can't do anything. He has to give you a cigarette and pretend that he's joking and having fun with you. Because he's only thinking, ok, I have to get to the other side to get to work, and if this makes it any faster then I

don't care, I'll give him a cigarette. And he's also thinking, if I don't give him the cigarette I don't know if he's going to get pissed at me. *CL1*

CL1 described his concern regarding a perceived lack of understanding on the part of IDF soldiers of the true nature of the situation of Palestinians at checkpoints. However, for CL3, Israelis and West Bank Palestinians (as opposed to those in Gaza) were seen as growing more understanding and tolerant of each other.

In the West Bank it's different, I think. Both them and us accepting the existence of the other side. And relatively, well, there's no formal peace agreement, but the coexistence is getting better and better all the time, which is good. I think nobody in Israel really expect that Israel will continue being, Israel borders will continue being, you know, will reach the Jordan River in the east. Practically it's not the situation and even the right-wing extremists, uh, accept it unless they're blind, you know. *CL3*

In contrast CL7, found that doing reserve duty in combat support exposed her to attitudes towards Arabs among her fellow soldiers which she found very distressing.

… there are other people that don't see that this way, and they see just like one group and they want to kill them. . . I was now in like two months ago, I was in reserve duty, and I remember it really bothered me because they speak about people not like people, like objects. Like we need to go and like, not clear the area, but it was, it felt really racist to me. *CL7*

Although CL2 (earlier in this section) made a clear distinction between his perception of the morality of Palestinian Arabs and Jewish Israelis, he expressed frustration at Israelis who viewed Palestinian citizens of Israel as synonymous with Palestinians from the Territories. For him, it was important to differentiate between fellow citizens of Israel and non-Israeli Palestinians.

I grew up, because it's a religious kibbutz, the society is very close, very closed minded about the Arab populations. It's sort of like a default. That it's us and them. The ability of people who grew up in that closed society to perceive Israeli Arabs as anything else than just other Arabs, it's very, very difficult. It's very difficult to make a distinction when you don't know any Arabs. *CL2*

3.4.4 Left Wing (N=10)

That Jewish Israelis tend to have little or no direct interaction with either Palestinian citizens of Israel or with Palestinians from the West Bank or Gaza (apart from during military service), and therefore do not get the opportunity to get to know people as individuals, was a recurring theme in the left wing interviews when discussing Jewish Israeli attitudes towards Palestinians/Arabs/Muslims. Segregated neighbourhoods and separate school systems were recognised as barriers to mutual understanding, as was the lack of Palestinian narratives in the history lessons in Israeli schools.

> I have a lot of family members, of my big family, in settlements. So I visited like many times in Hebron, like everywhere. In Gaza and Hebron and near Jenin, everywhere. So I visited the places many times, and going there, you just like drove, you're driving by Arab villages. But it's something you don't really see. It's somewhat exotic. Because you don't see it in your everyday life. You don't see like Palestinians in Tel Aviv. And you definitely don't see the Arab villages, which is quite different from the Israeli villages, or cities, or kibbutzim. But I manage, like most Israelis, to grow up without actually know that there is something like Palestinian people. *L1*

> I mean, for example, school texts, like the books that you learn from, obviously were very narrative based towards Zionist history. I'm quite certain that we never learned the other side's narrative or anything like that. *L6*

The repercussions of this lack of contact, and how these can be overridden, were described in relation to the perceptions that Israelis and Palestinians have of each other by L7, who is actively involved in peace-building initiatives with Palestinians.

> Working with a Palestinian village for a long time, you can see a difference inside Palestinian society. You can see the process they go through. I mean, the first time you go to a Palestinian village, almost any of them, part of the slogans that will be in the demonstration, even though you were invited by them and so on, part of the slogans will be "*Khaybar, Khaybar, ya Yahud*," which Khaybar is a city in Saudi Arabia in which Mohammed slaughtered all the Jews. So, it's a nice story. "*Khaybar, Khaybar ya Yahud*" is not exactly what I would want. Hi, I'm Jewish, I'm standing next to you. And you can see very clearly how that's the beginning of the demonstrations, but after a few months and after relationships start with Israelis, Jewish, they know that that's what we are, it changes. And for me, you know, that is also a change for the benefit of Israeli society. The fact that all that Palestinians know of Israelis, Jews, is settlers and military, that's a very bad, you know, impression. *L7*

This perception of a process of change in attitude is in stark contrast to the perceptions expressed by more right wing interviewees of Arab enmity as inevitable and never-ending. For the left wing, the identification of Palestinians as enemies is as much a social construct as the identification of Jewish Israelis as legitimately privileged.

Although they are frequently portrayed as bleeding hearts ("beautiful souls" in Israeli parlance) by Israelis further to the right, one of the left wing interviewees described attitudes towards Palestinians that were far from that of such stereotypes. L10 pulls no punches in describing how his own military service affected his view of Palestinians.

I mean even me, I was growing up in very liberal house, a very accepting blah blah blah, and after one or two weeks serving in the Occupied Territories I hated the Arab people, the Palestinians, hated. Because, really, what I saw there was people (pause) I mean if you take the, if you talk about morality in comparison to the IDF, the Palestinians are terrible. They act like animals. Really…I saw some situations where an ambulance tries to go out of Nablus, and there is some CNN reporter, and the [IDF] officer in the checkpoint says to the ambulance, ok, go. I mean he looks inside and he saw I don't know what. And then the [Palestinian] ambulance gets on the radio a command to stay because there is a, because there is a reporter of CNN, and he wants to make a picture of the Israeli army doesn't let the ambulance to go. And I say, wow, you're willing to sacrifice a pregnant woman just to get this reporter some mis- (pause) and when you see this, and it's on a daily basis, you really start to hate the Palestinians. Hate. Really. To think they're stupid, all the things that you can imagine. And still, I didn't, there was no one moment I thought this was justifying shooting without, you know, just letting the anger. *L10*

Unusually for a left wing conscientious objector (he served time in prison for refusing further military service in the Occupied Territories on moral grounds and stated that he is willing to do this again if necessary), in the above quote he does not consider the impact of the presence of the CNN reporter on the behaviour of the IDF soldiers in deciding to allow the ambulance through[19]. He also generalises the actions of particular Palestinians to the whole group, i.e. "the Arab people, the Palestinians." This was the only example of such generalisation that I heard from the left wing, and it is notable for its uniqueness.

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[19] It could just as easily be argued that the presence of the CNN reporter was why the IDF soldier at the checkpoint allowed the ambulance straight through rather than delaying it. Deaths of Palestinians at checkpoints due to ambulances being delayed or refused passage at IDF checkpoints are well-documented (see B'Tselem 2002 for a report specific to the second intifada). The battle for public perception was (and remains) an important element in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Turning from the impact that interactions with Palestinians in a military setting can have on Israeli attitudes, to the very different reactions produced through civilian-to-civilian interactions, we return to L7 who describes her growing awareness of the realities of life under occupation for Palestinians as she accompanied her activist father to a Palestinian village.

> At the time they were just starting to talk about the separation fence. And coming to that village, we knew there was a plan to have the fence somewhere there, in the village. And it was kind of like, yeah, it will go somewhere here, and nobody knew actually what it was going to be. And specifically that village, they are inside Jerusalem municipality lines, but they are green IDs, they're West Bankers' IDs, which means that legally they are illegal inhabitants in their own houses. And the fence is—then was, now is— closing them inside East Jerusalem, cutting them off from the West Bank which has to be their centre of life because they're West Bankers legally. They're illegal inside their houses…That's kind of where I started understanding what was going on around me. *L7*

This description of a Kafka-esque legal limbo faced by one East Jerusalem village reveals a perception by L7 not only of these Palestinian villagers as suffering from circumstances beyond their control, but of the Israeli government as being the party responsible for the creation of these circumstances. This is in direct contrast to more right wing interviewees who interpret the actions of the Israeli government, and by proxy the IDF, as having been brought upon themselves by the Palestinians through their own ill-judged behaviours, which they see as resulting from inherent differences in Arab morals and values. This indicates a very different attitude between the left and right wing towards both the Palestinians as people, and towards *hamatzav*, "the situation." Frustration at the implications for peace of essentialist attitudes towards Palestinians is expressed by L8.

Since Abu Mazen[20] the Palestinians have been very clear, even earlier I think in the Arab League's offer of 2002, the Arabs have made it very clear that they're interested in peace along the '67 lines. And Israel has decided to, um, I don't think Israelis are even aware that they're being offered peace. This is really, really weird. I really am puzzled by this, because I do believe that the Israeli people want peace. *L8*

3.5 Perceptions of *Hamatzav* ("The Situation")

There is a clear transition regarding whether or not Israel is perceived as sufficiently agentic to be able to end the Israeli/Palestinian conflict as one moves from left to right across the political spectrum: the left wing are adamant that ending the conflict is within Israel's control, and the right wing vary between placing responsibility on "the Muslims" and advocating accepting that peace is impossible to achieve. This correlates with differences between left and right in their perceptions of Jewish and Arab identity, with the left wing favouring a view of identities as at least partly socially constructed, and therefore subject to change, in contrast to the right wing which perceives identity as more fixed.

I think it's in Israel's hands…there is a big political interest to make people think that it's not in our hands, you know? And it's part, a huge part. There is this very significant statement of Prime Minister Barak after the Camp David failure in 2001. He said "ain partner", there is no partner. I mean, and he, and this statement, the impact and it's so oft-quoted, you know? *L2*

Yeah, so, dismantle the settlements, end apartheid, abolish the JNF[21], you know, the Jewish National Fund, the Jewish Agency, reform the law of return, the law of citizenship, accept responsibility for ethnic cleansing in

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[20] Mahmoud Abbas, commonly referred to as Abu Mazen, has been the Palestinian President since 2005.
[21] The Jewish National Fund was founded in 1901 with the purpose of acquiring land in Palestine for use by Jewish people only. Its policies and practices have been the subject of considerable controversy (see, for example, Leon, 2006).

1948. I'm not saying that 5 million have to return to Israel within the '67 borders, but Israel has to accept, to admit responsibility for ethnic cleansing in 1948, and come up with some proposed solution, including the absorption of a considerable number of Palestinian refugees. Or, you know, creating a, going for the one-state solution. So, basically, there's a lot that Israel has to do here. *L5*

I think that I'd rather be pragmatic and accept the fact that I live in a conflict-ridden part of the world, and simply invest my energies to try and reduce that conflict to the lowest level, and have the lowest (pause) reduce the consequences as much as possible. Because I think that that is the best thing that we can achieve. R1

Because of this idea of honour, they [the Palestinians] would say, look at what you did to us for umpteen years, you oppressed us for so many years. I think they would never let that go, especially because you have Hamas, who, that's what their belief is. Their number one belief is wiping Israel off the map. So you can't change people like that. *R8*

The centrist interviewees take positions which draw on each of these two poles, with more disagreement among their ranks than is found within the left wing and the right wing.

This conflict is fuelling so much, you know, it's all about the money, I don't know. It's all about money. You know, this conflict fuels the biggest industries in Israel, and it's not in their interest to finish it. And I think that's a big part of why, that's one big part of why we can't reach a solution. *CL6*

I'd love for the work I did in the army to be scrapped because there's no need. But as long as there is a need then I, I'll definitely be part of it. Because if I don't do that, then no one will do that, and if no one does that, then there won't be a Jewish state. There won't be a state of Israel because we will be driven out. If not by the Palestinians then by other Arab nations. *CL2*

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I think the governments from both sides there's a lot of things they can do. And I think, um, and I think that most of the population, if the government would act toward peace, would be in favour of it. Always, always. *CR4*

But there are always wars, especially in this place, it's historically, there was many wars here, so it's kind of naïve to believe that now we shouldn't have war. What's different from now and ancient times…There were always been wars, and there will always be wars. It's human nature." *CR7*

A clear difference between left and right is that of who is perceived as benefitting from the situation remaining as it currently stands. Both left wing and centre left interviewees stated that the status quo is sustainable for Israel, as Israel is both militarily and economically powerful enough to continue to contain the situation in the Territories, while right wing interviewees stated that the Palestinians benefit from the current situation as it gives them more time to achieve their aims of statehood.

While the other political groups referred to geographical disputes, the role of special interests in sustaining the conflict, and political interests, the right wing described the conflict in terms of sacred duty. Again, this correlates with their views on group identity, in which different peoples have been put on earth by God to fulfil different roles.

3.6   Perceptions of Possible Solutions to the Conflict

Here there was a clear divide between the right and left. Whereas the left and centre left focused on various ways of finding amicably negotiated solutions to the conflict, most of the centre right and right wing interviewees favoured forceful action and/or coming to terms with the impossibility of ever having peace with their Arab neighbours.

What we have it's not a real war, you know. Like the Russians and the Chechnyans, like. It's not a real war. One month like this and this. And no solution. This doesn't make any solution to the situation. We need one real war and that's it…I think that this is the thing that will solve everything. Even that the whole Arabics will came. Israel still can win. *CR9*

From what I know, according to Islam, and this is also—it predates Israel—Mohammed and the way he conquered Mecca, I believe. Basically, in their rules, and this is also something you can see in every peace agreement that Israel's conducted with an Arab country, or even the PLO, the PA, that if they don't have the possibility to beat their enemy, then they'll make peace. And if they…once they do get the chance they will try, they will use a chance…It makes things very complicated, because it basically means eternal struggle and even if you have a peace agreement that's 50 years long, even though throughout the history I don't know any peace agreement that actually held that long, but that means that it will break at some point. *R6*

One solution presented by the right wing involved establishing an Emirates-type model in the Territories, whereby Palestinians would maintain local control over their towns and villages, which Israel would ensure remained separate from each other, and which would be under the overall control of Israel. Palestinians would not serve in the Israeli military (and they would not be allowed a military of their own), and they would not be allowed to vote in national elections. This proposed solution, in which Palestinians would remain under Israel's control as disenfranchised residents rather than as fellow citizens in a democracy or as citizens of an independent state, is consistent with right wing perceptions that "the situation" can only be contained, not resolved.

However, some of the centre right, and most of the centre left and left wing interviewees felt that a socio-economic approach, involving joint projects aimed at lifting the Palestinians out of poverty, might help to lead to an end to the conflict.

I do believe that if we find a way for Gaza to develop economic ties, both with Israel and with Egypt, then they can break out of the cycle. And if they have another option I do believe that the moderates will prevent the extremists from allowing the violence to escalate. And we're not. Israel needs to actively work towards that. *CL2*

Tell the Hamas give us one week to walk around the Gaza Strip with flowers, go to the people, ok? Bring in help, in the meaning of infrastructure, TV, stuff like that. Bring in business, ok? It means ways of earning money, working, things like that, and helping them out in that way…After a week, let's come back and see what's happening. CR3

Interestingly, while these centrists perceived economic improvement in Gaza and the West Bank as a possible means of ending the conflict, they did not refer to the negative impact on the economies of the West Bank and Gaza of existing restrictive economic policies (for example, with respect to controlling the movement of labour, the collection of taxes, and restrictions on trade) enforced by the Israeli government (e.g., Amundsen, Giacaman, & Khan, 2004; Roy, 2005; Strand, 2014). Such policies were only cited by left wing interviewees.

Another area in which the left wing differed from the centrists, consistent with differences in their perceptions of the agency of Israel regarding the conflict, was in the view of what societal changes would be necessary in order for peace with the Palestinians to be possible. While centrists proposed that peace might be achieved if the Palestinians were educated in the ways of peaceful co-existence, the left wing (and one lone right wing interviewee) argued that Israelis also required such education. Indeed, some in the left wing felt that, given the current attitudes of the majority of Israelis towards the Palestinians, peace would only be possible if the international community applied sufficient pressure for change.

We should free ourselves from this illusion of a change, an Israeli change from within. No. A change can only be imposed by a reality, through a global campaign. *L5*

The left wing's willingness to relinquish some of Israel's autonomy in seeking a resolution of the conflict is at odds with the desire of the right wing for Israel to establish unilateral control. This can be seen clearly in their different views of what a workable one-state solution might look like. For the left wing, a one-state solution would treat both Jews and Arabs as equal citizens, with full voting rights. This would prioritise democracy over the concept of Israel as a Jewish state. The right wing, however, envisaged a one-state solution in which only Jews would have voting rights and full citizenship.

The idea that Israel might cease to be a Jewish state was problematic for many interviewees across the political spectrum. The centre right and centre left interviewees consistently favoured a two-state solution, in which Palestinian Arabs had autonomy over their own territories, while Israel remained a Jewish democracy. (The status of Palestinian citizens of Israel remained a problematic subject.) A minority of the left wing also saw two states as representing the most realistic and equitable solution to the current conflict. For these interviewees, the notion of Israel as providing a safe haven for Jews from around the world was sacrosanct: any solution would have to ensure that the Jewish people would always have a homeland to turn to in times of trouble. The jury was out as to whether this would be possible in a state where Jews and Arabs were equal citizens.

This chapter has sought to present some of the complexities relating to Jewish Israelis' perceptions of ingroup and outgroup identities, and to their

subsequent perceptions of the nature of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and of the prospects for peace. Interpretations of the nature of Jewish Israeli identity are not only complicated, they are actively contested within Israel, with significant dividing points between the secular and the religious, liberals and conservatives, and between more established and more recent ethnic groups. Differences in whether identity is understood in essentialist terms, or conversely as socially constructed, has considerable impact on approaches to interactions with perceived outgroups.

In the remaining sections of the thesis, different aspects of dynamics of moral judgment will be analysed. Specifically, the following three chapters address how cognitive processes involving intuitions and biases can affect moral judgments with regard to perceived ingroups and outgroups. By demonstrating something of the heterogeneity of perceptions of ingroup and outgroup identity among Jewish Israelis, this chapter gives some indication of the incredible complexity around moral judgment in situations of intergroup conflict.

4   Selective Fairness in Intergroup Dynamics: a moral foundations theory analysis of moral dilemmas experienced by Jewish Israeli reserve soldiers and conscientious objectors within the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict

> Q: But what characteristics do you think are important for a moral army?
>
> A: Well, at this point, I think that that's a line that has a very big problem, because when you're trying to be moral to people that you're fighting, that means almost automatically that you're being immoral to yourself and to your own people. Because you're trying to protect them.
>
> —Interview with Israel Defense Forces reserve soldier[22] "*R6*," 2012

4.1   Introduction

In situations of seemingly intractable conflict, such as that between Israel and the Palestinians, the perception of what behaviours are appropriate when interacting with perceived outgroup members can be highly politically divisive. In Israeli politics, the left-right divide applies primarily to differences in policies regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, with the political left willing to engage in land-for-peace initiatives and the political right rejecting relinquishing any territory (Ben-Porat, 2011; Yishai, 1987). These polarised positions reflect contrasting beliefs about the intentions and trustworthiness of the Palestinians (Nadler & Liviatan, 2006), and differing levels of openness to peacemaking initiatives (Halperin & Bar-Tal, 2011). The current research uses a moral foundations theory (MFT) framework to address

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[22] In the Israeli military system, after fulfilling their compulsory 3-4 years of military service, soldiers are then required to be available for compulsory reserve duty until they are in their 40s. Exact age of exemption, and frequency and duration of reserve duty varies according to the specific training and role of the soldier and of the military needs of the state.

how Jewish Israelis across the left-right divide differ in (a) their experiences of moral dilemmas relating to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, (b) their perceptions of group identities as fixed or fluid, and (c) how they perceive prospects for peace. The findings from these analyses are then used to examine and critique particular relevant aspects of the current structure of moral foundations theory.

This chapter comprises two studies: (1) a Hebrew version of the Moral Foundations Questionnaire conducted online with 523 participants; and (2) analysis of semi-structured interviews with 40 Jewish Israeli conscientious objectors and reserve soldiers from across the political spectrum. The findings from these studies contribute to the literatures on moral judgment and ingroup-outgroup relations – specifically regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict – within political psychology and social psychology, and to current debates around the normative claims associated with moral foundations theory (e.g., Jost, 2012).

4.2   Study 1: Moral Foundations Questionnaire

4.2.1 Aim of Study 1

The purpose of Study 1 was to establish whether it would be appropriate to apply moral foundations theory—developed in the US—to the analysis of moral judgment across the political spectrum within Israel. MFT predicts that liberal left wing participants will draw on the Individualising moral foundations (Harm/Fairness) to a greater extent than they will on the Binding moral foundations (Authority/Loyalty/ Purity), while the conservative right wing will draw more equally on the Harm/Fairness and Authority/Loyalty/Purity foundations.

4.2.2 Analysis

As detailed in section 4.1, 523 Jewish Israelis, divided roughly equally between four political categories (left wing, centre left, centre right, and right wing), participated in this study, filling out a Hebrew language version of the Moral Foundations Questionnaire (moralfoundations.org, 2008a). Figure 4.1 indicates that, in line with the predictions of MFT (Graham et al., 2009; Haidt & Joseph, 2007) left wing liberal Jewish Israelis rely to a greater extent on the Harm/Fairness foundations, while right wing conservative Jewish Israelis rely more evenly on the Harm/Fairness and Authority/Loyalty/Purity foundations.

Figure 4.1: Adherence to Moral Foundations by Political Category
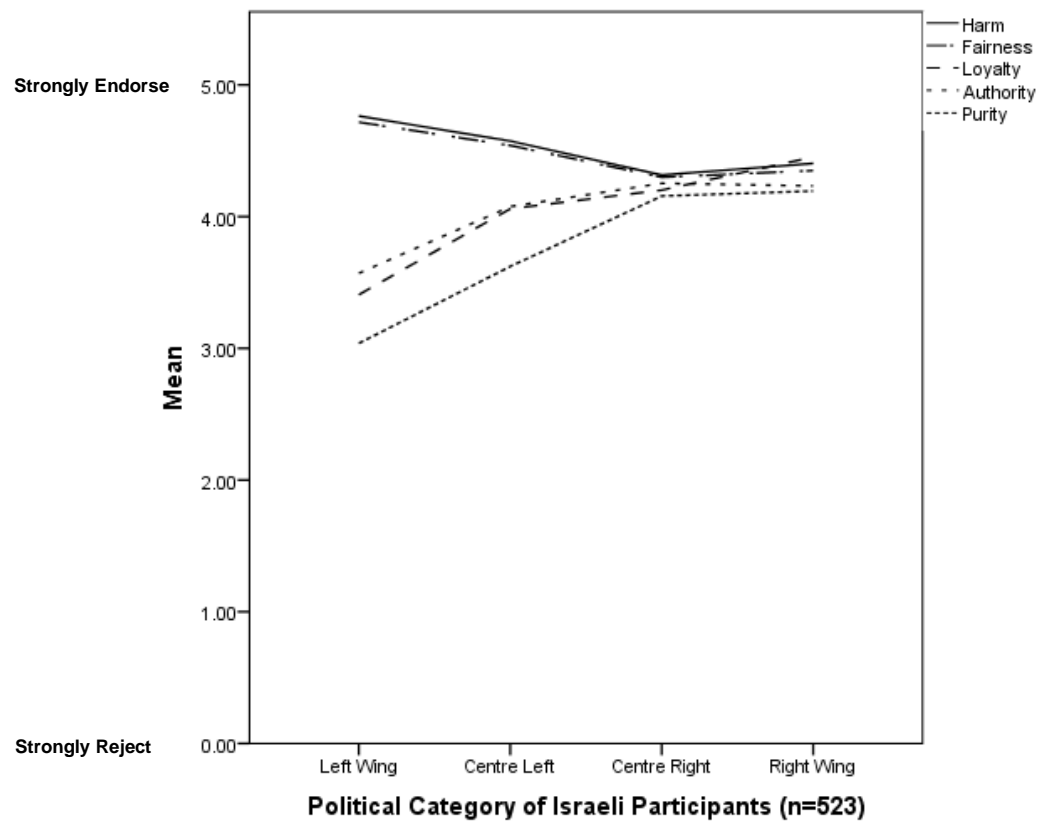
Figure 4.2 illustrates the relation between Israeli political categories and what MFT refers to as *moral progressivism,* a value which is obtained by subtracting the scores of the Authority/Loyalty/Purity foundations from those of the Harm/Fairness foundations (moralfoundations.org, 2008b). A univariate ANOVA revealed a significant difference between the political categories' mean values of progressivism, $F(3, 519) = 109.44, p < .001$. A post hoc Tukey test showed that all groups differed significantly from each other at $p < .001$ except for the centre right and right wing, which were not significantly different from each other at $p = .995$.

Figure 4.2: Political Category by Progressivism
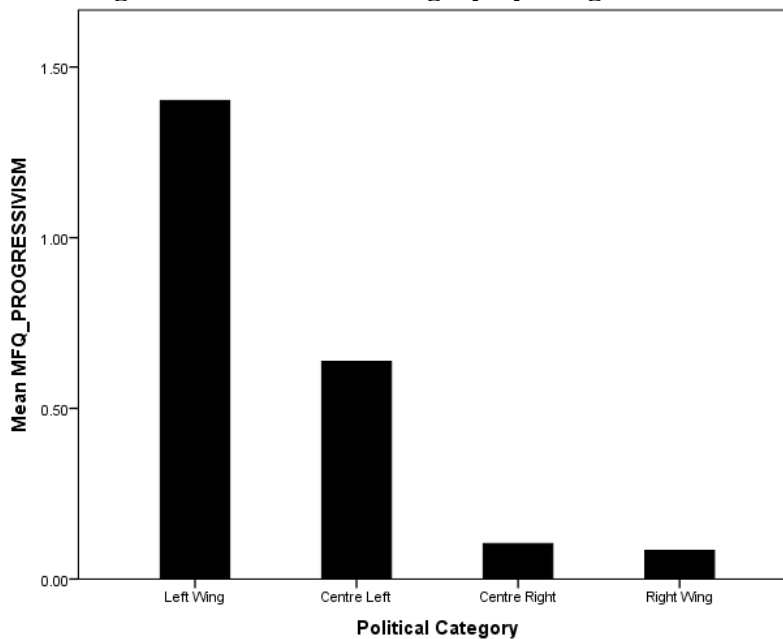
These findings demonstrate that differences in patterns of adherence to the Harm/ Fairness and the Authority/Loyalty/Purity moral foundations along the left-right political continuum within Israel correspond with the predictions of moral foundations theory. This suggests that it is therefore appropriate to apply MFT to analysis of differences across the political spectrum in Jewish Israelis' experiences of moral dilemmas relating to military service.

4.3 Study 2: Interview analysis of Jewish Israeli reserve soldiers and conscientious objectors

4.3.1 Aims of Study 2

The aims of Study 2 were twofold. The first aim was to identify differences across the political spectrum in Israeli reserve soldiers' and conscientious objectors' experiences of moral dilemmas relating to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict by analysing (a) which moral foundations come into conflict when they experience moral dilemmas, and (b) how this relates to differences regarding which segments of the perceived Palestinian outgroup population triggered moral dilemmas for the interviewees. These findings were then analysed in conjunction with variations between the political groups in how fixed or fluid they perceive group identities and differences to be, and how these factors affect their perceptions of the prospects for peace. The second aim was to apply these findings to analysis of how strength of adherence to the Binding foundations affects breadth of application of the Individualising foundations, and to address the implications of this relationship for the current structure of MFT.

4.3.2 Differences along the political continuum in application of Moral Foundations

Moral foundations theory (MFT) would predict that conservative right wing Israelis will grant more importance to the Authority/Loyalty/Purity moral foundations than will more liberal Israelis further to the left along the political continuum (Graham et al., 2009). However, it is important to bear in mind that the left-right political continuum in Israel does not directly correlate with that of the United States, where MFT was developed. The left-right divide in Israel refers primarily to differences in approach to the Israeli/Palestinian conflict, with ostensibly "radical left wing" Israeli

views corresponding to more centrist positions within the US and other western nations (Olmert, 2013; Piurko, Schwartz, & Davidov, 2011). This was also the perception of interviewees branded as radical leftists within Israel.

> If it's compared to humankind, it's somewhere in the centre, but to the Israeli politics of now I'm radical left. *L9*

However, as demonstrated in Study 1, differences between adherence to the Harm/Fairness and Authority/Loyalty/Purity moral foundations among Jewish Israelis retain the pattern predicted by MFT, with politically liberal individuals relying primarily on the Harm/Fairness foundations, while politically conservative individuals also rely heavily on the Authority/Loyalty/Purity foundations. This is also evident in the interviewees' descriptions of how they perceive differences in morality between the political groups.

Left Wing Conscientious Objectors perceived the centre left as lacking the courage of their convictions because although the centre left explicitly opposed what they described as the military occupation of Palestine (Harm/Fairness), they continued to serve there as soldiers (over-reliance on Authority). The left wing described the centre right and right wing as "racist," "violent" and "aggressive" (Purity/Loyalty, lacking in Harm/Fairness) and asserted that these groups did not want to make peace with the Palestinians.

The Centre Left perceived left wing conscientious objectors as anti-democracy and "self-righteous" (lacking in Authority). They described the centre right as unthinkingly taking the "path of least resistance" (over-reliance on Authority) and saw the right wing, and particularly the settlers, in the same terms as

did the left wing, as "racist," "violent" and "aggressive," and as presenting obstacles to peace (over-reliance on Purity/Loyalty, lacking in Harm/Fairness).

The Centre Right considered the centre left and left wing "too apologetic" regarding Israel's military actions (lacking in Ingroup Loyalty), and saw the conscientious objectors as "not pulling their weight" as citizens (lacking in Ingroup Loyalty). Like the centre left, they perceived the left wing conscientious objectors as anti-democratic (lacking in Authority). They described the right wing, and especially the settlers, as posing obstacles to peace. All of the centre right interviewees were secular, and they described what they saw as the right wing's unquestioning adherence to religious tenets as morally problematic (over-reliance on Purity).

The Right Wing interviewees in this study were all religious, and described secularism (lacking in Purity) as morally problematic for all of the other groups. They saw maintaining a Jewish presence in all of *Eretz Israel*[23] as a moral imperative (Ingroup Loyalty/Purity).

This pattern of difference in application of moral foundations was also apparent when analysing how the different political groups experienced moral dilemmas relating to military service.

4.3.3 Moral Dilemmas: the predicted liberal/conservative divide

For the purposes of this research, I am defining a "moral dilemma" as any situation relating to military service which is perceived and described by the interviewees as involving competing, mutually exclusive, moral behavioural requirements. As I am

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[23] *Eretz Israel* is also known as Greater Israel, or the Holy Land. Its exact borders are the subject of debate, but are generally considered to include the West Bank and Gaza.

employing MFT to analyse these dilemmas, I categorise each situation according to which particular moral foundations come into conflict. In line with the predictions of MFT, I would expect to find that left wing liberals experience more moral dilemmas involving threats to universal application of the Harm/Fairness foundations, and that right wing conservatives would experience more dilemmas relating to threats to the Authority/Loyalty/Purity foundations. In the following sections I focus on two situations which consistently resulted in strongly differing perceptions between the political/ideological groups: (1) experiences of manning checkpoints in the West Bank and Gaza, and (2) the 2005 Disengagement from Gaza.

Checkpoints

For left wing interviewees, checkpoints which prevented Palestinians from moving freely between their own towns, cities, and villages were a key instrument of enforcing the military occupation and therefore, by definition, immoral. In the language of MFT, the left wing saw these checkpoints as contravening both the Fairness and Harm foundations toward the Palestinians. This contrasts with the centre left position, which argues that unless liberally-minded soldiers are present at the checkpoints, the Palestinians will suffer more (Harm) because the only soldiers at the checkpoints will be centre right and right wing. Whether or not it is possible to behave in a truly moral manner if one is working at a checkpoint (Fairness) is a long-running argument between the left and centre left in Israel. The left wing argues that it is not possible.

> Yes, so part of the decision to refuse [to serve in the military is] because of the very understanding that you can't act morally in a long-lived occupation. *L1*

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You know, a lot of people are trying, a lot of people, [centre] leftists, speak about, "I want to go and serve and change the system from within." This is the biggest bullshit ever from the way I see it. "I want to go stand in a checkpoint to see that the pregnant woman can get by and be treated in hospital." Okay, good for you. Bullshit. *L2*

However, for the centre left, the opportunity to reduce what they perceived as the harmful impact of the checkpoints (Harm) was seen as a moral imperative.

And I was in charge of one of these checkpoints, and a woman, a pregnant woman did arrive. That night, by the way, my sister gave birth. Yeah. Just before. So this woman comes to us barely walking and with her husband and two other women. And we said no one can go in. And they said they had to. So I didn't really ask anybody. I told them, you can't get your car inside, but maybe you can call over here an ambulance and she can go in the ambulance. And they said ok. And I alerted the other forces that I, that an ambulance is supposed to arrive, let it pass to get to our checkpoint. And they said ok…I remember articles in the newspapers that I read about babies that died in checkpoints. And I remember that I didn't want to be one of those soldiers… But, also, I was the commander. I don't know what, if I were the soldier, I guess I would just go along with what the commander would decide. *CL4*

CL4 touches on an important difference between the left and centre left regarding deference to Authority: the centre left interviewees respected the Authority moral foundation more than did the left wing interviewees. The left wing interviewees were willing to become conscientious objectors in response to such dilemmas. But CL4 recognized and conceded that in a situation where he felt a moral dilemma relating to Harm/Fairness with respect to Palestinians, the Authority foundation would take precedence if he was ordered by a superior officer not to allow the pregnant woman through the checkpoint. Contrast this with the experience

of a right wing soldier who described a very different moral dilemma at a checkpoint triggered by the perception of having his hands tied to such an extent by the IDF's ethical standards relating to searching women that he was unable to control what he saw as a dangerous situation which could put the perceived Jewish ingroup at risk.

> For example, there was a woman who we really wanted to check [at a checkpoint]. We were an all-male unit. And I was told I couldn't check her. And I said, but she has a bulge in her, I can't think of the word now, for her full dress. And it's dark out, it's between 5 and 5.15 in the morning, it's very dark out there, no lights, I can't see anything, and our metal detector, we had a wand, was broken. For some reason something was wrong with it and it worked when we got in the Hummer, when we got out of the Hummer it didn't work anymore. And I had a very big moral dilemma, because I said, I don't care what you say. I want to check this woman. I don't want her killing a Jew. *R8*

Unlike the moral dilemmas detailed previously as experienced by left wing and centre left interviewees, which were triggered by concerns about Harm/Fairness issues relating to the Palestinians, for R8, a moral dilemma was triggered by Harm concerns relating to the perceived Jewish Israeli ingroup. His dilemma involved a clash between the Authority foundation (his orders did not allow him to search the woman), and a combination of the Harm and Ingroup Loyalty foundations ("I don't want her killing a Jew.") Moral dilemmas around the Disengagement from Gaza also involved this particular combination of competing moral foundations for soldiers to the right of the political spectrum.

Disengagement from Gaza

For one of the centre right and all of the right wing interviewees the Disengagement from Gaza, when IDF soldiers were ordered to remove Jewish settlers in Gaza from their homes in 2005, was a source of moral dilemma. Whether obeying the order to

evacuate Jewish settlers constituted one's duty as a soldier, or instead subverted that duty through calling on soldiers to act in direct contradiction of what they perceived as the primary purpose of the IDF (to protect the Jewish homeland) caused a great deal of moral concern among these interviewees.

This situation resulted in the right wing religious soldiers, who had previously condemned the left wing conscientious objectors as self-serving traitors, to become (or if they did not receive such orders, to support) right wing conscientious objectors who now refused their orders to participate in the evacuation. In the language of MFT, these soldiers suffered from competing behavioural requirements of the Authority foundation, to follow military orders (evacuate the settlements) and from a combination of the Authority, Purity, Harm and Fairness foundations, specifically, follow the instructions of the rabbi, keep these lands Jewish, do not throw people out of their homes (refuse the order to evacuate the settlements).

Some of the left wing interviewees stated that they found it difficult to judge whether the right wing's refusal constituted a moral or an immoral act: while they explicitly recognised the role played by the Harm/Fairness moral foundations in the right wing conscientious objectors' decisions, and were impressed that they were willing to contravene the Authority foundation, they still abhorred the right wing's adherence to the Purity foundation. For the left wing, the fact that right wing soldiers refused to remove Jewish Israelis from their homes, but had no such qualms about removing Palestinian Arabs from theirs, was morally problematic. The right wing was applying both Harm, and ironically "Fairness," selectively.

Interestingly, some interviewees from both the left and right wing described feeling "betrayed" during the disengagement process, with the right wing feeling betrayed by the IDF and the Israeli government, and the left wing and centre left feeling betrayed by the right wing.

> I think the only time it started to become complicated was when they decided that the army is the one that's gonna evict people from Gush Katif[24]. That's when it became complicated because that's when the army became an enemy to some people. *R5*

> I felt really betrayed by the right wing…I said if I would do what I think, I would refuse lots of things that I do here, but this is the policy of the country and I'm doing this because this is somehow a democracy and we should just do what we're told and we're not going to… And I said, wait a minute, if they're not going to do the orders when they don't like them, and I'm doing the orders that they like when I don't like them, that really, really pissed me off. *CL4*

The Disengagement from Gaza was described as a time of high passion. By pitting emotionally-charged values relating to religious belief, the peace and security of Israel, and the democratic process against each other, this policy brought some of Israel's key sacred values into conflict.

4.3.4 Sacred Values

Sacred values are defined as emotionally-charged values which are non-negotiable for those who hold them (Atran, 2010). Four values which met these criteria and which repeatedly surfaced during these interviews were:

1. Israel as a safe haven for Jews

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[24] Gush Katif was the collective name for 17 Jewish Israeli settlements in the Gaza Strip.

2. Keeping *Eretz Israel* Jewish

3. Israel as a democratic state

4. Israel having laws based on principles of universal human rights

MFT would predict that conservatives would support numbers one and two, as these correspond to the Loyalty/Authority/Purity foundations, while liberals would support numbers three and four, as these correspond to the Harm/Fairness foundations. And this largely held true in these interviews. However, keeping Israel as a safe haven for Jews was seen as important across the political spectrum. For a nation traumatised by the Holocaust, the value of providing a safe haven for Jews from anywhere in the world holds great emotional power.

> You can't, you just can't live in this country and pretend it's any old western country like America or England or France or whatever. It's not…The reason is that this is a place for the Jewish people. If we are just another state of the 200 and I don't know countries worldwide there's no difference between Israel, Switzerland, and the United States. This is a place for the Jewish people. *R5*

For many religious Jewish Israelis, the concept of the safe haven is strongly linked to the belief that all of *Eretz Israel* belongs to the Jewish people (EretzIsraelForever.net, 2013), and the right wing interviewees argued this case in support of Jewish settlements throughout the West Bank and Gaza.

> I think that the principle plane, the borders of Israel, the connection between the nation and the land, are not dependent on what the United Nations has decided for Israel, or any other, the British Mandate or any other occupation, Turkish, whatsoever. This is something very, very fundamental in the Jewish belief, and I think that statistically, even statistically, about 65-70% of the Jewish ancient history has take place in Judea and Samaria[25]. Okay? This is

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[25] Judea and Samaria are the biblical names for the areas comprising the West Bank.

the point. So, yes, this is part of the Jewish nation. We were taken to exile 2000 years ago. It was just a pause. And we got back. *R3*

The other groups, however, saw this as problematic to varying degrees: the further to the left the interviewees, the more they described the settlements as detrimental to the security of Israel, and therefore to its ability to function as a safe haven. For these interviewees, maintaining a strong democracy was seen as more conducive to maintaining Israel as a safe haven for Jews than the settlement project.

However, for very left wing interviewees, Israeli democracy did not qualify as democracy at all, because over four million Palestinian Arabs in the West Bank and Gaza living under Israeli military rule for over 60 years had no voting rights in Israeli elections (Fairness). For these interviewees, a democracy was only a democracy if it recognised the human rights of all of the inhabitants over which it held control. Anything less dishonoured the lessons of the Holocaust, as argued by this interviewee who fled with his family as a child from Nazi Germany.

> And I think that part of the heritage, as I see it, from Nazi Germany, is that I have to be in the front line in the struggle against chauvinism and racism and violation of human rights. This is the heritage which I took from being a refugee. Which, unfortunately, most of the Israelis don't share. For them the Holocaust is a license to do evil to others. And to me the lesson which I learned from Nazi Germany is that we have to insist on human rights. That's guaranteed, that it won't happen again. *L3*

That the emotional salience of the same traumatic event—in this case, the Holocaust—can underpin sacred values that are universalist, such as human rights, as well as those that are grounded in ingroup loyalty, such as that of *Eretz Israel* providing a safe haven for Jews alone, supports the thesis that the content of Sacred

Values varies according to relative reliance on different moral foundations (Graham & Haidt, 2012; Graham et al., 2009). In the following section I analyse differences between Israeli political groups in their application of the Harm/Fairness foundations relating to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and of how these differences correspond with the groups' perceptions of the nature of group identity, and of possible solutions to the conflict.

4.3.5 Selective application of the Harm/Fairness Moral Foundations

Numerous studies indicate that conservative individuals identify more strongly as members of collectives while liberals are more universalist (see Haidt, 2012). However, all of the interviewees in this study, regardless of political affiliation, expressed concern for the safety, security and well-being of Israeli citizens. They all applied the Harm/Fairness foundations to this perceived ingroup. But there were differences along the political spectrum regarding to whom among the perceived Palestinian outgroup they also applied the Harm/Fairness foundations.

Figure 4.3 details which segments of the Palestinian population triggered moral dilemmas for the interviewees. These figures indicate that the left wing faced Harm/Fairness-based moral dilemmas relating to the Palestinian population as a whole because they considered the military occupation of the Palestinian Territories as immoral full stop. But groups further to the right cited interactions with increasingly smaller sub-sections of the Palestinian civilian population as having caused them moral dilemmas. In other words, the categories of perceived Palestinian outgroup members whose situations within the context of the Israeli/Palestinian conflict cause Harm/Fairness moral dilemmas for them, become fewer the farther to the political right one travels.

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Figure 4.3: Specific sections of the Palestinian population cited by Israeli interviewees as having caused them moral dilemmas relating to military service

Left Wing	Centre Left	Centre Right	Right Wing
Entire Palestinian population in West Bank Cited by 100%	Entire Palestinian population in West Bank Cited by 90.9%	None Cited by 40%	None Cited by 55.5%
Entire Palestinian population in Gaza Cited by 100%	Entire Palestinian population in Gaza Cited by 72.7%	Civilians used as human shields by Hamas Cited by 10%	Children witnessing parents arrested or humiliated Cited by 22.2%
Palestinian citizens of Israel Cited by 70%	Civilians whose homes were searched Cited by 9.1%	Civilians whose homes were confiscated Cited by 10%	Children shouted at by soldiers Cited by 11.1%
	Civilians mistreated at checkpoints Cited by 9.1%	Civilians stopped and searched Cited by 10%	Children searched by soldiers Cited by 11.1%
		Palestinian workers trying to reach their jobs in Israel Cited by 10%	
		Children shot at by IDF Cited by 10%	
		Injured children Cited by 10%	

Note: where individuals cited entire populations (West Bank/Gaza/Israel), no further sub-groups cited by those individuals are listed, as these would be included within the larger populations. A complete breakdown of groups cited by interviewees can be found in Appendix 4.

The left wing interviewees described Harm/Fairness moral dilemmas as being triggered by the contrast between (a) universalist morals present in Jewish teachings (for example, in the books of the prophets in the Jewish Bible) and ethical values explicitly espoused by the IDF (see Jewish Virtual Library, n.d.), and (b) actions which they perceived as involving harmful and unfair treatment of civilians based solely on their membership of a particular ethnic group. This quote by L1

describes the difference between how Jewish and Arab protesters in Jerusalem were treated by the authorities during protests in October 2000.

> And it was the first time when I couldn't understand, like really, couldn't understand how come, how come when it has to do with, like thousands, tens of thousands of *Haredi* [ultra-Orthodox Jewish] people that are throwing Molotov bottles at policemen, nobody get killed. Some of them get arrested and get released after two hours. And when Arab citizens are like facing policemen in a much less violent way, 13 [Arab] people are killed. *L1*

In concordance with other left wing interviewees, L1 perceived such differential treatment of Arabs and Jews, in addition to being morally abhorrent, as contributing to Israel's security problems by causing more discontent and unrest among the Arab population: by not treating Arabs and Jews equally, Israel was condemning itself to intractable conflict. In contrast, interviewees further to the right perceived a reverse of this dynamic, asserting that "unpleasant" treatment of Arabs was unfortunate but necessary.

> It's hard to be ethical and moral when the other side is not. . . I think their extremes, they'll do anything at any cost, which means targeting, you know, innocent people, which I think we would never, I know me personally I would never do, and I think 99% of the people here would never do that. *R7*

This difference of opinion regarding what constitutes fair and appropriate treatment of Palestinians corresponds with (a) differences across the political spectrum in how fixed or fluid individuals perceived group identity to be (see sections 3.3 and 3.4), and (b) with differences in what types of possible solutions to the conflict were considered to be plausible (see section 3.6). Figures 4.4 and 4.5 illustrate these differences among the 40 interviewees.

Figure 4.4:   How/whether interviewees perceive differences between Jewish Israelis and Palestinian Arabs

	Left Wing Cited by:	**Centre Left** Cited by:	**Centre Right** Cited by:	**Right Wing** Cited by:
Fluid [Identity is a Social Construct People are the same underneath Group identity not important]	70%	36.4%	10%	0
Middle Ground [Navigable Cultural/ Mindset Differences]	50%	54.5%	40%	44.4%
Fixed [Genetic/ Biological Differences Insurmountable Cultural/ Mindset Differences Jewish people inseparable from the land of Israel]	10%	36.4%	80%	100%

Note: Some interviewees provided more than one category of answer, i.e., Fixed and Middle Ground (N=8); Fluid and Middle Ground (N=3); or Fixed and Fluid (N=1). This reflects the complexities involved in their perceptions of group identity and difference. See Appendix 4 for a detailed breakdown.

Figure 4.5: Interviewees' Suggested Solutions to the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

	Left Wing Cited by:	Centre Left Cited by:	Centre Right Cited by:	Right Wing Cited by:
One State: Democratic	**40%**	**0**	**0**	**0**
One State: Jewish	**0**	**0**	**10%**	**66.7%**
One State: Democratic & Jewish	**0**	**0**	**0**	**11.1%**
Two States	**50%**	**90.9%**	**50%**	**0**
Conflict will continue/Only relative peace possible	**10%**	**0**	**10%**	**22.2%**
Strong Military Assault	**0**	**0**	**40%**	**33.3%**
Socio-Economic Approach	**10%**	**9.1%**	**20%**	**0**
Put PA in charge of Gaza	**0**	**0**	**10%**	**0**
Palestinians restricted to enclaves: no vote; no military service	**0**	**0**	**0**	**33.3%**
Involve Jordan in deciding where Palestinians will live (Transfer)	**0**	**0**	**0**	**11.1%**
Negotiation	**20%**	**27.3%**	**20%**	**0**
Unilateral Decisions	**0**	**9.1%**	**0**	**0**

Note: This was not a list of options, but solutions and methods specifically and spontaneously suggested by the interviewees. See Appendix 4 for a detailed breakdown.

Figure 4.6 illustrates correspondence between (a) how fixed or fluid the political groups perceived group identity and differences to be, and (b) the types of possible solutions to be Israeli-Palestinian conflict which they considered to be appropriate and achievable.

Figure 4.6: Relation of Fixed/Fluid Identity to Possible Solutions to the Conflict

Perceptions of Group Identity /Group Differences	Left Wing	Centre Left	Centre Right	Right Wing
	Mainly Fluid	Mainly Middle Ground	Mainly Fixed	Mainly Fixed
How to end the conflict?	Close settlements End Occupation Socio-economic approach Two states OR One *democratic* state	Close settlements End Occupation Israel must act unilaterally Socio-economic approach Two states	Close some, not all, settlements Strong military assault needed Socio-economic approach Two states	Annex more land Strong military assault needed Palestinians confined to specific areas, no voting rights One *Jewish* state

This analysis indicates that, for these interviewees, the more fixed group identity and differences are conceived to be (which corresponds to the Purity moral foundation), the more appropriate it is perceived to be to treat Jewish Israelis and Palestinian Arabs differently. If, as for the interviewees to the right of the political continuum, the two groups are understood as having differences in mentality and morality which are not amenable to change, then treating the Palestinians equally under the law and with regard to their autonomy (freedom of movement/voting rights) would be potentially harmful to the perceived Jewish Israeli ingroup. In contrast, the more fluid group identity and differences are conceived to be, the more appropriate it is perceived to be to treat all individuals within the control of the State of Israel equally (whether as separate and autonomous, or as equal Israeli citizens). To do otherwise would be seen by the interviewees further to the political left as creating or exacerbating ill feeling between different groups, thereby putting everyone at greater risk of harm.

4.4   Summary of Studies 1 and 2

The studies detailed in this chapter suggest that, although both liberals and conservatives value and apply the Harm/Fairness foundations (e.g. Graham et al., 2009), how broadly/selectively the interviewees apply these differs depending on how fixed or fluid they perceive group identities of Jewish Israelis and Palestinian Arabs to be. And this subsequently affects what they perceive to be appropriate and achievable solutions to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

This research showed a clear pattern relating to differential application of the Harm/Fairness foundations along the political spectrum. The left wing applied Harm/Fairness to the Palestinian populations as a whole when they experienced moral dilemmas resulting from being ordered to participate in a military occupation, and when witnessing differential treatment of Jewish and Palestinians citizens of Israel. The centre left also experienced moral dilemmas relating to military occupation (Harm/Fairness), but deferred to the Authority of the state when ordered to do military service. The centre right and right wing described experiencing Harm/Fairness-based moral dilemmas only in relation to certain specific sub-sets of the Palestinian population perceived as vulnerable, such as children.

Taken together with the findings of Study 1, which showed that liberal left wing Israelis make a clearer distinction between the Harm/Fairness moral foundations and the Loyalty/Authority/Purity foundations than do right wing conservatives, the results of Study 2 indicate an inverse relationship between strength of adherence to the Loyalty/Authority/ Purity moral foundations and breadth of application of the Harm/Fairness moral foundations. The Loyalty/Authority/ Purity moral foundations therefore appear to function to limit the extent of the

application of the Harm/Fairness moral foundations. The potential implications of this for the current structure of moral foundations theory are discussed below.

4.5   Implications for Moral Foundations Theory

I would propose that there are two areas of muddiness in MFT's presentation of the Fairness foundation which have to date not been addressed: fairness in relation to justice, and fairness in relation to ingroup loyalty.

4.5.1 Clarifying Fairness in relation to Justice

First, as highlighted in Chapter 1, MFT proposes a conception of fairness which is equated with justice. In adopting what is essentially a universalist conception of fairness, MFT inadvertently undermines its own remit to describe morality in terms which are not limited to liberal western interpretations. More conservative interpretations of justice can include concepts in which the rights of individuals directly relate to their predetermined position within an established hierarchy, for example in India's caste system. In such systems, treating individuals from different groups as equals (fairness) would be considered as violating conceptions of justice. If MFT seeks to address different cultural notions of what constitutes morality in its descriptive framework, I would suggest that the concept of fairness needs to be addressed separately from that of justice.

The current analysis provides support for this proposal as it indicates that more conservative Jewish Israelis, who according to these interviews perceive group identity as more fixed than do their more liberal co-nationals, consider it fair and appropriate to treat Palestinian Arabs differently (separate legal systems, restricted movement) from Jewish Israelis. From a pragmatic point of view they argue that it

would be foolish and dangerous to do otherwise as the Palestinians would increase their attacks on Jewish Israelis. In contrast, the very liberal left wing considers it fair and appropriate to treat Palestinian Arabs and Jewish Israelis equally. They argue that this would be pragmatic because to do otherwise creates more distrust and hatred between the groups, which puts Jewish Israelis at greater risk of violent attack. Therefore, very conservative Israelis and very liberal Israelis would appear to hold different conceptions of fairness and justice. For the very conservative, justice requires treating Jewish Israelis and Palestinian Arabs differently (so, not 'fair' in the sense of equal treatment), while for the very liberal justice and fairness (in the sense of equal treatment) are inseparable.

4.5.2 Clarifying Fairness in relation to Ingroup Loyalty

This begs the question of what it might mean to apply 'fairness' selectively. I would suggest that instead of constituting two independent moral foundations, Fairness and Ingroup Loyalty are better conceived of as representing opposite poles along a single continuum. At one extreme would be Universal Fairness, in which all individuals are treated equally with relation to Harm vs. Care regardless of group affiliations. At the other end of the continuum would be an extreme version of Ingroup Loyalty, in which perceived ingroup members would always receive preferential treatment (see Figure 4.7). The results of the interview analysis strongly suggest that when individuals who strongly adhere to the moral foundations of Purity, Authority, and Ingroup Loyalty consider issues of Fairness, they limit their consideration of these issues to more restricted groups of individuals than do their more liberal counterparts. For this reason, I would propose revisions to the Moral

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Foundations Questionnaire to allow for differentiation between perceived morally acceptable treatment of ingroups versus outgroups.

Figure 4.7: Revised Positioning of Fairness and Ingroup Loyalty

Purity

Authority

Universal
Fairness

Ingroup
Loyalty

How broadly do individuals apply the Harm vs. Care moral foundation?

Liberal   Centrist   Conservative
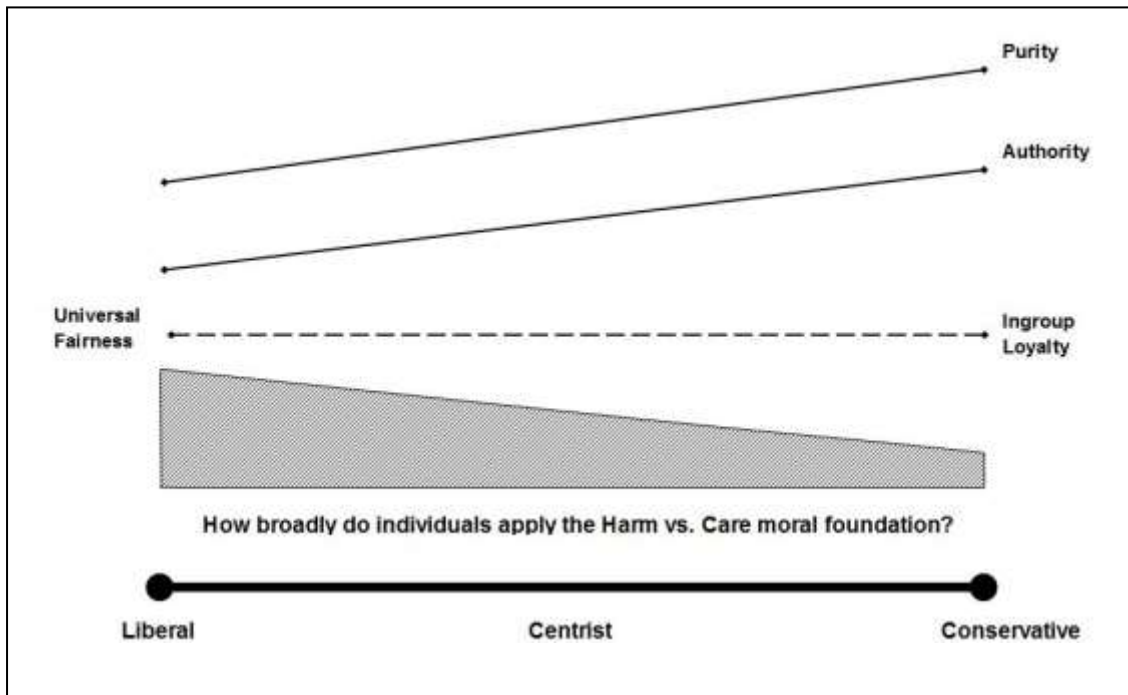
Note: This is a schematic diagram, not an *x/y* chart.

Indeed, one does not have to compare the extremes of left and right in this study to see this effect. Centre left and left wing interviewees disagreed regarding whether or not Israel could be considered a democracy. The left wing argued that Israel was not a true democracy as it barred millions of people under its control from voting, on the grounds of ethnicity. By their reading, this was unfair and resulted in government policies which harmed Palestinians. But the centre left, in arguing that they had a duty to obey their democratically-elected government when it ordered them to go against their own consciences regarding what they perceived as harms against the Palestinian population (for example, government policies relating to settlement expansion), demonstrated that they did not consider it unfair that the

Palestinians were unable to vote in these elections: the centre left were more restrictive regarding this particular application of fair (equal) treatment.

4.5.3 Normative issues

Haidt (2012, 2013) has acknowledged that strong adherence to the Authority /Loyalty/Purity foundations can, in certain circumstances, result in mistreatment of outgroups. But he also contends that liberals have a blind spot in not understanding that these foundations can also contribute positively to group solidarity and community. This raises two issues. First, Haidt's assertion would seem to suggest that liberals do not value any contributions to group cohesiveness and identity. But liberal theorists of multiculturalism such as Kymlicka (1989, 2001) argue the benefits of cultural membership for individuals, and Stilz (2009) contends that shared principles of justice can form the basis of national loyalty among liberals. To assert that liberals perceive no value for group membership would be an over-simplification. Second, according to Moral Foundations Questionnaire research, liberals do not wholly discount the Authority/Loyalty/Purity foundations. They simply give them less weight relative to the Harm/Fairness foundations (see Figure 4.1).

How one interprets this lies at the heart of the current debate regarding the normative claims associated with MFT. While Haidt (2012) argues that these results indicate that conservatives have a richer moral palette than liberals as conservatives draw strongly on all five moral foundations, Jost (2012) contends that it instead indicates that liberals' relative adherence to the different foundations is more discerning than that of conservatives. I would propose that the findings of the current research introduce an additional normative consideration. The analysis

detailed in this chapter suggests an inverse relationship between strength of adherence to the Authority/Loyalty/Purity foundations and breadth of the application of the Harm vs. Care moral foundation. A further normative question is therefore whether one considers restricting the application of the Harm foundation in this way as morally valid, and whether this should vary between situations or whether it should be considered universally applicable.

4.6   Limitations and future directions

Interview dynamics are always complex, and never more so than in situations where participants feel compelled to protect the reputation of their perceived ingroup when talking with outsiders. To that end, when asked to recall situations in which they experienced moral dilemmas, interviewees' answers would be expected to reflect some degree of social desirability bias. However, because the political groups differed in their concepts of what actually constitutes morality, then this would also affect how they perceive social desirability, and hence how they sought to present themselves to me as an interviewer.

In the world of ingroup-outgroup dynamics, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is an extreme case. It would be useful to apply MFT analysis to further case studies, ideally including groups who are not engaged in open conflict. Such analysis, as well as having the potential to add to our understanding of specific ingroup-outgroup interactions, would also serve to reinforce or challenge my arguments regarding the benefits of altering the current structure of MFT with regard to clarifying the definition of Fairness, and to positioning it at one end of a continuum with Ingroup Loyalty at the other.

4.7   Conclusion

In this chapter I have made the following key arguments based on analysis of Moral Foundations Questionnaire results and of interviews with Jewish Israelis from across the political spectrum:

- Strong adherence to the Binding moral foundations (Loyalty/Authority/ Purity) functions to limit the breadth of application of the Individualising moral foundations (Harm/Fairness). In the current research, very conservative interviewees were more selective in their application of the Individualising moral foundations than very liberal interviewees, who applied the Individualising moral foundations more universally.

- Selective application of the Individualising moral foundations corresponded with differences in how individuals from across the political spectrum viewed group identities: the liberal left wing perceived group identity as more fluid than did the conservative right wing.

- These differences corresponded with variations in the types of possible solutions that the interviewees deemed viable. The liberal left favoured solutions in which Palestinians were granted the same autonomy as Jewish Israelis, either through full involvement in the democratic process in a one state solution, or through separate nationhood via a two state solution. In contrast, the conservative right, who considered group differences between Jewish Israelis and Palestinian Arabs as more fixed, favoured solutions in which Palestinians had more limited autonomy than Jewish Israelis, for example by being confined to specific geographic areas, in order to (a) ensure that Israel fulfilled its remit to be a Jewish state, and (b) prevent attacks on Israeli citizens.

In turn, these findings suggested amendments to aspects of the current formulation of MFT.

- By definitionally including 'justice' as an element of the Fairness moral foundation, MFT is currently at odds with its remit to transcend a western, liberal conception of morality. If 'fairness' is understood as treating people equally, then MFT needs to take into account that some very conservative societies consider unequal treatment of individuals based on their different positions/roles within society to be morally appropriate and just. I propose that, as MFT is intended to provide a descriptive framework incorporating a broad range of understandings of what constitutes morality, 'justice' and 'fairness' need to be definitionally distinct.

- Building on the first two points, I further propose that, structurally, Fairness and Loyalty would be better conceived of as opposite ends of a single continuum rather than as two separate moral foundations (see Figure 4.6). Analysis of the questionnaire and interview data suggests that liberals and conservatives among the participants in the current research hold different conceptions of 'fairness.' According to the questionnaire analysis, both liberals and conservatives strongly value 'fairness' (see Figure 4.1). But the interview analysis indicates that very conservative individuals largely restrict equal treatment to perceived ingroup members, while very liberal individuals tend to advocate equal treatment of individuals regardless of ethnic/religious affiliation. If one conceives of extreme fairness (in the form of completely equal treatment regardless of family, ethnic, political, or national affiliation) at one end of a continuum, and extreme ingroup loyalty (in which perceived ingroups are always prioritized) at the other, then these results make sense. Definitionally, they indicate two extremes, and one

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would expect actual human beings to fall somewhere between these polar opposites, but with very conservative individuals closer to the Ingroup Loyalty end of the continuum, and more liberal individuals closer to the Fairness position. Such a model corresponds with the findings of the current research.

This chapter has focused on how competing moral intuitions can affect moral judgment for Jewish Israelis within the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In the following two chapters I will extend my exploration of cognitive dynamics which can affect moral judgment within this context to consider the influence of a proposed cognitive bias not currently found within the literature: the effect of competent performance on the assessment of actor morality.

5 Narratives of Competence and Morality in Israeli Nationalist Discourse: the possible connection with cognitive bias

5.1 Introduction

In section 2.2.4 I described how, through remaining open to 'useful noise' arising from the semi-structured interviews, I began to question whether, when performing or observing actions which interviewees found morally troubling, their assessment of the morality of the actors involved was influenced by how competently they performed the actions in question. Within the interviews, this dynamic between competent performance and assessment of actor morality appeared to exhibit across the political spectrum. This led me to wonder whether/how narratives of competence and morality within Israeli national discourse would have been experienced by the interviewees, and how this might have influenced their subsequent moral judgments. Although the focus of this chapter is on how these dynamics relating to competence and morality manifest within Israel, this is by no means an exclusively Israeli phenomenon. For example, nationalist narratives such as that of "Manifest Destiny" in the USA, and European colonial narratives can, I would argue, also be interpreted in terms of perceived competence of performance contributing to moral justification for territorial expansion. To unpack these dynamics within Israel, in this chapter I analyze nationalist narratives involving competence and morality specific to Israeli nationalist discourse, how these narratives are integrated into the educational system when preparing young people for military service, and how these narratives are subsequently embodied by individuals within their military service.

5.2   Discursive Analysis of Narratives of Competence and Morality in Israeli Nationalist Discourse

The founders of modern Israel faced the task of creating a united Jewish nation-state from a population comprising individuals from diverse countries and backgrounds. David Ben-Gurion, Israel's first Prime Minister, understood the power that mythic narrative has in the formation of national consciousness. Drawing on Biblical narratives already prevalent in19[th] century Zionist discourse (making the desert bloom, Israel as a light unto the nations), and on the narrative of Jewish genius, Ben-Gurion played a key role in establishing a nationalist discourse which functioned to nurture pride and to instill a sense of belonging and common purpose within the nascent Israeli nation-state, and to justify its appropriation of land (Tzahor, 1995).

In a letter to President of the United States Dwight D. Eisenhower, David Ben-Gurion declared that Jewish genius would enable the nation of Israel not only to make the Negev desert bloom, but also to teach impoverished nations around the world to make their own deserts bloom, thus making it possible to feed the world's hungry and, in doing so, to fulfill the Biblical prophecy of *or lagoyim* (Israel serving as a light unto the other nations) (Tzahor, 1995). In this declaration, Ben-Gurion effectively linked three nationalist narratives— *or lagoyim*, Jewish Israelis making the desert bloom, and Jewish genius, which identify Jewish Israelis as having a destiny unique among the nations of the world. I am interested in the role played by competence and morality in each of these narratives and of how this contributes to nationalist discourse. In the following sections I use discursive analysis to unpack the dynamics of competence and morality within each of these narratives in turn.

5.2.1 Jewish Genius

The narrative of Jewish genius contends that there is something special about the Jewish people—either because of genetic inheritance or cultural environment—that has resulted in (a) above average intelligence, and (b) making a disproportionately large contribution to cognitively challenging fields such as science and mathematics relative to the small size of the Jewish population. Within this narrative, IQ studies which show that Jewish people in America and Britain have higher mean IQ scores than British and American populations as a whole (Herrnstein & Murray, 1994; Lynn & Longley, 2006; Lynn & Kanazawa, 2008)[26], and a disproportionate percentage of Jewish Nobel Prize winners (Berry, 1981; Zhang, 1998) are two areas cited as evidence of exceptional Jewish genius. Explanations for, and to a lesser extent evidence of, Jewish genius have been debated within both academia and among the general public. But this narrative remains firmly fixed in the popular imagination. Debates between supporters and detractors of the various theses to do with the Jewish genius narrative frequently take on a decidedly political flavor.

Jewish individuals have frequently been cited as being disproportionately represented among Nobel Prize winners for contributions to cognitively challenging fields such as science and mathematics (Berry, 1981; Zhang, 1998). Exact numbers and percentages have been contested, however, due in part to differing opinions on what qualifies someone as Jewish, and in part to ideological motivations either to downplay or emphasize Jewish accomplishment. To cite two polarized examples, on

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[26] Note: the data regarding higher mean IQ scores among Jewish populations only refer to Ashkenazim (those of European heritage). See, for example, Cochran, Hardy, & Harpending (2006).

a website devoted to reviving anti-Semitism as a valid intellectual position, the pseudonymous Radl (2013) contends that figures purporting to show that Jewish people are over-represented among Nobel Prize winners are wrong due to flawed methodology and that they are in fact, under-represented. In contrast, the February 2006 online edition of *Jewish Magazine* declares that although Jews make up on 0.2% of the world population and Muslims constitute 20%, there have been only six Arab Nobel Prize winners as compared with 165 Jewish winners [note the conflation of "Muslims" and "Arabs"]. "Can you supply a reason for the large discrepancy between the Arab/Islamic population's contribution to the world body and that of the Jew?" the article asks provocatively (jewishmag.com, 2006). As what constitutes Jewishness is hotly contested, even within Israel (see Chapter 3.3), there is no definitive answer to the question of how many Nobel Prize winners are Jewish: as Chapter 3 demonstrated, an individual who is to be considered Jewish according to *halachic* law may not identify as Jewish, while many people who identify as Jewish are not considered as such according to *halachic* law. Broad or narrow definitions of Jewishness within these debates would appear to be chosen in the service of whichever ideological position is being argued.

Within academia questions relating to Jewish intelligence have largely been debated between proponents of a strong genetic influence in intelligence and those who decry such analysis as biological determinism. For example, Herrnstein and Murray (1994), authors of the controversial book on race and intelligence, *The Bell Curve*, although stating that both genes and culture contribute to intelligence, cited genetic differences between ethnic groups as strong determinants of intelligence. In an article entitled, *Jewish Genius*, Murray (2007) argues that genetic components likely outweigh environmental influence in explaining high Jewish intelligence.

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This article was published in *Commentary*, a neoconservative American magazine which was originally founded by the American Jewish Committee (AJC) in 1945, and which historian Richard Pells (2005) has described as the most consistently influential journal in political and cultural debates within the US. The proposed strength of the link between race and intelligence has been widely criticized by more left-leaning scholars, for example by Chomsky (1972) who disparaged as racist Herrnstein's thesis that intelligence is inherited, and that therefore differences in status and financial success between ethnic groups is evidence of a hereditary meritocracy. Similarly, Gould (1996) decried Murray's analysis as biological determinism which effectively ignored the impact of privilege and discrimination on different ethnic groups, and which erroneously reduced "intelligence" to a single numerical score.

Explanations pointing to cultural factors specific to Jewish tradition to account for high levels of Jewish success in the sciences have also proved controversial and divisive. One suggested explanation is that the emphasis on Torah study within ancient Judaism resulted in both high levels of literacy, and a culture of questioning and critical thinking which continues to this day (e.g., Lipset & Raab, 1995; Aune, 2004). But Hezser's (2001) historical analysis of Jewish literacy within Roman Palestine suggests that literacy rates among Jews were lower than those of Greeks and Romans of the same period. She argues that although Jewish males were required to have a rudimentary ability to read and write, ancient Judaism was primarily transmitted and understood through oral, ritual, and symbolic traditions. Hezser also contends that interpretation of religious texts was primarily the domain of the rabbis, and that only a small minority of the male population would have been in a position to have direct access to the Torah and to engage in discussions over

meaning. Efron (2014) rejects both genetic determinism and specifically Jewish traits and cultural behaviors as an explanation for the success of Jewish people in science. Instead, he argues that historical persecution and the need to emigrate to new lands resulted in Jewish people embracing scientific endeavor as a means of creating new worlds in which Jews would not be victimized.

Although the nature versus nurture debates on this subject are not only complex but also highly politically charged, within the narrative of Jewish high achievement in intellectually challenging fields, analyzing how competence and morality may be perceived of as interlinked is more straightforward. Competence in scientific and technological endeavours can foster contributions to knowledge which have the potential to benefit all of humankind, such as medical advances in the treatment of cancer or malaria. Such competence can, of course, also result in technologies which can prove morally divisive, for example, research into nuclear weaponry or on human cloning. Be that as it may, the Jewish genius narrative foregrounds a strong link between competence and morality, highlighting both Jewish accomplishment and its contribution to humanity at large.

The strength of this link, I would suggest, is why the numbers of Nobel Prize winners, and the explanations for Jewish IQ scores are considered so important, and why they are contested: if competence and morality are conceptually intertwined, then highlighting or attacking the competence of a particular group has implications for the perceived morality of that group. The nationalist discourse to which the Jewish genius, making the desert bloom, and *or lagoyim* narratives contribute, does not isolate competence from morality. The Jewish people are presented as having a unique responsibility to use their intellectual gifts and moral standing to benefit not

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only themselves, but the wider world as well. In short, to be *or lagoyim,* a "light unto the other nations."

5.2.2 *Or lagoyim*

> It is too small a thing for you to be my servant to restore the tribes of Jacob and bring back those of Israel I have kept. I will also make you a light for the Gentiles, that my salvation may reach to the ends of the earth. Isaiah 49:6

In Ben-Gurion's nationalist vision, the state of Israel was to serve as a beacon to the international community by creating an ideal society worthy of emulation. In this way, the nascent state would legitimize both its initial founding and its continuing development, and thereby garner international support necessary first for Israel's establishment and then for its security (Avi-Hai, 1974; Bar-Joseph, 2000). In translating the concept of *or lagoyim* into a nationalist mission, Ben-Gurion effectively secularized and territorialised the biblical prophecy found in Isaiah. Creating such a link between the religious and the secular was in line with classical Zionist principles (Gurkan, 2009).

In addition to providing justification for Israel's existence as a nation-state to the international community, *or lagoyim* also functioned to instill a sense of collective mission among Jewish Israelis. This sense of mission was realized in the 1950s and 1960s through programs bringing training and aid to developing countries (Inbar, 1990) and has remained relevant within the Israeli psyche through IDF aid missions providing disaster relief (Stand for Israel, 2015; Erlich, Segal, Marom, Dagan & Glassberg, 2015) and through scientific and technological achievements (Birenbaum-Carmeli, Carmli, & Cohen, 2000; Almog, 2001; Efron, 2011).

It has also been argued that scientific and technological achievement by Jewish Israelis, in addition to providing practical support for the establishment and sustenance of the state, has also been cited as justification for Israeli control over territory. The core of this argument is that, through superior scientific capabilities, Israel is able to produce technologies that benefit everyone within the region (and beyond), and that therefore Israel has a greater moral right to control of lands than the indigenous Arab population who would not make such good use of the resources (Efron, 2011). This narrative dovetails with stereotypes of Arabs as not being capable of making proper use of western technologies as a result of entrenched cultural differences (Suleiman, 2004), and serves to create a clear distinction between Jewish Israelis and Palestinian Arabs. Indeed, the heart of the concept of *or lagoyim* suggests something inherently unique about the Jewish people in contrast to all the other nations of the world: the Jewish nation has been tasked with setting an example to everyone else, and as long as they are not obstructed in this mission, the rest of the world will also benefit from the achievements of the people of Israel.

Again, nationalist narratives of superiority are not unique to Israel. But such reasoning, I would suggest, has been a contributory factor of Israeli unilateralism in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Policies as diverse as the disengagement from Gaza in 2005, and the establishment of boundaries through the construction of the separation barrier/wall in the West Bank which began in 2002, were undertaken as unilateral measures by the Israeli government. An Israeli narrative of Palestinian Arabs being inherently less capable than Jewish Israelis, coupled with the sense of mission inherent within *or lagoyim*, produces a discourse in which unilateral action on the part of Israel is perceived as not only permissible, but morally imperative. Prime Minister Netanyahu has cited Israel's ability to

determine its own destiny as crucial in order for the nation to thrive and to serve as a light unto the other nations (Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2010). There is, I would suggest, a fine line between a conception of one's nation as having a *responsibility* to act as an example to other peoples, and a *justification* for acting against the wishes of those same people. Indeed, Efron (2011) describes the Zionist attitude towards technologically-driven increases in agricultural production as combining (a) a Calvinistic belief that equates success with divine election, with (b) a Lockean belief that improving the land entitles one to ownership of the land. He argues that this strongly colonialist attitude unites elements of "intellectual superiority, inerrant entitlement, and selfless virtue" (Efron, 2011, p.422).

This is not to downplay advancements by Israeli scientists that have undoubtedly benefitted the wider world, such as the development of micro-irrigation techniques that have improved agriculture yields in developing countries (Hillel, 1987; WorldFoodPrize.org; 2012). Indeed, technological achievements relating to agriculture and water management have proved particularly powerful symbolically, linking the concept of *or lagoyim* to the narrative of "making the desert bloom." But I would argue that when a nationalist discourse includes narratives in which such competence is provided as moral justification for appropriation of land, the declared mission of providing benefit to other peoples suffers. Decades worth of Israeli government-sanctioned destruction of Palestinian agricultural projects have been documented, for example, uprooting olive trees, fouling or destroying water supplies, destroying greenhouses, and preventing farmers from reaching their lands (PFCSO, 2013; United Nations, 2014).

Perceived divisions between "us" and "them" relating to land and rights exist within the Israeli polity itself. Ongoing disputes between the Israeli government and

the Bedouin (who are citizens of Israel) over land rights have resulted in repeated evictions from and destruction of Bedouin villages by the government (Falah, 1989; Rangwala, 2004). In February 2002 the Israeli government sent planes to spray poisonous chemicals on 12,000 dunams of land cultivated by Bedouins in the Negev (Naqab in Arabic) desert near Beersheva, in order to destroy the crops. The action was repeated in October 2002. Avigdor Lieberman, then the minister responsible for land management, made the following statement: "We must stop their illegal invasion into state land by all means possible; the Bedouins have no regard for our laws; in the process we are losing the last resources of state lands; one of my main missions is to return power to the Land Authority in dealing with the non-Jewish threat to our lands. At the same time, we must settle the land by building new communal settlements and family farms. If we don't do this, we shall lose the Negev forever" (quoted in Yiftachel, 2006, p.3). Lieberman clearly differentiates between "we" Jewish Israelis and "they" as non-Jewish Israelis with respect to who has rights to the land (Yiftachel, 2006). Right wing politicians such as Lieberman adhere to an interpretation of Isaiah's prophecy by which only the Jewish people can truly make the desert bloom.

5.2.3 Making the desert bloom

The desert and the parched land will be glad; the wilderness will rejoice and blossom. Like the crocus, it will burst into bloom; it will rejoice greatly and shout for joy. (Isaiah 35:1-2)

This promise, of a time of peace and plenty when the Jewish people will return to the land of Israel and make the desert bloom, has long been a cornerstone of Zionist ideology (Kellerman, 1996; Schely-Newman, 1997). The Jewish National

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Fund (JNF), established in 1901 by the World Zionist Organization (WZO) to purchase and cultivate land in Palestine for the creation of a Jewish state, draws heavily on this prophecy in describing its ongoing mission and achievements: "JNF is supporting a new generation of Israeli pioneers in fulfilling David Ben Gurion's vision of making the desert bloom, ensuring Israel's vitality for generations to come" (Jewish National Fund: Our History, 2009).

The Zionist project envisioned (re-)uniting the Jewish people with the land of Israel through the creation of the "New Jew," or *Sabra*. Named after a prickly pear, a Sabra was seen as tough and thorny on the outside but sweet on the inside. In contrast to the perceived bookishness of the "old" Jews of Europe, the Sabra was physically fit from agricultural work which not only functioned to reclaim the land, but also the bodies and souls of the Jewish pioneers (Tzahor, 1995; Bar-Itzhak, 2005). According to this narrative, the Jewish pioneers (*halutzim*) arrived in Palestine, and through superior technology, determination and hard work, reclaimed territory that had either been left as, or allowed to deteriorate into, wasteland by the local Arab population (Bar-Itzhak, 2005; Penslar, 2007).

Various elements of this narrative have proved controversial. First, the nature of the activities of the JNF have long been argued over, specifically, whether their purchase of Palestinian land was part of an explicit plan to make the entire area exclusively Jewish. Historians such as Morris (1988) have contended that expulsion of Arab populations were unplanned by-products of war rather than intentional Zionist strategies. But Khalidi (1961, referenced in Pappe, 2006) argues that "Plan Dalet," a set of guidelines formulated by the Haganah in 1948 for gaining control of land in order to establish the Israeli state, indicates that expulsion of Arabs was, instead, an intentional strategy. And Masalha's (1992) analysis of archival material

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including diaries of early Zionist leaders provides evidence of a strategy of "transfer"

of the Arab population into neighboring Arab countries, for example as evidenced by

the following quote from Yosef Weitz, the JNF's Director of Land Development:

"only [Arab] population transfer and evacuating this country so it would become

exclusively for us is the solution" (Masalha, 1992, p.132; see Shlaim, 1994 for

analysis of contrasts between Morris's and Masalha's theses).

The narrative of pre-*halutzim* Palestine as a wasteland has been contested in

two key ways. First, the narrative has been criticized as downplaying or ignoring

existing Palestinian Arab agriculture (e.g., George, 1979), and second, for the

perceived assumption that only a Europeanized afforested landscape constitutes

proper use of the land (e.g., Bar-Itzhak, 2005; Sheikh &Weizman, 2015). While

acknowledging the accomplishments in land reclamation and agriculture achieved by

Jewish pioneers, George (1979) analyses historical records which indicate that less

than 50% of pre-*halutzim* Palestine had a desert climate, and that much of the land

"reclaimed" by the pioneers was, in fact, Arab farmland. Some difference in

perception of Arab cultivation of the land between Jewish pioneers and the British

government can be found in a seemingly innocuous paragraph in a 1947 report to the

UN General Assembly by the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine

(UNSCOP). "According to government estimates, most of the land capable of being

cultivated by present methods is under crops, and any considerable development

depends on more advanced methods of farming and, more particularly, on more

extensive irrigation. Jewish authorities claim, however, that government estimates

are too conservative" (UNSCOP, 1947). The report acknowledged differences in

technologies employed by Jewish and Arab farmers in Palestine, with Jewish farmers

bringing financial investment and modern irrigation methods, but pointed out

differences in motivations for farming by the two populations. Arab farmers were focused on being self-sustaining, while Jewish farmers were interested in producing exportable crops: although production of vegetables by Arab farmers was less than that of Jewish farmers, the production costs of the Arab farmers were also lower (UNSCOP, 1947).

Control and use of water would, of course, become hotly contested issues in the region. On the one hand, modern water management technologies have made it possible to increase agricultural productivity (Friedler, 2001; Oron, DeMalach, Gillerman, David, & Lurie, 2002;), but there have also been negative environmental impacts including seawater seeping into fresh water aquifers, and contamination of water sources through fertilizer run-off (Tal, 2006; Levinson, 2008). And then there are the political implications of water policies. Broich (2013) describes as "environmental Orientalism" the attitudes of British and Zionist conceptions of Arabs and contends that water policies in British Mandatory Palestine negatively affected Arab farmers' capabilities to maintain viable agricultural projects. Lowi (1993) describes prohibitions barring Palestinian Arabs from drilling wells without permission from the Israeli Civilian Administration. She describes how only "existing uses" of water by West Bank Palestinian farmers are recognized, effectively restricting water usage to 1968 levels with only a small margin for growth allowed. More recent water policies have continued this trend. Reports from Amnesty International (2009) and the World Bank (2009) indicate that Israeli controls over water use greatly disadvantage Palestinians, whose water consumption, at up to 70 litres per day per person, fails to meet the World Health Organization's recommended daily minimum of 100 litres. Overall Israeli water consumption is four times the amount of that of the Palestinians, while water consumption for some

Israeli settlements in the West Bank is up to 20 times greater than that of neighbouring Palestinian communities (Amnesty, 2009). As a result of Israeli territorial jurisdiction, the Palestinian Authority (PA) is unable to regulate management of water sources in the West Bank. This disparity of power has resulted, for example, in Israel increasing its own share of water drawn from the Western Aquifer while preventing Palestinians from drilling wells into the aquifer in order to meet the growing needs of its population (World Bank, 2009).

Coupled with restrictions that frequently prevent Palestinian farmers from reaching their lands (O'Callaghan, Jaspars, & Pavanello, 2009; Fields, 2010), such water policies have limited the potential for improving agricultural techniques. Could it be that policies limiting Palestinian farmers' ability to develop their lands result in a self-fulfilling prophecy relating to the roles of competence and morality within the "making the desert bloom" narrative? If Jewish Israeli agricultural competence is perceived as contributing to a moral justification for control of land, and government policy severely limits the ability of Palestinian Arabs to farm their lands competently then, could the resulting differences in agricultural production be perceived by some as confirmation of the biblical prophecy that the "wasteland" of Palestine will only bloom when it is once again in Jewish hands?

I have suggested that the three narratives discussed above—Jewish genius, *or lagoyim*, and making the desert bloom—each incorporate elements of competence and morality which, at times, become intertwined in such a way that they may feed into a nationalist discourse in which Jewish Israeli competence serves as a justificatory factor for control of contested territory. This argument builds on Efron's (2011) contention that Israeli technological superiority is equated with perceived exceptional morality and of entitlement to land within Zionist discourse.

As a country with near-universal military conscription, military values in Israel do not constitute a separate, isolated culture, but are instead inseparable from mainstream narratives (Al-Qazzaz, 1973; Israelashvili, 1992). If competence and morality can become conflated within the nationalist discourse, effectively justifying appropriation of territory, how does this translate into narratives of competence and morality specifically relating to the military? And how might competent or incompetent performance of military duties affect individual soldiers' assessment of the morality of themselves, their fellow soldiers, and the missions on which they are engaged?

5.3   Narratives of Competence and Morality in Israeli Military Discourse

In this section I integrate embodied discourse analysis of interview data relating to the lived experience of preparation for, and participation in, military service of the 40 Israeli reserve soldiers and conscientious objector I interviewed, with discursive analysis of narratives of competence and morality specifically relating to the Israeli military.

At its inception, the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) was perceived as the embodiment of a nationalist discourse in which the Jewish people re-established themselves securely in their historical homeland, and through hard work and intelligence, made the desert bloom (Ben-Eliezer, 1998). Formed as a conscript army by Ben-Gurion in 1948, the IDF was intended to serve a function far beyond that of merely defending the state. Ben-Gurion perceived the soldiers of the IDF as the natural successors to the pre-state *halutzim* (pioneers): soldiers would not only protect the nascent state, but also serve as educators and nation-builders. They

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would follow in the footsteps of the early pioneers by reclaiming the desert, and military service would function to mould Jewish immigrants from around the world into a unified and successful Israeli nation (Ben-Ari, 1998; Weissbrod, 2002).

The school system systematically and pedagogically prepares young people for participation in military service. The following English translation of an excerpt from an Israeli Ministry of Education Directive (2007) defining the goals of the education system with regard to preparation of young people for military service illustrates how Ben-Gurion's vision of *halutzim*-soldiers is integrated into the education system.

2.1   To cultivate the adolescents' feeling of identification and belonging to the people, the land, and the State of Israel:

a. to develop the adolescents' Zionist Israeli identity and culture

b. to develop the adolescents' commitment to the community and to society

c. to raise the consciousness of the youth to the importance of the multi-cultural encounter between soldiers in the IDF that reflects the diversity of Israeli society

2.2   To reinforce the feeling of responsibility amongst youth to fulfil their right and civil obligation to preserve the security of the state

2.3   To raise youth's awareness of questions of moral values while reinforcing their critical ability and judgment, their individual thinking, and their initiative

2.4   To encourage adolescents' willingness to serve meaningfully in the IDF while emphasising the importance of service in the military alliance, according to the army's needs, and to their talents and aspirations.

By linking Zionist ideals to meaningful military service, and to development of students' capabilities and moral values, the education system in Israel begins a process through which narratives of competence are linked to those of morality with respect to the IDF. Preparations in high school for military service may include information sessions, visits to schools from serving soldiers, psychological and physical tests, special needs training, physical training, and a week spent at an army base (Israelashvili, 1992). Physical, cognitive, and psychological testing continues during the initial phase of induction into the military in order to assign individuals to the military roles and units to which they are deemed most suitable (Israel Defense Forces, 2015). This selection process is highly competitive, and young Israelis find themselves competing against not only their previous capabilities, but also directly against their peers, in order to secure their place within the military hierarchy.

> But the IDF, everybody goes, it's good. The kids, we always used to brag about, no, I'm going to be more of a hero than you, I'm going to be a pilot, I'm going to be… it was obvious that this (pause) You're going to go to the army, you're going to do a good job, you're going to be excellent, and it's a good thing, and obviously the things in high school, the system's worked out this way to bring you fully motivated into the army. *L8*

Highly motivated young Israelis are prepared to throw themselves bodily into preparations that will improve their chances of gaining the positions within the military that they desire, and which will secure their status in the wider Israeli society. A left wing conscientious objector who had previously served in the air force described how, as a high school student, he and a few of his friends undertook additional physical training prior to their induction into the military in order to maximize their chances for getting assigned to elite training programmes such as those for pilots.

We signed up to this guy that we paid to get us running around hills with bags of sand on our backs and stuff like that. It sounds very crazy today, but we did it then. Our parents paid for it. And we took it extremely seriously. I think more as a status symbol than wanting to sacrifice for the state or anything like that. *L6*

A centre right reserve soldier described his own transformation from "a very fat child" to physically fit as the point at which he became interested in what he might be able to accomplish in the military.

When I was in 11th grade I decided I'm knocking off some kilograms. I dropped like 15 kilos in 3 months. And then I said, ok, I'm fit, let's try and see what I can do, like going into the army…that's the only point that I started to show any interest in the IDF. Before that it wasn't any interest of me. *CR3*

In both of these quotes, the desire to "prove oneself," rather than a strong desire to serve the State per se, is evident. Although in different parts of these interviews both of these men also described being motivated to serve their nation, the opportunity to test oneself and to compete with one's peer group were clearly strong motivators for some teenage recruits to the IDF—including those who had strong nationalist motivations.

Because I grew up in a kibbutzim religious society, the drive to serve the country is very, very high. And there's a lot of competition. You really feel like, ok, well if that guy's going to be a pilot, I want to be, you know, in [*Sayeret*] *Matkal*[27], because I want to be better than him. *CL2*

Striving for competence in the highly competitive induction phase of military service reinforces the narrative of the IDF as highly capable. This complements the narrative of Israeli military superiority. Israel's achievements in military technology

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[27] *Sayeret Matkal* is a special forces unit within the IDF.

are internationally recognized, and include leading the field in the export of

Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs), commonly known as drones (FSRN, 2014);

development of anti-missile technology such as the Iron Dome system (Shapir,

2013); and technology that enables shooting at targets from around corners

(cornershot.com, n.d.). Participating in complex, competently performed, military

operations in such a technologically advanced army can prove very attractive to

individual soldiers.

> So you find in Israel the best people go to the army…At least 20 years ago.
> So there were a lot of great people in the unit. It was very interesting. You
> done a lot of many, many operations everywhere. Like movie stuff, like
> action movie stuff…Lot of operations, lot of very complicated operations.
> The Israeli army is really, really very good. At least the elite units. I'm not
> sure about the other parts. And it was very, very fulfilling. Very
> empowering. *L1*

Whether serving as combat soldiers or in non-combat positions such as IT

development or education, individual recruits find themselves performing their

prescribed roles within a highly competitive hierarchy in which competence is both

valued and rewarded. The narrative of military competence describes a meritocracy

where those above you in rank are there because they have earned that right. But

officers also receive additional training relating to ethics as part of their military

service, thereby reinforcing the sense that one's superior officers are also well-versed

in moral judgment. And there is an ethos within the IDF of combat commanders

leading from the front as summed up by the expression, "Follow me." This tactic

has been cited as the reason for high casualty rates among officers. For example, in

the 2014 invasion of Gaza, 44% of the 64 IDF fatalities were commanders

(Ginsburg, 2014). But the willingness of commanders to put themselves in the line

of fire ahead of their troops functions to boost morale within the ranks and encourages soldiers to trust their superior officers (Flah, 2005).

> The people who we give deadly power to are also generally your higher quality people because you have to trust them to do the right thing…I have officers who, you know, I went to war with, and I'd do it again. Never had anybody who I didn't respect, who didn't meet that standard. *CR5*

Indeed, Bar-Tal, Halperin, and Oren (2010) argue that the narrative of Israeli military technological superiority is complemented by a narrative of moral superiority. During the second intifada, when Israel's military operations were coming increasingly under scrutiny by the international community (Kober, 2007), Shaul Mofaz, then IDF Chief of Staff, famously described the IDF as "the most moral army in the world." Since then this highly contentious phrase has been taken up with enthusiasm by Israeli politicians as well as by the military and much of the public (e.g., Medzini, 2009; Keinon, 2014; Novak, 2014), and is embodied in the public imagination by the figure of the "good soldier" who is considered to represent the majority of the military, while the more morally questionable figure of the "bad soldier" is held to represent only a small minority (Even-Tzur & Hadar, 2014). The IDF is presented as exceptionally moral based on two complementary narratives, that of only going to war when there is no other choice (*ayn breirah*), and that of "purity of arms" (*tohar haneshek*), which entails practising restraint and engaging in humane conduct when at war (Sucharov, 2005).

But as well as being contested within the international community, some Israelis have also disputed this claim of exceptional morality. The role of the air force (IAF) in national debates about morality and warfare has been significant. The air force is widely considered to be at the pinnacle of the IDF hierarchy, with pilots

viewed as the cream of the cream of Israeli society due to the high level of skill and intelligence required to successfully qualify as a pilot. The IAF's slogan, "The Best to the Air Force" has been widely accepted since Israel's victory in the 1967 Six Day War (Ben-Eliezer, 1998; Epstein, 2001). Competition to become a pilot is fierce. Pilots are not only considered to be extremely competent, but are also seen as personifying the ethical values of the IDF, and by extension those of the Israeli state.

One centre right interviewee who served in a support role in the air force described looking to the pilots for moral guidance even though, and perhaps even because, they were further to the left politically than he was.

> Pilots that serve in the IDF, today many of them are in the left part of the political map...And so I always thought to myself, ok, if they're doing those stuffs, and I knew that the air force was very professional, very moral, in terms of quality of people it was very high quality, especially the pilots. This is like the top—top of the top, really. You can't even, I don't know, there are Navy Seals, or *Sayeret Matkal*, which are also very good units, but still, pilots are, yeah, over there [pointing up]. So I knew that nothing immoral happened. *CR6*

CR6 describes the IAF, and especially the pilots, as "very professional, very moral, in terms of quality of people it was very high quality." Here, competence and morality are seen as existing hand in hand for "high quality" individuals. In trusting in the pilots' moral judgment, CR6 has effectively relegated moral decision-making to people higher in the hierarchy. Such trust in the moral judgement of pilots has a long history. This is why, when in 2003 a group of pilots not only publicly denounced the morality of IAF bombing missions in Gaza, but removed themselves bodily from further military service, their actions caused shock across the nation.

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The pilots' actions were in response to the targeted assassination by the IAF of Salah Shehadeh, the leader of the military wing of Hamas. When the IAF bombed Shehadeh's house, the explosion destroyed the neighbouring house as well. The bomb killed 15 people in total, including eight children and three women, as well as injuring dozens of others (Margalit, 2012). Twenty-seven reserve and active duty pilots signed what came to be known as "The Pilots' Letter," stating that they were no longer prepared to drop bombs in residential areas or to provide support for such missions (see Appendix 4). In statements to the media they said that they did not want to become war criminals. The pilots' position as the elite of the elite within the IDF meant that this very public act of conscientious objection caused uproar within Israel, and the leadership was quick to vilify the pilots as providing support to terrorist organizations which sought Israel's destruction (Ben-Eliezer, 2012).

The pilots challenged a narrative common among technologically-advanced militaries—that "pinpoint" bombing is sufficiently accurate to morally justify aerial bombardment in civilian areas. The strength of this narrative can be persistent, even in the face of high civilian casualties. Where bombing missions targeting specific individuals or infrastructure are perceived as competently performed, civilian casualties may be viewed as unfortunate but as sincerely unintended. In this way moral concerns can be reduced even in the face of increasing numbers of civilian casualties. But analysis of the interview data raised the question of whether perceived competence of such missions might provide a moral "cushion" by which an individual's moral qualms regarding bombings carried out in civilian areas might be mitigated, while perceived incompetence might instead heighten such moral concerns. This appeared to be the case for one IAF air traffic controller, L6.

Incompetent performance, on the part of themselves or of others, appeared to prove the final straw that led some reserve soldiers such as L6 to remove themselves physically from military duties. L6 held political views that made him uncomfortable with participating in the military occupation of the Palestinian Territories and with taking part in aerial bombing campaigns in civilian areas in Gaza, but he continued to perform his military service within the elite IAF. His perception of the air force as being highly competent suffered, however, when he moved up the chain of command and observed and took part in operations which allowed him to see how things actually played out in real-world situations.

> And my big experience was in the Gaza war in 2008. I was doing reserve. I did my reserve service in Tel Aviv, in the higher chain of command. And one of the days there was a lot of pressure, throwing a lot of bombs in a short period of time. One of the goals of that operation was to sort of shock and awe the Gazan population. Said they wanted an effect of a bomb landing every minute on different targets…And the problem was that we had two different airplanes that were supposed to attack the same house. I was in charge of both of them, and he [the commander] said cease fire on the target, and I was under, I mean I had too many airplanes, and I didn't notice that two of them had the same target, and I just told one of them to cease fire, and the other one fired and bombed the house. So, that's an incident that I was directly in charge of. Me and the commander that didn't make sure that I stopped everything that was (pause) and that kind of shocked me…So, I was in complete shock in that minute, so I didn't really understand. The commander later on said it looked like it was ok, there were no civilians. I don't know if he really meant that or not. The IDF didn't do any, um, serious investigation into the matter. It was really not a big deal. For me it was a big

deal, but for them (pause) you know how many civilians were killed in that operation[28], so… *L6*

For L6, it was his own and his commander's incompetence, and not his participation per se in a "shock and awe" bombing campaign of which he already disapproved on moral grounds, and which he recognised was resulting in high numbers of civilian casualties, that led to his refusal to do further military service. It was a failure in competence which, in the end, made this interviewee question the morality of his own involvement in the 2008 aerial bombing campaign in Gaza to the extent where he felt compelled to physically remove himself from further participation. However, one might arguably interpret this in one of two ways. First, it might be argued that incompetence in this situation negatively affected L6's assessment of the morality of remaining in the IDF because the incompetent action put Palestinian civilian lives at greater risk. If this were the case, then the dynamic between competent performance and assessment of actor morality would indicate an appropriate integration of relevant information in the assessment of actor morality: if actors are not sufficiently competent to ensure that all safeguards for civilians are put into place, then this could be seen as relevant to the morality of engaging in the operation.

But there is another possible explanation which dovetails with the aforementioned contesting of a narrative of pinpoint bombing as being sufficiently accurate to protect innocent civilians from unnecessary risk. In this argument, a perception of competent performance can function to imply that any number of civilian casualties is acceptable as long as the actors are performing their specific

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[28] Israeli and Palestinian NGOs estimate between 1,385 and 1,419 Palestinian fatalities d during Operation Cast Lead, with at least 308 of these under the age of 18. Over 5000 were wounded. There were thirteen Israeli fatalities, including 3 civilians. (Institute for Middle East Understanding, 2012)

tasks competently. From my analysis of L6's statements, this explanation would appear to be a better fit for his assessment of the situation: he felt that the perceived technological skills of the IDF served as a smokescreen to the damage being done to Palestinian civilians. I began to think that if this were the case, then the competence/morality dynamic might indicate the presence of a cognitive bias not currently found within the literature.

The experience of another reserve soldier, CL4, provides further support for the hypothsized effect that competent or incompetent performance may have on the assessment of morality.   When asked about moral dilemmas he had experienced during his military service, CL4 described incidents which troubled him in terms of incompetence. In one example, he described what he perceived as incompetence on the part of the IDF which led to the destruction of several Palestinian families' water supplies. His unit was searching domestic reservoirs in family homes to see if a wanted man they were looking for was hiding in one of them. To determine whether or not the man was in a particular reservoir, the soldiers would throw either a live or a fake grenade into it, to either kill the man or frighten him into coming out where they could capture him.

CL4 described feeling frustrated that they were not taking a more "professional" approach to the problem, for instance by putting a camera on a pole and putting that into the reservoir to see if anyone was hiding, instead of destroying families' water supplies. He described how the family members would plead with him in Arabic not to destroy their reservoirs. Although he does not speak Arabic, he said that their meaning was all too clear, and that their fear and distress in turn caused him distress. "I wanted it not to happen, and I couldn't influence that at all." However, he stated that, although he still would not have been able to change what

his colleagues were doing, his moral discomfort would have been reduced if he had

been fluent (competent) in Arabic and he could have apologized to the families.

> I felt bad about it but it really translated to practical things for me. I wanted
> to know Arabic. It really felt that if I could talk to them, it would be better,
> so I was really frustrated that I can't make this conversation. *CL4*

CL4's description of this incident reveals two separate aspects of the

dynamic between competence of performance and assessment of morality. First,

increased competence—in having the resources to search the reservoirs without

destroying them—would have enabled him to behave in a way that he perceived as

more humane, while still obeying protocol. An alternative to blowing up the

reservoirs could have been employed and the families would not have lost their

water supplies. In this way, increased competence would result in less risk of harm

to the Palestinian families. This corresponds with the first explanation of the

proposed competence/morality dynamic as detailed in the analysis of L6's interview

above.

However, I would suggest that the second dynamic is quite different. If

being able to communicate competently with the families whose water supplies were

about to be destroyed would result in CL4 feeling less morally troubled, then I would

argue that competence of performance in this case was affecting CL4's assessment

of his own morality in an inappropriate way. If he had been sufficiently competent

in speaking Arabic, he could have apologized, thereby communicating that he was a

"good person." However, the level of risk of harm to the Palestinian families would

not change—the reservoirs would still be destroyed and the families would still lose

their water supplies—but, according to his own assessment, CL4's moral qualms

would have decreased. Interestingly, although this situation had caused him to

consider becoming a conscientious objector, he continued to do reserve duty in the IDF. In accordance with the diktats of the State, his physical presence within the military continued.

The examples of the moral dilemmas described by L6 and CL4 pose interesting questions regarding dynamics between perceived competence of performance and assessment of actor morality for soldiers when faced with situations which they find morally problematic. Both of these men considered the continuing military occupation of the Palestinian Territories to be morally problematic. But both had continued to do reserve duty. For each of these men, incidents involving *in*competent performance had increased their moral unease.

But while the experience he described in the interview was the turning point for L6 in deciding to stop doing reserve duty, CL4 continued to serve. For CL4, it would appear that the very act of thinking of ways to improve the competence of his performance contributed to reducing his moral concerns to a point where he once again felt able to serve as a reserve soldier. He *talked about* the possibility of refusing further military service, but he still *physically participated in* military operations of which he disapproved. Here, it would appear that the continuing influence of competence on assessment of actor morality contributed to enabling CL4 to act against his own moral beliefs. Through his actions he was embodying a discourse with which he did not explicitly agree. In this way there was a disconnect between the narrative he espoused, and the narrative he embodied.

5.4   Conclusion

The current research has presented evidence in support of the argument that a nationalist discourse in Israel which incorporates the narratives of Jewish genius,

Israel as a light unto the other nations, and the Jewish people making the desert

bloom, weaves together disparate threads of competence and morality into a design

in which it can be difficult to cleanly separate the one from the other. In this Israel is

not alone. Nationalist and religious collectives have long interpreted the ability to

achieve their desires as evidence of their inherent moral deservingness. Whether this

entails expanding national boundaries (Manifest Destiny in the USA), creating an

empire (European colonialisms), or re-establishing what is presented as a divinely

ordered caliphate (ISIS), if "we" are capable of achieving our goals, then the

inclination to take this as a sign of "our" morality is strong.

I have argued that within Israel one such dynamic becomes evident when

examining the narrative of Jewish Israelis "making the desert bloom" in conjunction

with punitive government policies with respect to Palestinian agriculture. The

"making the desert bloom" narrative as adopted by Ben-Gurion equates Jewish

Israeli agricultural competence with a moral justification for control of land.

Combined with Israeli governmental policies which negatively affect the abilities of

Palestinians to farm their lands competently, the resulting differences in agricultural

production reinforce a narrative which asserts that the "wasteland" of Palestine will

only bloom when it is under Jewish stewardship. This self-fulfilling prophecy

effectively functions to reinforce a belief that Israeli unilateralism with respect to

policies on appropriation of land is both necessary and justified.

Nationalist discourses can be embodied in many ways, including through

military service. In countries where the military and the wider society embrace the

same values, these can be transmitted in a systematic way through institutions such

as the education system to successive generations. I have argued that young Jewish

Israelis not only absorb a nationalist discourse in which competence and morality

become intertwined intellectually, they embody it through preparation for and participation in compulsory military service. Crucially, the present research suggests the possibility that although competent performance may function to ameliorate moral qualms of individuals with respect to their actions within military service, exposure to incompetent performance may produce the opposite effect, resulting in increased moral concerns.

If competent performance can influence assessment of morality, the very fact of 48 years of successfully enforcing a military occupation clamours to be interpreted as indicative of self-evident moral superiority: at least by those from the occupying nation. As right wing reserve soldier R3 explained, "When you say, 'I win,' you actually say, behind the scene, that you have truth. That you have truth and someone else is lying." In this Calvinistic interpretation of "might makes right," "might" (competent military performance) is viewed as indicative of "right" (moral superiority). If my initial analysis is correct, then in this way, to be a "good" soldier in the competent sense may become conflated with being a "good" soldier in the moral sense. However, I would suggest that although one interpretation of the interviewees' statements supports this hypothesis, there is sufficient ambiguity within the interview data to warrant further clarification. Therefore, in order to test for the proposed competence/morality dynamic, and in order to gain insight into whether this proposed dynamic would better be understood as a cognitive bias (in which perceived competence *inappropriately* influences assessment of actor morality), or as a useful heuristic (in which competence *appropriately* influences moral judgment), I designed and conducted two online experiments which are detailed in the next chapter.

6 Being Good at Being Bad: the influence of competent performance on assessment of actor morality

6.1 Introduction

This chapter describes two experiments which I designed to test the influence of competent actor performance on the subsequent assessment of actor morality. The inspiration for these experiments was the analysis of interviews with IDF reserve soldiers and conscientious objectors detailed in the previous chapter which suggested that competent or incompetent performance could affect individuals' assessment of the morality of themselves and of their colleagues. I was interested in first determining whether competent performance could be shown within controlled experiments to influence assessment of actor morality. Secondly, I wished to assess possible interpretations relating to whether the influence of competent performance on judgment of actor morality could best be considered a cognitive bias or a useful heuristic.

As detailed in Chapter 1, current models involving competence and morality/warmth identify these traits as constituting the two dimensions by which humans primarily judge individuals and groups, positing that these dimensions are distinct (Fiske, Cuddy, & Glick, 2007) and orthogonal (Wojciszke, 2005a). In this chapter I conduct two experiments which provide support for the hypothesis that competent performance can influence assessment of actor morality, and that therefore competence and morality are only weakly orthogonal. In taking this approach, this study diverges from the current trend in social psychology to design experiments to test moral judgment relating to specific actions, and instead engages with a person-centred approach to moral judgment (see Pizarro & Tannenbaum,

2011; Uhlmann, Pizarro & Diermeier, 2015). While act-centred experiments seek to distinguish between deontological and utilitarian reasoning in assessing the morality of particular actions (see Greene, Nystrom, Engel, Darley, & Cohen, 2004; Greene, Morelli, Lowenberg, Nystrom, & Cohen, 2008), a person-centred approach draws on the tradition of virtue ethics and contends that when people make judgments about morality, such judgments are influenced by the perceived moral character of the actors involved, and not simply the morality of the specific acts which are being performed.

Proponents of a person-centred approach argue that many alleged 'inconsistencies' in moral judgment presented in psychological research as evidence of cognitive bias do not, in fact, represent inconsistencies. They contend that such apparent 'inconsistencies' are, instead, evidence of people appropriately interpreting data regarding the performance of specific acts which are relevant to understanding the moral character of the actors (Pizarro & Tannenbaum, 2011; Ulhmann et al., 2015). The present study will explicitly engage with the question of whether or not the proposed competence/ morality dynamic is better understood as (a) a useful heuristic which draws on relevant information regarding the role of competence when assessing actor morality, or (b) a cognitive bias in which assessment of an actor's moral character is influenced in an inappropriate way by perception of the actor's competence. These alternative explanations are detailed below.

6.2 Cognitive Bias or Useful Heuristic?

Explanation 1: The competence/morality dynamic as a cognitive bias

Wojciszke's (2005a; 2005b) empirical research provides support for the thesis that competence, as a self-profitable trait, is prioritized over morality when individuals

judge themselves and their ingroups. This is because competent, effective performance directly affects the ability of the ingroup to survive and thrive. In contrast, morality is an other-profitable trait which directly affects those with whom the individual or ingroup members are interacting. Therefore, morality (or warmth using the terminology of Fiske and colleagues) is prioritized when judging others (Wojcziske, Bazinska, & Jaworski, 1998; Fiske, Cuddy, & Glick, 2006), as morality/warmth indicates others' intentions towards oneself or one's ingroup.

In both of these bodies of research, the benefits of competent performance are understood as distinct from questions of morality. However, the narrative analyses from the previous chapter suggest that the prioritizing of competence when judging the ingroup may also affect judgment of ingroup actor morality, with competent actors deemed more moral than incompetent actors. Therefore, I am hypothesizing that competence and morality are only weakly orthogonal.

If competent performance influences assessment of actor morality, and competence and morality are distinct dimensions, this begs the question of whether the proposed competence/morality dynamic constitutes a cognitive bias. One argument would be that an individual's level of competence has no bearing on their moral character, and therefore any dynamic through which competence affects judgment of morality would indicate cognitive bias. However, there is an alternative explanation through which competence and morality might be considered even less distinct and orthogonal.

Explanation 2: The competence/morality dynamic as a useful heuristic

The above explanation interprets the proposed competence/morality dynamic as a cognitive bias on the grounds that competence and morality are distinct dimensions

(Fiske, Cuddy, & Glick, 2007) and therefore competence 'should not' influence assessment of actor morality. But Railton (2014) suggests that when making moral judgments, affective processes (also known as System 1 processes – associated with heuristics, including cognitive bias) do not simply entail automatic, inflexible reactions, but instead can integrate complex representations grounded in experience in order to present individuals with realistic – rather than biased – perceptions of specific situations. Railton re-evaluates Haidt, Björklund, and Murphy's (2000) famous scenario of siblings who, after discussing the matter thoroughly and taking precautions against pregnancy, decide to have sex with each other on a one-time basis on the grounds that it would be an interesting experience that they felt sufficiently emotionally stable to cope with. When Haidt and colleagues presented study participants with this scenario and asked them to judge the morality of the siblings' decision, he found that participants tended to assert that their actions were immoral, but were unable to identify any harm being done to anyone.

Haidt and colleagues attributed the participants' negative reactions regarding the morality of the siblings' decision to a 'flash of disgust' and described as 'moral dumbfounding' their insistence that the action was wrong even though they could not present reasons for their moral judgment. In contrast, Railton (2014) argues that even though the siblings were presented in the scenario as having taken sufficient precautions to prevent any harmful outcomes from their actions, it was highly likely that participants in the study would have brought their own life experiences to bear in making their assessments. Far from simply experiencing a 'flash of disgust,' participants would have been making an intuitive judgment that incorporated the high level of risk that the siblings were taking with respect to potential damage to their own psyches. Therefore, although the outcome presented in the scenario

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appeared to show no negative outcomes, the risks that had been taken were felt to be 'not OK' (Railton, 2014). Applying this reasoning to the competence/morality dynamic, one might argue that competence *appropriately* influences assessment of actor morality because incompetence leads to greater risk of morally problematic outcomes.

Although focused on outcomes, such an analysis dovetails with the person-centred analyses of moral judgment of Pizarro and Tannenbaum (2011) and of Uhlmann et al, (2015), who argue that many phenomena (mis)identified as cognitive bias instead constitute evidence of people interpreting, in a logical and valid way, information regarding the performance of specific acts as relevant to understanding the moral character of the actors (Pizarro & Tannenbaum, 2011; Ulhmann et al., 2015). In analyzing whether the proposed competence/morality dynamic can best be understood as a cognitive bias or as a useful heuristic, I will engage with both of these alternative explanations. But first I need to establish whether the existence of the proposed competence/morality dynamic can be supported by experimental evidence, and to determine what factors might be expected to influence this dynamic.

6.3 Hypotheses

According to the stereotype content model (Fiske et al., 2002; Fiske et al., 2007), individuals are biased towards assessing their ingroups as being high in both competence and morality/warmth. In our ancestral past, it has been argued, morality functioned to enable individuals within groups to cooperate with each other, thereby increasing their survival chances (e.g., Hamilton, 1964; Nowak & Sigmund, 1998; Trivers, 1971). But unless members of the group are performing competently, survival chances will be low. It therefore follows, I would suggest, that cooperating

in ingroup-beneficial actions being performed competently is more adaptive than either (a) acting competently on one's own, or (b) acting cooperatively but incompetently. If individuals exhibit high morality/warmth but low competence, their lack of competence undermines their ability to cooperate effectively. In this way, competence and morality intertwine in their adaptive functions.

If this is the case, and competent performance *enhances the benefits of group cooperation*, then might it be the case that competent performance could affect the assessment of actor morality in situations in which the acts being performed are in some way ingroup-beneficial, i.e. if they function to enhance group solidarity, or provide benefits to the ingroup at the expense of outgroup members?

The experiments detailed in this chapter were designed to evaluate the role of competent performance on assessment of actor morality in situations involving morally ambiguous actions which pit group-level moral norms (adherence to which, by definition, contribute to group cohesion) against competing generic-level moral norms. Conforming to social norms (Asch, 1951; Haney, Banks, & Zimbardo, 1973; Milgram, 1963; Tajfel, 1982), and a propensity to prioritize the interests of the ingroup at the expense of those of outgroups (Wildschut, Insko, & Gaertner, 2002; Effron & Knowles, 2015) are, of course, well-established psychological phenomena. These two phenomena can interact when group-level norms conflict with generic-level norms.

For example, a group-level norm requiring gang members to engage in violent behaviours would be in conflict with generic-level norms forbidding causing harm to others (Killen, Rutland, Abrams, Mulvey, & Hitti, 2012). Humans are biased towards conforming to the norms of valued ingroups (e.g., Sripada & Stich,

2006; O'Gorman et al., 2008; Richerson & Henrich, 2012), and show greater empathy towards ingroup members than towards outgroup members, experiencing more distress (negative feedback) when harm is done to ingroup members (Cikara, et al., 2011; Chiao & Mathur, 2010; Cikara, et al., 2010; Mathur et al., 2010). Positive feedback resulting from competently complying with group-based norms could therefore, to some degree, be expected to offset negative feedback resulting from transgressing generic-level moral norms, especially if the targets of the generic-level transgressions were categorized as outgroup members.

I therefore predicted that influence of competent performance on the assessment of actor morality would exhibit when individuals and ingroup members were targeting outgroup members and/or conforming to group-level norms. Conversely, I also predicted that this phenomenon would not occur when assessing the morality of outgroup members targeting ingroup members.

Hypothesis 1: When assessing morality from a first-person perspective, individuals performing actions which produce morally problematic results but which require high levels of competence will assess their morality as higher if they perform competently than if they perform the same actions incompetently if (a) the behaviors conform to ingroup social norms, or (b) the victim is an outgroup member.

Hypothesis 2: (a) When presented with ingroup members victimizing outgroup members while performing morally problematic actions requiring high levels of competence, participants will assess the ingroup members' morality as higher when they perform the actions competently as opposed to incompetently; but (b) when presented with outgroup members victimizing ingroup members while performing morally problematic actions requiring high levels of competence,

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participants will not assess the outgroup members' morality as higher when they perform competently as opposed to incompetently.

Cognitive Dissonance: a mediating factor?

Cognitive dissonance can be triggered when an individual's positive self-image is threatened (Steele & Liu, 1983; Spencer, Josephs, & Steele, 1993; Heine & Lehman, 1997). Therefore, when a person performs an action producing results which they consider to be morally problematic, this could be expected to threaten that person's positive *moral* self–image and produce cognitive dissonance. But I would suggest that if the action in question involves performing a challenging task skilfully, then performing this task competently might also be expected to improve a person's positive *competent* self-image. This might be sufficient to reduce the cognitive dissonance resulting from the threat to the actor's positive *moral* self-identity. With dissonance reduced, perception of actor morality might increase as a result of an affective cue in which 'lower level of cognitive dissonance' = 'less distress.' In other words, if cognitive dissonance is lower, then one must not be feeling such great moral distress. If this were the case, then cognitive dissonance could be a mediating factor in the competence/morality dynamic, regardless of whether competence is considered to be distinct from morality (Explanation 1 above), or more closely related to morality (Explanation 2 above).

Hypothesis 3: Where competence has been shown to influence assessment of self or ingroup actor morality, cognitive dissonance will mediate this effect.

Although as discussed earlier, humans have a propensity to favor perceived ingroup members over perceived outgroup members (Wildschut et al., 2002; Effron & Knowles, 2015), the degree to which individuals identify as group members has

been shown to vary according to political ideology. Numerous studies indicate that conservatives are more conformist than liberals (e.g. Jost, Nosek, & Gosling, 2008; Sistrunk & Halcomb, 2013), and that conservatives also identify more strongly as members of collectives while liberals are more universalist (e.g., Haidt, 2012). I would therefore predict that when observing ingroup members performing morally problematic actions, conservatives, who strongly identify with the ingroup, would assess ingroup members as higher in morality than would more liberal individuals, even if the outgroup members are categorized as allies rather than as enemies.

Hypothesis 4: When presented with national ingroup members victimizing an allied national outgroup, conservatives will assess the ingroup members' actions as more moral than will liberals.

6.4 Overview of the Experimental Design

I tested these predictions using two online experiments conducted via the Midgam Project, which provides infrastructure and participant panels for online psychology research within Israel. These studies formed part of a larger research project into moral judgment being conducted in Israel with Jewish Israeli participants. The experiments were conducted in Hebrew.

Experiment 1 was a 2x4 between-subjects design, and tested hypotheses 1a, 1b and 3, relating to the influence of competent performance on judgment of the morality of an individual's own actions. I asked participants to identify with the main character in one of four scenarios about a competent or incompetent counterfeiter attempting to cash a fake cheque. After reading the scenario, participants assessed their levels of cognitive dissonance, competence and morality.

Experiment 2 was a 2x2 between-subjects design, and tested hypotheses 2a, 2b, 3, and 4, relating to the influence of competent performance on judgment of ingroup vs. outgroup actors' morality, and the role of cognitive dissonance in this dynamic. In these studies participants read a scenario describing a team of competent or incompetent spies planting a surveillance device in the office of an ambassador from a foreign but allied country. After reading the scenario, participants assessed the competence and morality of the spies.

In Experiment 1 the counterfeiter was successful whether or not s/he was competent, and in Experiment 2 the bugging device was eventually discovered whether or not the spies were competent. In Experiment 2 it was necessary for the surveillance device to be discovered in order to provide a reason for international criticism which threatened the ingroup nation's reputation. By ensuring that the outcomes of both the counterfeiter scenarios and the spying scenarios were the same between the competent and incompetent conditions, the experimental designs eliminated potential differences in emotional response resulting from the phenomenon of "cheater's high" (Reedy, Moore, Gino, & Schweitzer, 2013).

6.5 Experiment 1: Competent or Incompetent Counterfeiter

Method and Participants

I recruited 804 Jewish Israeli participants via the Midgam Project to participate in an online experiment for a payment of 8 shekels (US$2.19) each. Participants who failed a test question checking that participants were paying attention and giving valid responses were excluded from the experiment before completing the survey. Their places were taken by other potential participants who went through the same testing procedure until all places were filled. During the analysis process I excluded

two participants from the Lone Actor conditions whose answers in the feelings thermometer section of the experiment were all listed as "1" and who stated that they had not been able to identify with the main character. Due to the iterative nature of the design process, scenarios 1 and 2 were conducted separately from scenarios 3 and 4. The recruitment process ensured that selection of participants in both tranches of the research was conducted identically, and that there was no duplication of participants within experiments.

The competence/morality dynamic was predicted to occur regardless of political orientation. However, as differences along the liberal-conservative continuum were being tested for in Experiment 2, I also decided to test for differences in Experiment 1. In order to ensure roughly equal numbers of participants of different political categories, I created four identical versions of an online survey with Qualtrics, with one each for politically left wing, center-left, center-right, and right wing participants. The Midgam Project then recruited equal numbers of male and female participants from each of these political categories based on their self-reported most recent voting behaviors, and sent them to the appropriate Qualtrics link. Experimental conditions were randomly allocated. The data from each of the four Qualtrics links was then collated into one data file. The demographic breakdown for participants in all four scenarios is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Demographics for Experiment 1

Scenario	Participants (n)	Gender (%) Male	Age (%) 18-24	25-32	33-40	41+	Political Category (%) Left Wing	Centre Left	Centre Right	Right Wing
1	203	48.3	19.2	36	23.2	21.7	24.6	27.6	23.2	24.6
2	203	43.8	23.2	37.9	15.8	23.2	26.6	23.2	24.6	25.6
3	192	50.0	15.6	45.8	25.5	13	25.0	23.4	26.6	25.0
4	198	49.5	17.9	44.4	19.4	18.4	23.7	27.8	23.7	24.7

All texts and materials were translated from English into Hebrew and then back-translated by two native Hebrew speaking translators also fluent in English. The lead author discussed ambiguities in the back-translation with the two translators and with the Midgam Project before finalizing the Hebrew translations.

Procedure. I instructed participants that they would be taking part in a research project looking at individuals' reactions to narratives written from different points of view. The participants were then directed, "Please read the following story, imagining that you are the main character."

Participants then read one of the four versions of a scenario written in the 2nd-person in which the main character, either a competent or incompetent counterfeiter, walks into a shop and attempts to cash a fraudulent cheque which they have produced. Participants were asked to imagine themselves as this character while reading the scenario. In the competent condition, the main character is described as being highly skilled, and the cheque is described as being of high quality. In the incompetent condition, the cheque is described as being of poor quality, and the main character is described as lacking in skill. In both conditions, the main character

is successful in passing the forged cheque, but in the incompetent condition this is presented as due to luck rather than to skill. Therefore there is no difference in outcome between the competent and incompetent conditions; the only difference is in the level of competence of the main character.

There were four variations of the experimental scenario. Scenario 1 (Lone Actor/Home Country): the counterfeiter was portrayed as acting alone and committing the fraud in West Jerusalem, a predominantly Jewish area which would be perceived as ingroup space by the Jewish Israeli participants. Scenario 2 (Social Norms/Home Country): the counterfeiter was portrayed as conforming to the social norms of his/her family, and committing the fraud in West Jerusalem, defrauding ingroup members. In the third scenario (Lone Actor/Foreign Country) the counterfeiter was acting alone, and committing the fraud in the USA, a foreign but allied country, thereby defrauding outgroup members. I specifically chose an allied national outgroup in scenarios 3 and 4 as we were interested in participants' responses towards outgroups per se, and not specifically towards enemy outgroups. In the fourth scenario (Social Norms/Foreign Country), the counterfeiter was conforming to the social norms of his/her family, and committing the fraud in the USA, thereby defrauding outgroup members. See Appendix 1 for scenario scripts.

This experiment induced cognitive dissonance through the use of 2nd-person scenarios in which participants are instructed to imagine themselves as the main character in the story. This design draws on findings from the growing corpus of literature in cognitive psychology, media psychology, and communications on identification of readers with fictional characters, which has established that readers experience affective reactions (Cohen, 2001; Igartua, 2010; Konijn & Hoorn, 2005), and specifically, cognitive dissonance (Caracciolo, 2013), in response to characters'

situations.

Measures. Participants were asked to fill in a feelings thermometer with a 7-point Likert-type scale. The instructions read:

> Below are words that describe different types of feelings. Still imagining yourself as the main character in the story you have just read, please indicate how much each word describes how you are feeling right now by selecting a number on the scale. Don't spend much time thinking about each word, and *don't worry about how you think you should feel*, just give a quick, gut-level response about *how this particular telling of the story makes you feel right now*.

I phrased the second paragraph in this way to minimize social desirability bias: by putting the "blame" for the participants' feelings on the way that the story was written, rather than on themselves, I encouraged them to answer honestly rather than giving answers that they perceived to be socially desirable.

The feelings thermometer duplicated Elliot and Devine's (1994) cognitive dissonance scale, which tests for cognitive dissonance, but with the addition of four words relating to competence/incompetence (Capable, Skillful, Incompetent, Incapable) and four words relating to morality/immorality (Virtuous, Principled, Dishonorable, Unethical). Incompetent, Incapable, Dishonorable, and Unethical were reverse-scored. I selected these eight words during the piloting phase by testing 20 candidate words first with 10 colleagues from the UK who filled in a questionnaire designed to indicate the extent to which the words were understood as relating to competence, morality, both, or neither, and who also provided qualitative data in the form of discussions about their understandings of the words. I then ran

the questionnaire online with US participants (N = 30) via Mechanical Turk, and chose the eight words which scored the highest for relating either to competence/ incompetence or to morality/immorality. When these words were translated into Hebrew for the Israeli study, I tested that the meanings of the translated words were also clearly specific to either morality or competence with six native Hebrew speakers. Cronbach's alpha indicated reliability of feelings thermometer scales to be robust: Competence ($\alpha = .83$), Morality ($\alpha = .74$), Cognitive Dissonance ($\alpha = .85$).

Participants were then asked, still imagining themselves as the main character of the story, how responsible they felt for the success of the cheque fraud. Much of the literature on moral responsibility would suggest that the more causally responsible the participants felt with relation to the cheque fraud, the less moral they would consider themselves to be (e.g., Copp, 2006; Fischer, Kane, Pereboom, & Vargas, 2007). However, I predicted that influence of competence on the assessment of actor morality might undermine this correlation.

Participants were then instructed to answer—as themselves, rather than as identifying with the counterfeiter in the story—questions about their own personal beliefs regarding the morality of passing counterfeit cheques, and about whether they considered competent cheque forgers to be more moral than incompetent forgers. The final section of the experiment was a demographics questionnaire.

Experiment 1 Results

Manipulation check. T-tests confirmed that the counterfeiter was perceived as more competent in the competent condition ($M = 5.09$, $SD = 1.24$) than in the incompetent condition ($M = 4.21$, $SD = 1.10$) $t(794) = 10.68$, $p < .001$, 95% CI [0.72, 1.05], $d = 0.75$.

Hypothesis 1 predicted that morality would be higher in the competent than in the incompetent conditions when (a) conforming to social norms, or (b) targeting outgroup victims. I therefore first tested whether scenarios 2-4 (involving conforming to social norms and/or targeting outgroup victims) could be grouped together for analysis contrasting them against scenario 1. A univariate ANOVA with morality as the dependent factor and condition (competent and incompetent) and scenario (2-4 only) as the independent factors indicated no significant main effect for scenario $F(2, 587) = 1.77$, $p = .172$, $\eta^2 = .006$, and no significant interaction effect for condition and scenario $F(2, 587) = 0.12$, $p = .883$, $\eta^2 = 0.0004$. Having confirmed that scenarios 2-4 could be grouped together for analysis, I then analyzed differences in assessment of morality in competent and incompetent conditions between scenario 1 (Lone Actor/Home Country, which did not involve social norms or outgroup victims) and scenarios 2-4 combined (all of which involved social norms and/or outgroup victims). A univariate ANOVA with morality as the dependent factor, and with condition (competent and incompetent) and scenario as the independent factors indicated a significant main effect of condition $F(1, 792) = 4.54$, $p = .033$, $\eta^2 = .006$ with morality higher in the competent condition ($M = 3.09$; $SD = 0.07$) than in the incompetent condition ($M = 2.87$; $SD = 0.07$) $d = 3.14$. There was no significant main effect of scenario $F(1, 792) = 0.29$, $p = .865$, $\eta^2 = .00004$. There was, however, a marginally significant interaction effect for condition and scenario $F(1, 792) = 3.20$, $p = .074$, $\eta^2 = .004$.

To unpack this interaction effect, I conducted T-tests analyzing the effect of condition on morality for each of the four scenarios. Scenario 1 (Lone Actor/Home Country): As predicted by hypotheses 1a and 1b, T-tests indicated no significant difference in assessment of morality in the competent condition ($M = 3.00$, $SD =$

1.27) compared with the incompetent condition ($M = 2.97$, $SD = 1.29$) $t(201) = 0.19$, $p = .85$, 95 % CI [-0.32, 0.39], $d = 0.03$. Scenario 2 (Social Norms/Home Country): As predicted by hypothesis 1a, assessment of morality was significantly higher in the competent condition ($M = 3.19$, $SD = 1.42$) than in the incompetent condition ($M = 2.83$, $SD = 1.08$) $t(201) = 2.05$, $p = .042$, 95 % CI [0.01, 0.71], $d = 0.29$. Scenario 3 (Lone Actor/Foreign Country): As predicted by hypothesis 1b, assessment of morality was significantly higher in the competent condition ($M = 3.24$, $SD = 1.15$) than in the incompetent condition ($M = 2.88$, $SD = 1.19$) $t(190) = 2.12$, $p = .036$, 95 % CI [0.02, 0.70], $d = 0.31$. Scenario 4 (Social Norms/Foreign Country): As predicted by hypotheses 1a and 1b, assessment of morality was significantly higher in the competent condition ($M = 3.07$, $SD = 1.29$) than in the incompetent condition ($M = 2.61$, $SD = 1.15$) $t(196) = 3.20$, $p = .008$, 95 % CI [0.12, 0.81], $d = 0.38$. The t-tests confirmed the predictions of hypotheses 1a and 1b that there was only a significant effect of condition (competent vs. incompetent) on morality when participants were conforming to social norms and/or targeting an outgroup victim. See Figure 6.1.

Figure 6.1: Influence of Competence on assessment of Actor Morality
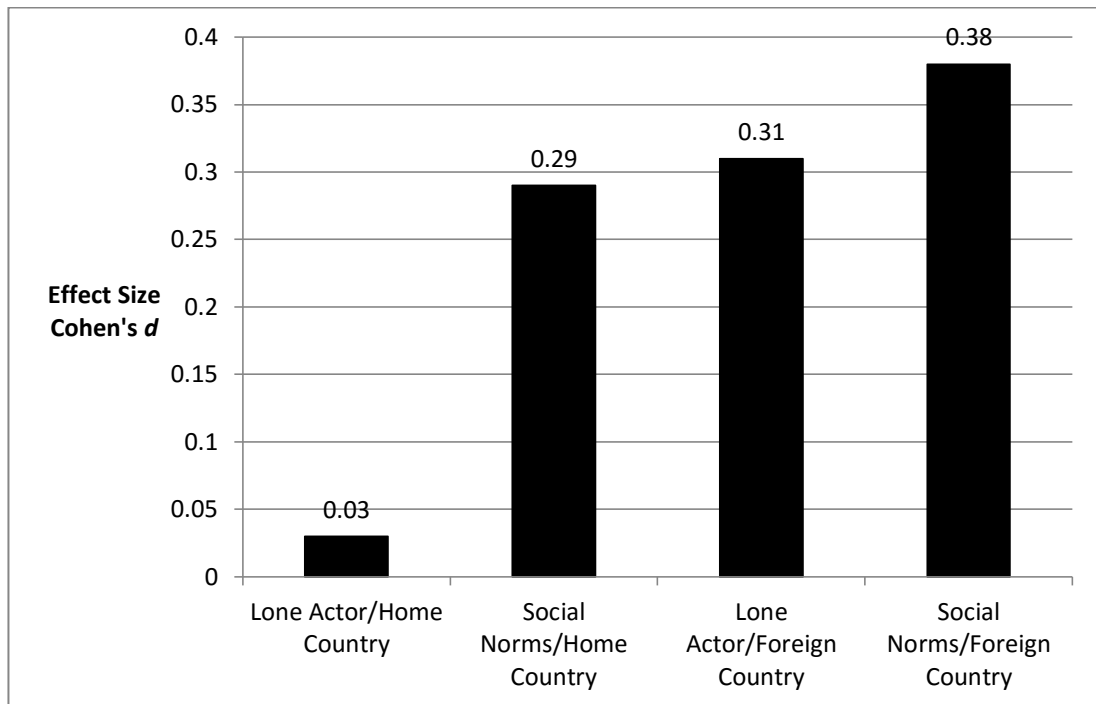
I further unpacked the statistically significant result for scenarios 2-4 combined by analyzing the effect of competence on assessment of actor morality across the political spectrum and by gender. A univariate ANOVA with morality as the dependent factor, and with condition (competent and incompetent) and political category as the independent factors indicated a marginally significant main effect of political category $F(3, 585) = 2.22$, $p = .084$, $\eta^2 = .011$, but with no clear pattern along the left-to-right political continuum (Left wing: $M = 3.09$, $SD = .10$; Centre left: $M = 2.93$, $SD = .10$, Centre right: $M = 3.08$, $SD = .10$; Right wing: $M = 2.78$, $SD = .10$) and no significant interaction effect for condition and political category $F(3, 585) = 0.823$, $p = .482$, $\eta^2 = .004$. A univariate ANOVA with morality as the dependent factor, and with condition (competent and incompetent) and gender as the independent factors indicated a marginally significant main effect of gender $F(1, 589) = 3.52$, $p = .061$, $\eta^2 = .006$, with assessment of actor morality higher for males ($M = 3.07$, $SD = 2.93$,) than females ($M = 2.88$, $SD = .07$) but no significant

interaction effect for condition and gender $F(1, 589) = 0.001$, $p = .973$, $\eta^2 = .000002$.

Hypothesis 3 predicted that cognitive dissonance would function as a mediator between competence and assessment of morality. This prediction was met. I conducted a simple mediation analysis on scenarios 2-4 combined using ordinary least squares path analysis. As can be seen in Figure 6.2, participants in the incompetent conditions reported experiencing greater cognitive dissonance than did those in the competent conditions ($a = -0.362$, $p<.001$), and participants who experienced greater cognitive dissonance assessed their morality as lower than did those experiencing less cognitive dissonance ($b = -0.361$, $p < .001$). The direct effect of competence on assessment of morality was significant ($c' = -0.228$, $p<.001.$). However, the results range of a bias-corrected bootstrap confidence interval for the indirect effect ($ab = 0.131$) based on 50,000 bootstrap samples did not include a value of zero (0.093 to 0.174), meaning that there was an indirect effect of cognitive dissonance on assessment of morality. Analysis of bivariate correlations confirmed significant negative correlation between competence and cognitive dissonance $r(593) = -.274$, $p < .001$, and significant negative correlation between cognitive dissonance and assessment of morality $r(593) = -.514$, $p < .001$.

Figure 6.2: Mediating effect of Cognitive Dissonance on influence of Competence on assessment of Actor Morality
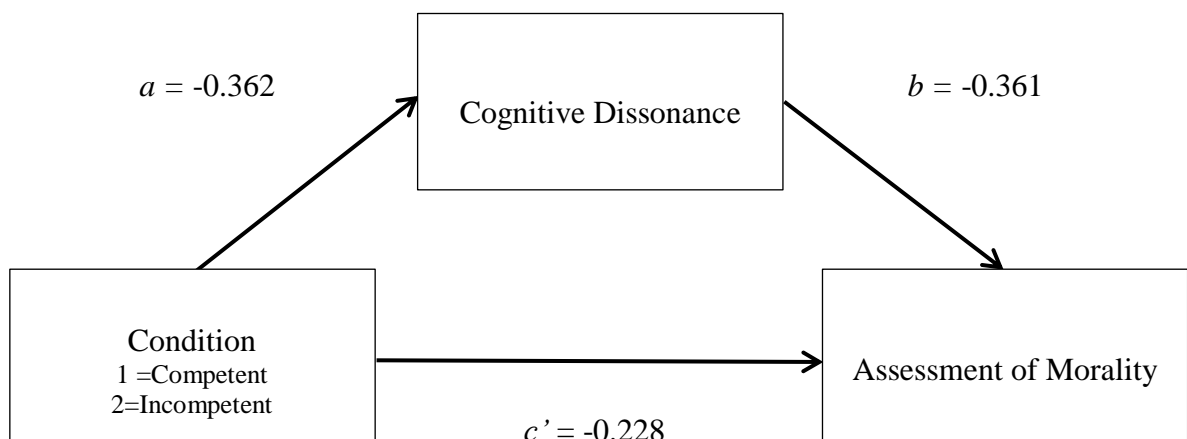
Across all four scenarios, when participants were asked for their own personal views on whether they considered cheque fraud to be immoral (rated on a scale from 1 to 7, with 1 = disagree completely, and 7 = agree completely), they gave high scores ($M = 6.68$, $SD = 0.94$). When asked if they considered a skilled counterfeiter to be more moral than an unskilled counterfeiter, participants gave low scores ($M = 1.51$, $SD = 1.27$).

T-tests indicated significant differences across all scenarios between the competent and incompetent conditions regarding how responsible participants felt that their character in the story was for the success of the cheque fraud, with participants in the competent condition rating their character as more responsible for the success ($M = 5.46$, $SD = 1.74$) than those in the incompetent condition ($M = 4.40$, $SD = 1.98$); $t(791) = 7.98$, p $<.001$, 95% CI [0.80, 1.31], $d = 0.57$.

Experiment 1 summary

This experiment tested for influence of competence on individuals' assessment of their own morality, and for a mediating effect of cognitive dissonance, when they were presented as following social norms, and/or victimizing outgroup members. Hypotheses 1a and 1b were supported. Competence significantly influenced assessment of morality when participants were conforming to social norms and/or targeting outgroup members, but not when acting on their own and targeting ingroup members. This contradicted participants' explicitly stated beliefs that competent counterfeiters were not more moral than incompetent counterfeiters. Hypothesis 3 was also supported. Cognitive dissonance was identified as a mediating factor between competent performance and assessment of morality. This was hypothesized

as occurring due to the need to reduce cognitive dissonance arising as a result of the morally problematic action posing a threat to a positive moral self-perception, with competent performance mitigating this threat by increasing the actor's positive competent self-perception.

6.6 Experiment 2: Competent and Incompetent International Spies

Method and Participants

Participants were recruited using the same methods as detailed in Experiment 1. There were 409 participants with completed surveys. Eleven survey responses were excluded due to missing values. Thus, the total number of surveys analyzed was n=398. The demographic breakdown is shown in Table 6.2.

Table 6.2: Demographics for Experiment 2

	Participants (n)	Gender (%)	Age (%)				Political Category (%)			
		Male	18-24	25-32	33-40	41+	Left Wing	Centre Left	Centre Right	Right Wing
Scenario										
1	196	45.9	16.9	46.7	17.4	19.0	24.5	27.0	25.0	23.5
2	202	50.0	16.3	28.7	22.3	32.7	21.3	26.7	22.8	26.2

Procedure: Participants were presented with a scenario written in the 3rd-person about a team of competent or incompetent international spies attempting to place a surveillance device in the office of the ambassador from an allied country. After reading the scenario, participants assessed their own cognitive dissonance, and

how competent and moral they perceived the spies to be using a 7 point Likert-type scale, and answered questions about how responsible the spies were for the outcome of the mission, about their beliefs regarding the morality of spying, and whether they considered competent spies to be more moral than incompetent spies. Finally, they completed a demographics questionnaire.

There were two variations of the experimental scenario. Scenario 1 (Ingroup Spies): the spies were from the participants' country (Israel) and were spying on an allied country (Micronesia) which was not powerful enough to pose any threat to the ingroup nation. I specifically chose an allied national outgroup as I was interested in participants' responses towards outgroups per se, and not specifically towards outgroups perceived as threatening. Scenario 2 (Outgroup Spies): the spies were from Micronesia and were spying on Israel. Regardless of whether the spies were presented as competent or incompetent, the surveillance device they planted was eventually discovered, resulting in international disapproval towards the spying country. See Appendix 5 for scenario scripts.

Experiment 2 Results

Manipulation check. T-tests confirmed that the spies were perceived as more competent in the competent condition ($M = 5.47$, $SD = 1.30$) than in the incompetent condition ($M = 2.96$, $SD = 1.38$); $t(396) = 18.69$, $p < .001$, 95% CI [2.25, 2.78], $d = 1.87$.

The predictions of hypotheses 2a and 2b, that participants' assessments of morality would be higher in the competent condition when judging the ingroup actors, but not when judging the outgroup actors, were met. T-tests confirmed that when judging the morality of their own nation's spies, participants assessed morality

as higher in the competent condition ($M = 4.71$, $SD = 1.30$) than in the incompetent condition ($M = 3.55$, $SD = 1.35$); $t(194) = 6.16$, $p<.001$, 95% CI [0.79, 1.54], $d = 0.88$.   Analysis of bivariate correlation confirmed positive correlation between incompetent performance and assessment of morality $r(196) = .673$, $p<.001$.   But when judging the spies from the foreign country there was no significant difference in assessment of morality between the competent condition ($M = 3.16$, $SD = 1.32$) and the incompetent condition ($M = 2.89$, $SD = 1.08$); $t(200) = 1.59$, $p = .113$, 95% CI [0.06, 0.60], $d = 0.22$. Analysis of bivariate correlation indicated no significant correlation between incompetent performance and assessment of morality $r(202) = .319$, $p<.001$.

The prediction of hypothesis 3, that cognitive dissonance would mediate the influence of competent performance on assessment of the morality of the ingroup spies was not met. I conducted a simple mediation analysis using ordinary least squares path analysis. Contrary to my predictions, this indicated that participants in the incompetent conditions did not report experiencing greater cognitive dissonance than those in the competent conditions ($a = -0.046$, $p = .491$). However, participants who did report experiencing greater cognitive dissonance assessed actor morality as lower than those experiencing less cognitive dissonance ($b = -0.101$, $p = .029$), and the direct effect of competence on assessment of morality was significant ($c' = 0.548$, $p<.001$).

The prediction of hypothesis 4, that when presented with national ingroup members victimizing an allied national outgroup, conservatives would assess the ingroup members' actions as more moral than would liberals, was met. A univariate ANOVA with morality as the dependent factor, and with condition (competent and incompetent) and political category as the independent factors indicated a significant

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main effect of political category $F(3, 188) = 6.839$, $p<.001$, $\eta^2 = .081$, but no significant interaction effect for condition and political category $F(3, 188) = 1.435$, $p = .234$, $\eta^2 = .017$. Figure 6.3 confirms that assessment of morality was higher for right-wing, conservative participants than for more liberal participants.[29]

When all participants were asked for their own personal views on whether they considered spying to be immoral (rated on a scale from 1 to 7, with 1 = disagree completely, and 7 = agree completely), they gave medium scores ($M = 3.75$, $SD = 1.83$). When asked if they considered a skilled spy to be more moral than an unskilled spy, participants gave low scores ($M = 1.87$, $SD = 1.38$).

Figure 6.3: Assessment of Morality of Ingroup x Political Category

Error Bars: 95% CI
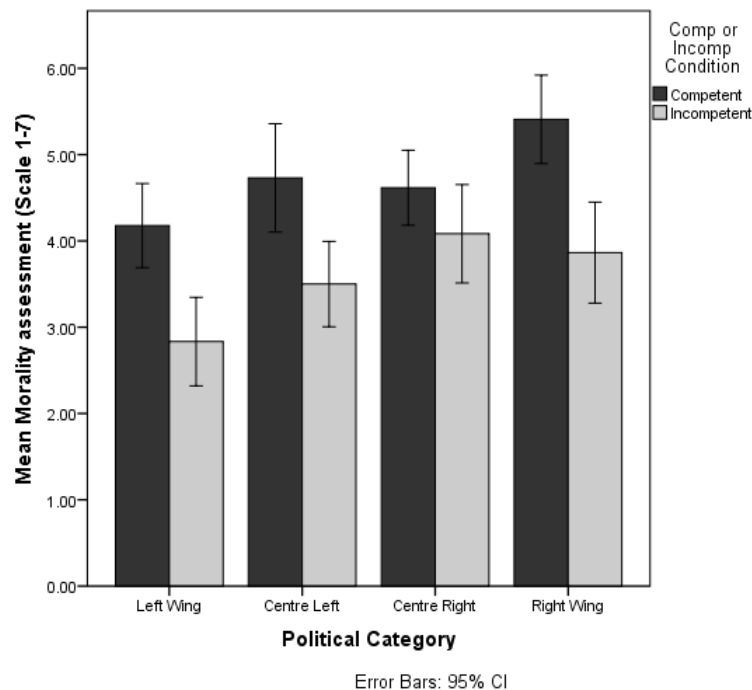
There were significant differences between the competent and incompetent conditions regarding how responsible participants felt that the spies were for the

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[29] In Israel there is a direct correspondence between the political left-right and the liberal-conservative spectrum as defined by Haidt and Joseph's (2006) moral foundations theory (see Chapter 5).

failure of the mission. Participants in the competent condition rated the spies as less responsible for the failure ($M = 3.43$, $SD = 1.91$) than those in the incompetent condition ($M = 5.17$, $SD = 1.84$); $t(395) = -9.244$, p < .001, 95% CI [-2.11, -1.37], $d = -0.93$.

Experiment 2 summary

Spies from either the national ingroup or from a foreign outgroup were presented as spying on an allied country. The results supported hypotheses 2a and 2b, which predicted that assessment of the morality would be higher in the competent condition when judging the ingroup spies, but not when judging the outgroup spies. The influence of competent performance on assessment of actor morality when judging the ingroup spies contradicted the participants' explicitly stated beliefs that competent spies are not more moral than incompetent spies. The prediction of hypothesis 4, that when judging the ingroup spies conservative participants would assess their morality as higher than did liberal participants, was also met.

The prediction that cognitive dissonance would have a mediating effect on the influence of competence on assessment of ingroup actor morality was not met. Analyses indicated that although, as predicted, there was an inverse relationship between self-reported cognitive dissonance and assessment of ingroup actor morality, the predicted corresponding inverse relationship between assessment of competence and self-reported cognitive dissonance did not materialise.

6.7 General Discussion

The findings on the influence of competent performance on assessment of actor morality from Experiments 1 and 2 were robust in revealing a novel inconsistency in

the way that the participants assessed morality. When judging their own morality in the counterfeiter scenarios (experiment 1), participants conforming to social norms and/or targeting outgroup members in the competent conditions assessed themselves as more moral than did participants in the incompetent conditions. Participants reading the spy scenarios (experiment 2), assessed the morality of the ingroup spies higher in the competent condition. This dynamic was in contrast to participants' explicitly stated beliefs that a competent counterfeiter or spy was not more moral than an incompetent counterfeiter or spy. This indicates inconsistency between the participants' introspection and of their actual moral judgment regarding the actors involved and suggests that competence and morality are only weakly orthogonal. But is the competence/ morality dynamic better understood as a cognitive bias in which actor competence inappropriately influences assessment of actor morality? Or as a useful heuristic incorporating information relevant to judgments of actor morality?

One argument in support of categorizing the competence/morality dynamic as a useful heuristic which influences assessment of actor morality in an appropriate way could be presented as follows. Competent performance, even in morally problematic actions, reduces the possibility that the actions will lead to harmful consequences befalling the ingroup. An incompetent actor increases the probability of such harmful consequences occurring, and because of this, even if the incompetent and competent actors have the same motivations and achieve the same results, the incompetent actor would be deemed as less moral than the competent actor. By putting the ingroup at greater risk, the incompetent actor is perceived as less moral than the competent actor not only because of the specific risk related to

the actions in question, but also because of the potential the incompetent actor has for bringing further harm to the ingroup in the future (see Railton, 2014).

This is a compelling argument, but I would suggest that one must ask whether putting the ingroup at risk is necessarily immoral. For example, in Experiment 1, it could be argued that even though they were successful, the incompetent counterfeiters put their families at greater risk of harmful repercussions than did the competent counterfeiters. An increased risk of criminal prosecution would certainly be considered harmful by the ingroup of the counterfeiter's family, but does this make it immoral? Or does this merely indicate self-interest? Is it immoral for criminal actions to be prosecuted? If we argue this, then we would be saying that any actions (such as incompetent performance) which increase the risk for people who are transgressing the laws and social norms of wider society getting caught and punished are necessarily immoral.

These experiments were designed to test whether competent performance of ingroup-profitable actions considered by the actors to be morally problematic resulted in them assessing themselves or their ingroup members to be more moral than if they performed the same actions incompetently. I would agree that there are situations in which incompetent performance increases risks in a way which might reasonably be perceived as immoral (see Railton's (2014) analysis of Haidt et al.'s (2000) incestuous siblings scenario). But my experiments indicate that competent performance can also lead to a higher assessment of actor morality in situations in which competent actors reduce the risk of consequences to the ingroup which, although harmful, also conform to generic-level moral norms which are recognized by the actors. For this reason, I would argue that the competence/morality dynamic is better understood as a cognitive bias.

While the findings for the existence of the competence/morality bias were robust, the predictions relating to cognitive dissonance as a mediating factor were, at best, mixed. In Experiment 1, where participants imagined themselves as a competent or incompetent counterfeiter, cognitive dissonance was found to be a mediating factor. However, in Experiment 2, where participants read a 3rd person scenario about their national ingroup spying on a friendly ally, cognitive dissonance was not found to mediate the competence/morality dynamic. Why might this be? Several explanations suggest themselves at this point. First, cognitive dissonance may have occurred in the predicted manner in both experiments, but may simply have been more acute in Experiment 1, where participants imagined themselves as the actor, and where the action in question was deemed more morally problematic, than in the 3rd person scenarios of Experiment 2. If this is the case then the design of the experiments may have been too blunt an instrument to accurately identify the role of cognitive dissonance in reaction to a 3rd person scenario. Second, the results of Experiment 1 may have been a false positive, and cognitive dissonance may not, in fact, mediate the competence/morality dynamic. Third, it may be the case that although a mediating effect was correctly identified in Experiment 1, the role of cognitive dissonance is not necessary for the competence/morality dynamic to exhibit. Cognitive dissonance may mediate in the predicted way in some situations but not in others. There is clearly scope for further research to clarify the role, if any, of cognitive dissonance in relation to the competence/morality dynamic.

With respect to my interpretation of the competence/morality dynamic as indicating cognitive bias which, to date, has not appeared in the literature, some might suggest that this might instead indicate a specific variation of Thorndike's (1920) halo effect. The halo effect is a type of confirmation bias by which

individuals tend to translate positive feelings about one aspect of a person into positive assessments of other unrelated aspects, or of the person as a whole. However, if my experiments were simply revealing evidence of the halo effect, then the influence of competence should have been present in all of the experimental scenarios. It was not. Competence only influenced assessment of morality when dynamics involving conforming to social norms or targeting outgroup members were present. Therefore, I would argue that my results suggest the presence of a distinct cognitive bias.

It is worth noting that these experiments tested for influence of competent performance on the assessment of actor morality involving task-relevant competences. It would be interesting in future research to test whether this bias also occurs in the presence of task-irrelevant competences. And the counterintuitive finding that in the competent conditions participants judged ingroup actors to be both (a) more moral, and (b) more causally responsible for the success of an action which participants considered morally problematic, would be an interesting subject for philosophers interested in questions of moral responsibility and agency. Interestingly, although in the literatures addressing morality and responsibility much has been written about free will, agency, and moral luck (see for example, Strawson, 1994; Pereboom 2001; Fischer et al., 2007; Williams, 1981) I have found nothing to date that directly addresses this issue.

Another direction for future research concerns determining whether or not influence of competence on the assessment of actor morality is universal, and how and to what extent this may be affected by specific cultural factors. It would be interesting to conduct controlled cross-cultural studies in order to gain insight into how influence of competence on the assessment of actor morality varies between

specific cultures, for example contrasting differences in this effect between individualistic cultures such as that of the US, and cultures which put a greater emphasis on collectivity, such as Japan. It would also be useful to run experiments in which situational factors were manipulated in order to understand how particular cultural cues can either encourage or discourage this bias.

Greater understanding of situational factors which might encourage influence of competent performance on the assessment of actor morality could also make a useful contribution to the field of institutional ethics. An important topic of research in this field relates to the conditions that lead employees to speak up when confronted with unethical behavior in the workplace (Morrison & Milliken, 2003). Organizations which seek to reduce corruption would benefit from understanding how this cognitive bias might contribute to assuaging the moral qualms of employees when faced with immoral but competent behaviors, and therefore make them less likely to voice their concerns. A useful future research question could therefore address whether reward structures that focus exclusively on competence-based criteria (leaving the institution's ethical goals safely ring-fenced within the mission statement) might be contributory factors to creating cultures in which corruption is tolerated.

With respect to experimental design, it would be interesting to construct experiments where instead of reading scenarios and imagining themselves as the characters, participants were actually performing actions competently or incompetently. It would also be useful to move beyond self-report measures by, for instance, working with neuroscientists in order to examine what happens within the brain itself when individuals make assessments of morality relating to competent or incompetent behaviors. Recent advances in imaging technology such as fMRI have

facilitated investigations into brain activity associated with processes of emotion and controlled cognition implicated in moral judgment (e.g. Greene et al. 2008; Greene et al. 2004) and in attitudes towards outgroups (Bruneau, Dufour, and Saxe, 2012; Bruneau and Saxe, 2010). As the cognitive processes we recruit to make moral evaluations are likely to be complex, and could potentially involve reward bases systems (striatum/basal-ganglia) as well as executive functioning (pre-frontal cortex) and conflict detection (ACC), using fMRI techniques to carry out localization studies could provide useful insights into the suite of processes that are involved in the influence of competence on the assessment of actor morality when forming moral evaluations of specific situations.

6.8 Conclusion

As individuals and as members of collectives, people are responsible for making moral judgments about decisions and behaviors. But my research has suggested that moral reasoning can be affected by a cognitive bias which can result in competent performance affecting assessments of actor morality. If we wish to avoid such bias, then we would do well to be aware of this tendency when making moral judgments, especially when in cultures which put a high premium on competence. In the following chapter I analyse how the separate elements identified in the thesis as contributing to moral judgment form a cohesive whole in addressing the primary aim of this research: to better understand dynamics of mora judgment affecting Jewish Israelis conscripted into military service within the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

7   Discussion and Conclusion

7.1 Overview of the chapter

In the Introduction chapter I described the overarching aim of this thesis as involving distinct but interrelated goals, the achievement of which would involve a dialogue between the universal and the particular. The primary goal of the research was to better understand moral judgment by Jewish Israeli reserve soldiers and conscientious objectors within the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This was to be achieved by (a) engaging with theories of morality and of ingroup-outgroup relations in such a way that the universalist theories and the culturally specific particulars relating to military service in Israel would effectively interrogate and illuminate each other; and (b) engaging with moral philosophy, specifically with a person-centred approach to moral judgment grounded in virtue ethics, in order to provide an appropriate framework through which to understand how individuals make sense of the behaviours of themselves and of perceived ingroup members when engaging with moral dilemmas relating to long-standing conflict.

Chapters 3 through 6 described separate studies which, cumulatively, served to construct a dialogue between the universal and the particular in order to address these goals. Table 7.1 provides a summary of how each chapter contributes to this dialogue. I then unpack how engagement between the culturally specific ethnographic data and the key universalist theories employed resulted in identifying specific elements involved in processes of moral judgment relating to intergroup dynamics. This leads into analysis of how the individual elements involved in moral judgment form a cohesive whole in addressing the first aim of the thesis: to better understand dynamics of moral judgment for Jewish Israelis called upon to participate

in military service within the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. And finally,

there is a discussion of limitations and areas for future research, and a concluding

section highlighting the key original empirical and theoretical contributions of the

research.

Table 7.1: How each phase of the research engages with the Particular and the Universal

Chapter 3: "Us," "Them," and *Hamatzav*	This chapter took an idiographic approach, focusing on the particular context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and applying interpretative phenomenological analysis to interview data in order to understand how Jewish Israeli individuals understood concepts relating to group identity and to the nature of the ongoing conflict with the Palestinians.
Chapter 4: Selective Fairness in Intergroup Dynamics	This chapter engaged both the universal and the particular by applying a universalist theory (moral foundations theory) to analysis of interview data focusing on the particular context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and using the findings from analysis of the interview data to critique this universalist theory. Specifically, by critiquing(a) the inclusion of justice within moral foundation theory's conception of fairness, and (b) the structure of moral foundations theory with respect to the Fairness and Loyalty foundations.
Chapter 5: Narratives of competence and morality in Israeli Nationalist Discourse	This chapter focused primarily on the particular by (a) analysing nationalist narratives particular to Israel which incorporate competence and morality, and (b) applying embodied discourse analysis to unpack how the resulting nationalist discourse was embodied within the particular context of military service in the IDF. However, this analysis suggested the possibility of a hypothesized to be universal cognitive bias by which competent performance influences assessment of actor morality, which was tested for in the following chapter.
Chapter 6: Being Good at Being Bad	This chapter engaged with a person-centred approach to moral judgment grounded in a virtue ethics tradition. It described a nomothetic approach using an experimental protocol to test for the presence of the aforementioned hypothesized to be universal cognitive bias. Again, the possibility of the existence of the proposed cognitive bias was suggested by analysis of interview data, in other words, it originated during an idiographic phase of the research focusing on the particular context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

7.2 Identifying Specific Elements Involved in Moral Judgment

Seeking to better understand how universal cognitive processes which we all share as humans affect, and are affected by, the particulars of specific cultural contexts—in the present case with respect to moral judgment within a context of seemingly intractable conflict—is at the heart of the research interests underpinning this thesis. To that end, I have integrated studies which address cognitive processes which affect individuals' moral judgment and which are hypothesized to be universal, with fine-grained analysis of Jewish Israeli individuals' experiences relating to military service within the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The analysis has engaged with a person-centred approach to moral judgment in order to better understand how individuals assess the morality of themselves and of perceived ingroup members when engaged in morally problematic actions. The following sections detail how this approach has identified specific elements relating to moral judgment relevant to the context of military service in Israel, and the implications of these findings for structural and normative aspects of the theories involved.

7.2.1 Culturally Specific Factors Relating to Identity

Analysis of interview data with 40 Jewish Israeli reserve soldiers and conscientious objectors revealed that far from one homogenously perceived Jewish Israeli ingroup, perceptions of Jewish identity not only significantly varied, but were also actively contested between the religious and the secular, the liberal and the conservative, and between different ethnic groups. Whether Jewishness was perceived as primarily related to religion, ethnicity, or shared history and culture, was a question that the interviewees acknowledged as being a subject of frequent disagreement within Israel.

The interview data revealed that the further to the political right one travelled, the more essentialist was the concept of Jewishness. In contrast, those further to the left perceived Jewish identity as primarily socially constructed. Right wing interviewees described Jewishness in terms of genetic inheritance as well as in religious terms, and contrasted positive innate characteristics which they associated with Jewishness, for example high moral standards and superior intelligence, against negative innate characteristics which they attached to Arabs and Muslims, including aggressiveness and a childlike inability to make rational decisions.

This perception of essential differences between Arabs and Jews also influenced perceptions of Mizrahi and Sephardi Israelis, who hold a lower social status within Israel than do Ashkenazi Israelis, as they are considered to resemble Arabs ethnically and culturally (see Khazzoom, 2003; Shabi, 2008). Indeed, R1, who is ethnically Sephardi, politically right wing, and who described both Jewish and Arab/Muslim identities in terms of genetics and innateness, actively distanced himself from his Sephardi roots. He preferred to stress the "melting pot" analogy of the State of Israel, in which one's ethnic origins are subsumed within an overarching Jewish Israeli identity. R1 was keen to embrace an element of his identity which, within the socio-cultural context of modern Israel, was perceived as status-enhancing and which indicated that he belonged in the land of Israel. For R1, this meant distancing himself as much as possible from any notion that he might resemble or be expected to behave "like an Arab." Such a strategy of highlighting status-enhancing elements of identity while downplaying status-threatening aspects was also adopted by some individuals from recent immigrant groups to Israel whose Jewishness had been called into question.

The primacy in Israel of a strict orthodox definition of what it means to be Jewish has led to tensions not only between religious and secular Israelis but has also challenged the perceived Jewishness of immigrants from the former Soviet Union ("Russians") and from Ethiopia (Schwarz, 2001; Kravel-Tovi, 2012; Maltz, 2015). This was reflected in statements by some interviewees from these ethnic groups expressing their frustration at having their Jewishness questioned, for example Ethiopian Israelis whose families had suffered great hardships in making the journey to what they perceived as their religious homeland. In contrast, other interviewees proposed that they felt more Israeli than Jewish, and that their Israeli identity was of primary importance to them. As CR5 ("Russian") stated, "I really don't want to look at myself as not authentic Jew, I look myself as [authentic] Israeli." This echoes R1's strategy of choosing the most status-enhancing aspect of his identity and downplaying aspects which are seen as placing him lower in the social hierarchy. Crucially, for such individuals, performing military service functioned as a way of actively proving their Israeliness, thereby raising their status within society and reinforcing their perceived right to live in Israel.

Where identity was understood in concrete, unchangeable, deterministic terms, so too was *hamatzav*. If Jewish Israelis and Arabs/Muslims/Palestinians were seen as essentially different, with the Palestinians perceived as innately aggressive and violent, then continuation of the ongoing conflict was seen as inevitable, with "no partner for peace." Only containing or categorically defeating the Palestinians were put forward as viable options by the right wing and some of the centre right. For these interviewees Israel bore no responsibility for the current conflict and therefore had only limited agency regarding how they could respond to it: the Arabs were to blame and had brought Israeli reprisals upon themselves. The

left wing, in line with their view of identity as largely socially constructed, saw the conflict as amenable to change, and peace with the Palestinians as attainable. They perceived Israel as the actor with the most agency within the situation as Israel was militarily and economically more powerful. These two polarized views of the nature of the conflict were modified to varying degrees among the centrist interviewees.

Summary

There were clear differences, particularly between the secular left and the religious right, in whether identity was perceived as innate or as socially constructed. Such differences correlated with differing perceptions of the conflict with the Palestinians: the right wing perceived *hamatzav* ("the situation") as resulting from essential differences between Jews and Arabs which could never be fully overcome, while the left wing saw the ongoing conflict as reflecting situational factors which were socially constructed and therefore able to be changed. The right wing saw Israel as responding to a situation that had been forced upon them by the Arabs, while the left wing saw Israel in more agentic terms, as an actor whose actions had partly, or largely, created and sustained the conflict. In addition, for Ethiopian and Russian Israelis whose Jewishness was called into question, and also to some extent for Mizrahi and Sephardi Israelis who were perceived as culturally closer to Arabs than were Ashkenazi Israelis, military service functioned as a way of proving their Israeliness and of actively distancing themselves from inclusion with perceived outgroups.

Military service in the context of the ongoing conflict with the Palestinians, for many of the interviewees, as well as being perceived as necessary in order to protect the state of Israel from very real threats, played an important role in the

active performance of their Jewish/Israeli identity. But for non-Ashkenazi Israelis, including recent immigrant groups whose Jewishness had been questioned, the conflict also provided a means of reinforcing their claim to an ingroup identity which held practical as well as symbolic meaning for them. Serving in the military reinforced their perceived right as members of the Jewish/Israeli collective to live in Israel as members of the dominant elite.

These findings contribute to the literatures on ethnographies of Israel, ingroup-outgroup identities, liberal-conservative studies within social and political psychology, and on intergroup conflict. The differences identified along the liberal-conservative continuum within Israel with respect to the nature of group identity and subsequent differences in perceptions of prospects for a peaceful resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict were shown to have implications for moral judgment relating to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and specifically for differences in selective application of fairness with respect to the Palestinians. This is detailed in the following section.

7.2.2 Selective Fairness in Intergroup Dynamics: Treating "Us" Differently from "Them?"

This section of the research introduced one of the thesis' original empirical contributions: the identification of evidence of selective fairness in intergroup dynamics, as suggested by a moral foundations theory (MFT) analysis of the 40 semi-structured interviews. This analysis identified differences across the political spectrum in the Jewish Israeli interviewees' application of the Harm and Fairness moral foundations with respect to members of the perceived Palestinian outgroup. Individuals provided details of their experience of moral dilemmas relating to

military service within the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Analysis of this data suggested that, for these interviewees, the Ingroup Loyalty, Authority, and Sanctity/Purity moral foundations effectively functioned to restrict to whom the Harm and Fairness moral foundations were applied. The further one travelled to the right along the political continuum—which, as detailed in the previous section, corresponded with an increasing perception of Jewish Israeli and Palestinian Arab group identities as involving innate differences— more restrictive categories of Palestinians were cited in relation to moral dilemmas relating to military service.

Very left wing individuals opposed the military occupation of the Palestinian Territories on the grounds that, by definition, the occupation violated the Harm and Fairness moral foundations by treating the entire Palestinian population unfairly and causing them considerable harm. Crucially for this group of Israelis, the description of Israel as a democratic state (a Sacred Value for the left wing and centre left) was considered misleading because the over four million Palestinians living in the West Bank and Gaza were under the control of Israel, but had no voting privileges, and therefore no say in policies which directly affected them. For the left wing, such a situation did not constitute democracy. In contrast, the centre left interviewees, although describing some Harm and Fairness concerns relating to all of the Palestinians within Gaza and/or the West Bank[30], still perceived Israel as a democratic nation. Indeed, the centre left interviewees cited their duty as citizens of a democracy as a reason for performing military service in the West Bank and Gaza even though they disapproved of the military occupation on moral grounds. For the

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[30] Only one of the centre left interviewees limited their description of moral dilemmas relating to the conflict to specific segments of the population, rather than to the entire Gaza and/or West Bank population.

centre left, the Palestinians did not appear to trigger Harm and Fairness moral dilemmas with respect to democratic rights.

For the centre right and right wing only specific, and very limited, segments of the Palestinian population were cited has having triggered moral dilemmas. Particularly for the right wing, the Sacred Value of Jewish control over *Eretz Israel* (which includes the West Bank and Gaza within its perceived boundaries) took priority over that of Israel as a democratic state. Their strongest reported moral dilemmas related to threats to Jewish sovereignty over the land, such as being ordered to participate in the Disengagement from Gaza in 2005. Their moral concerns with respect to Harm and Fairness issues relating to the Palestinians were described as arising in response to incidents in which they were personally involved rather than from concerns about the Palestinian populations as a whole. For treatment of Palestinians to trigger moral dilemmas for these interviewees, it would appear that first-hand experience of emotionally-charged situations, such as witnessing mistreatment of children or of pregnant women, was required. The interview analysis suggests that greater reliance on the Ingroup Loyalty, Authority, and Sanctity/Purity moral foundations by conservative Israelis who view group differences as innate and unchangeable meant that they largely restricted the application of the Harm and Fairness moral foundations to people whom they considered to be members of their ingroup of Jewish Israelis.

This point has implications for the current structure of MFT with respect to the Fairness[31] and Ingroup Loyalty moral foundations. At present, these are described as two separate foundations, but I am suggesting that they would be better

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[31] In Chapter 4 I also critique the equation of fairness and justice within MFT, arguing that if MFT is to accurately describe elements of morality which include non-liberal non-western conceptualisations, then fairness and justice need to be treated separately.

understood as opposite points along a single continuum: at the Ingroup Loyalty extreme the Harm versus Care moral foundation would only be applied to those perceived as ingroup members, while at the Universal Fairness extreme the Harm versus Care moral foundation would be applied equally to all regardless of perceived ingroup-outgroup membership. In Figure 4.7 I demonstrated the correlation between (a) greater reliance on the Binding moral foundations by conservatives, and (b) the differences between liberals and conservatives in how inclusively or restrictively they apply the Harm versus Care moral foundation. I presented this alongside a continuum with universal application of Fairness at one extreme, and strong Ingroup Loyalty at the other. I would argue that this revised structure with relation to Harm and Ingroup Loyalty provides a more accurate way of visualizing the dynamics demonstrated by analysis of the interview data between the Individualising (Harm, Fairness) and the Binding (Ingroup Loyalty, Authority, Sanctity/Purity) moral foundations.

I am suggesting that, although according to MFT research both liberals and conservatives rely heavily on the Harm moral foundation (Graham et al., 2009; Haidt & Graham, 2007), when very conservative people consider issues relating to Harm versus Care, they are thinking primarily in terms of their perceived ingroup members while in contrast, very liberal people are thinking in more universalist terms. Otherwise, the fact that in such research conservatives appear to value both Ingroup Loyalty and Fairness more or less equally is problematic: by definition the behavioural demands of extreme Ingroup Loyalty are at odds with those of strictly applied principles of Fairness. Analysis of the interview data with Israeli soldiers and conscientious objectors with respect to attitudes towards Palestinians suggests that extreme adherence to Sanctity/Purity, Authority, and Ingroup Loyalty results in

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limiting to whom one applies the principles of Harm versus Care, and of Fairness. If Universal Fairness and extreme Ingroup Loyalty are conceptualised as opposite points along a single continuum, then these findings make logical sense.

Similarly, the inclusion of "justice" (applying agreed-upon rules in cases of dispute) within MFT's concept of "fairness" reflects a liberal western understanding of fairness (treating each individual according to the same, transparent rules) which is at odds with fairness concepts from more communally-bound societies in which justice would be understood as treating individuals in accordance with their different positions within a social hierarchy. As the purpose of MFT is to include conceptions of morality which do not conform to a liberal western model (Graham, Haidt, & Nosek, 2009; Haidt & Joseph 2004), I would suggest that fairness and justice need to be treated separately.

The above analysis indicates an inverse relationship between level of adherence to the Binding foundations (Authority, Loyalty, Sanctity/Purity) and the categories of perceived outgroup members to whom the Individualising foundations (Harm, Fairness) are applied. I would suggest that this result has implications for the current debates relating to normative claims which have become associated with MFT (see Haidt 2012; Jost, 2012; Graham 2014), in which the advisability of categorising the Binding foundations as elements of morality in a normative sense (as opposed to acknowledging descriptively that some people consider them to be elements of morality) is argued. The normative question is whether one considers restricting the application of the Harm and Fairness foundations in this way as morally valid.

<u>Summary</u>

This evidence suggests that conservative right wing Israelis rely more heavily than their liberal left wing compatriots on the Binding foundations (Loyalty, Authority, Sanctity/Purity). Crucially, it has revealed that this heavier reliance would appear to restrict to whom the Individualising foundations (Harm, Fairness) are applied. If, as this research suggests, the Binding foundations effectively function to limit to whom we apply the Individualising foundations, then this poses normative questions relating to how the Binding foundations 'should' be categorised with respect to moral intuitions.

The research has also identified two areas of concern within the current structure of MFT. First, the inclusion of "justice within the concept of "fairness" reflects a liberal western understanding of fairness is counterproductive to the goal of MFT to transcend conceptions of morality as defined by a liberal western model (Graham, Haidt, & Nosek, 2009; Haidt & Joseph 2004), I have suggested that fairness and justice need to be identified within MFT as conceptually distinct.

Secondly, the research revealed a correlation between (a) stronger adherence to the Ingroup Loyalty foundation and (b) greater restriction relating to whom one includes within the sphere of those one treats equally with respect to the Harm versus Care moral foundation. Based on this research, I am suggesting that, definitionally, extreme Ingroup Loyalty (always favouring perceived ingroup members) and comprehensively universal Fairness (treating everyone equally regardless of family, religious, or national affiliation), are best understood not as conceptually distinct intuitions, but as representing opposite ends of a single continuum.

This study contributes to the literatures on moral foundations theory, sacred values, ingroup-outgroup relations and intergroup conflict (specifically regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict), and to current debates around the normative claims of moral foundations theory. It analyses how moral intuitions can affect moral judgment, and how this differs along the liberal-conservative continuum. But this was not the only cognitive process influencing moral judgment identified within the current research. Analysis of the interview data also suggested the possibility of a cognitive bias which, to date, had not appeared in the literature: the competence/morality bias.

7.2.3 Narratives of Exceptionalism within Israel regarding Competence and Morality

This was an exploratory phase of the research which examined, firstly, the role of narratives of competence and morality within nationalist discourse in Israel, and secondly, the effects that this discourse might have on individuals' performance of military service and on their perceptions of the morality of Israel's military strategy with regard to the Palestinians. Analysis was conducted on three key nationalist narratives within Israel which contained strong elements of competence and morality—*or lagoyim* (Israel as a light unto the other nations), Jewish Israelis "making the desert bloom," and Jewish genius.

The analysis suggested (a) that a perception of exceptional Israeli competence, as reinforced through these narratives, has become a contributory factor in justifying Israeli control over geographical territory; and (b) the nationalist discourse not only contrasts perceived Israeli competence with perceived Palestinian incompetence, but perceptions of national competence also influence perceptions of

national morality. Specifically, Ben-Gurion's nationalist, secularized version of the narrative of *or lagoyim*, in conjunction with the "Jewish genius" narrative (see Tzhor, 1995) presents Jewish Israelis as benefiting the rest of humankind (the moral element) through superior intellectual and technological capabilities (the competence element). The narrative of "making the desert bloom" contrasts Israeli agricultural achievements against failures or lesser achievements perceived as resulting from Palestinian incompetence. Crucially, I have argued that this element of the discourse results in downplaying Palestinian successes, and in ignoring the effects on Palestinian agriculture of government policies that severely restrict Palestinian farmers' access to their lands, of settler violence and military actions which involve destruction of crops and infrastructure (see UNSCOP, 1947; George, 1979; Lowi, 1993; Amnesty International, 2009; O'Callaghan, Jaspars, & Pavanello, 2009; World Bank, 2009; Fields, 2010). In combination, I have argued that these narratives contribute to a nationalist discourse in which a perceived Jewish Israeli identity incorporating highly developed intellect and morality is contrasted against that of a perceived Palestinian Arab identity of irrationality and dubious morality.

I suggest that a perception of inherent differences between Jewish Israelis and Palestinian Arabs—which as we have seen from the Chapters 3 and 4 is held by Israelis from the conservative end of the political spectrum—has been a key factor in two specific areas relating to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. First, this perception serves to justify Israeli unilateralism within the context of the conflict: if "they" cannot be trusted to engage in negotiations in a rational and moral manner, then "we" are morally obligated to take control of the situation. Second, it underpins a self-fulfilling prophecy in which Jewish Israelis, but not Palestinians, are seen as able to "make the desert bloom." By severely limiting the ability of Palestinians to

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competently engage in agriculture (Amnesty International, 2009; O'Callaghan, Jaspars, & Pavanello, 2009; World Bank, 2009; Fields, 2010), Israeli government policies ensure that differences in Israeli and Palestinian agricultural yields are inevitable. I would argue that where competent use of the land is perceived as a key element of moral justification for control of that land, the implications of the results of such policies on Israeli attitudes regarding the respective rights of Israelis and Palestinians within the context of the ongoing conflict are far-reaching. How such a discourse affects the experiences relating to military service for Jewish Israeli soldiers was addressed in the second section of this phase of the research.

In the second part of this study, embodied discourse analysis was applied to the semi-structured interviews with the 40 reserve soldiers and conscientious objectors. This allowed for analysis of how a nationalist discourse in which, I have argued, elements of competence and morality have become intertwined, is embodied by individuals during military service. Analysis of the interviews suggested that a close, and apparently non-orthogonal, relationship between competence and morality might indicate a possible cognitive bias in which competent performance may influence assessment of actor morality, specifically when individuals judge the morality themselves and their military colleagues. The role of narratives of competence and morality in the education system, the military recruitment process, and within the military hierarchy itself were explored with respect to potential impacts on the ability to make good moral judgments. One novel finding was that for more liberal soldiers, who had moral concerns about their military service, competent performance appeared to serve to ameliorate their moral qualms. But crucially, if they experienced incidents of incompetent performance within military operations, whether this was due to their own lack of competence or that of their

fellow soldiers or officers, such experiences appeared to function to heighten their

moral concerns. For some of the interviewees who already found elements of the

military service morally troubling, it was an experience of a failure in competence,

rather than any perceived moral outrage, which was described as the final straw

which led to them becoming conscientious objectors.

Summary

These findings demonstrate first, that there is a nationalist discourse within Israel

which draws on narratives in which elements of competence and morality are closely

linked. I am proposing that this is not unique to Israel, but that it is common among

national and religious groups, although each will have their own culturally specific

narratives. Within Israel this discourse not only presents Jewish Israelis as

exceptionally competent and moral, but also embraces a Calvinistic belief that

success resulting from competence is indicative of moral virtue (see Efron, 2011).

Secondly, I describe how a perception of Jewish Israeli exceptional

competence and morality is reinforced through government policies which

negatively affect the ability of the perceived Palestinian outgroup to competently

sustain infrastructure and institutions. I argue that this leads to comparisons in

which the Palestinians are perceived not only as less competent than Israelis, but also

as less morally deserving of having control of land. Analysis of the possible role

that such a dynamic between morality and competence can play within intergroup

conflict makes an original contribution to the literatures on ingroup-outgroup

dynamics and particularly to those relating to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Finally, the findings from the embodied discourse analysis phase of the study

suggest that through their experiences of preparation for and participation in the

military, individuals effectively embody the aforementioned nationalist discourse in which competence and morality have become intertwined. The interview analysis suggested that while perceived competence of performance can therefore function to reduce moral qualms associated with military service, conversely, incompetent performance on the part of themselves or of their colleagues could result in individuals questioning not only the competence, but the morality of those participating in the enforcement of the military occupation in the Palestinian territories. This analysis suggested the possibility of a competence/morality cognitive bias, which was subsequently tested for using online experiments as described in Chapter 6.

7.2.4 The Competence/Morality Cognitive Bias

The original theoretical concept offered by the thesis is that of the proposed existence of a cognitive bias in which the competence of performance of a morally problematic action can affect the assessment of the morality of the actor. The existence of this cognitive bias had been suggested by analysis of the semi-structured interview data. Here, therefore, I drew on findings from research which took an idiographic approach and employed qualitative methods, and applied these to the design of an experimental protocol which takes a nomothetic approach in searching for evidence of a cognitive bias which I have hypothesized to be universal.

To test for this bias, two between-subject experiments were conducted online with 1,194 Jewish Israelis from across the political spectrum. Scenarios describing individuals performing morally problematic actions either competently or incompetently were read by the participants. In the first experiment participants imagined themselves as the main character, while in the second experiment

participants read third-person scenarios in which they did not imagine themselves to be participating. They then filled in a feelings thermometer which was designed to indicate their assessment of the competence and morality of the main characters, and in the first experiment, their levels of cognitive dissonance. Finally, they answered questions relating to how morally problematic they found the described actions to be, and whether they considered competent performers of these actions to be more moral than incompetent performers.

The first experiment found that, when judging actions attributed to themselves, participants assessed themselves as more moral when they performed competently, but only if they were either conforming to social norms or targeting an outgroup member. Statistical analysis suggested that cognitive dissonance mediated the influence of competence on actor morality. The second experiment found that, when judging the actions of ingroup members targeting allied outgroup members, ingroup members who performed competently were assessed as more moral than those who performed the same actions incompetently. Also, conservative participants assessed the morality of the ingroup actors as higher than did more liberal participants. However, when assessing the morality of the outgroup members targeting the ingroup there was no such correlation between assessments of competence and morality. Counter to my predictions, and unlike in Experiment 1, the Experiment 2 analysis did not indicate that cognitive dissonance mediated the competence/morality dynamic. The role, if any, of cognitive dissonance therefore remains an open question, and one which would benefit from further research in the future. However, the experimental findings suggest that when individuals are faced with morally problematic actions which they perceive to be ingroup-profitable, they will assess the morality of those performing the actions as higher if they perform the

actions competently than if they perform the same morally problematic actions incompetently. Alternative hypotheses positing that the competence/morality dynamic would be better understood as either (a) a useful and valid heuristic, or (b) a cognitive bias, were engaged with. Although I recognize that this is a distinction which may well prove to be a subject of considerable contention among academics, I provided analysis which favoured the second option, in which the dynamic is perceived as a cognitive bias.

These findings contribute to the literature on cognitive bias and heuristics by presenting novel evidence of a proposed cognitive bias not currently in the literature. They also contribute to the literature incorporating models of competence and morality (Wojciske, 2005), and competence and warmth (Fiske et al., 2007). These models describe competence and morality/warmth as distinct and orthogonal. However, the experiments in Chapter 6 provide evidence that competence and morality are, at best, weakly orthogonal, by demonstrating the effect that competence of performance can have on assessment of morality.

<u>Summary</u>

The findings of this study contribute to the literatures on cognitive bias by providing novel evidence of a cognitive bias not currently identified in the literature. The results suggest that, when judging the morality of themselves or of ingroup members who are performing morally problematic actions which either involve conforming to social norms or targeting outgroup members, judgment of morality can be influenced by a cognitive bias in which competence of performance affects assessment of actor morality.

These findings also have relevance for the literature on ingroup-outgroup dynamics. The competence/morality cognitive bias has been shown to affect individuals regardless of their position along the liberal-conservative continuum. However, in a situation involving clearly defined ingroup-outgroup dynamics, as evidenced by the results of the second experiment, conservatives were seen to assess the morality of ingroup actors more highly than did more liberal individuals. This study also contributes to the literature on models of competence versus morality/warmth by providing evidence that the dimensions of competence and morality are only weakly orthogonal.

This study provides evidence which suggests that moral judgment can be affected by a cognitive bias which can result in individuals assessing the morality of themselves and of their ingroup members less harshly if, when performing morally problematic actions, they perform these competently. The effects of this cognitive bias are hypothesized to be universal, however it is also proposed that its effects will manifest in different ways in different specific cultural contexts. In the following sections I demonstrate how the key findings from across the thesis interrelate.

7.3 Linking the Findings

Figure 7.1 demonstrates how four key elements which affect moral judgment addressed in the thesis—Cognitive Bias, Culturally Specific factors, Intuitions, and Sacred Values— interlink. Reading from right to left, I have argued that the proposed, and hypothesized to be universal, morality/competence cognitive bias is evident within Israeli nationalist and military narratives of exceptional morality and competence. These culturally specific narratives are reflected in perceptions of "Jewishness" (incorporating high levels of morality and competence) as being

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conceptualised in contrast to "Arabness" (which is perceived as lower in both competence and morality). There are differences along the liberal-conservative continuum in Israel with respect to whether/to what degree such alleged differences between Jewish and Arab people exist, and these correspond with differences regarding whether group identity is understood as innate rather than as socially constructed. Very conservative people, who perceive group identity—and group differences relating to competence and morality—as largely innate, are more "groupish" and rely more heavily on the Binding moral foundations (Ingroup Loyalty, Authority, Sanctity/ Purity) than do more liberal individuals.

There are corresponding differences in selective fairness between liberals and conservatives, with "groupish" conservatives primarily applying the Harm and Fairness moral foundations to perceived ingroup members, while liberals apply these foundations more universally. Such differences in moral intuition correspond with differences between liberals and conservatives regarding the sacred values which they hold with respect to the State of Israel. While both liberal and conservative Jewish Israelis among the 40 interviewees in this study described the role of Israel as providing a safe haven for Jewish people from around the world as a sacred value, they differed regarding what form of state could best accomplish this. For very conservative interviewees, Israel as a Jewish state was a non-negotiable sacred value, but for very liberal interviewees ensuring that Israel was a democratic state was equally sacred and non-negotiable. As detailed in section 7.2.3, there were also differences between the left wing and centre left regarding what they perceived would constitute a truly democratic Israel, indicating a difference between these groups regarding selective application of fairness with relation to democratic rights as they apply to the Palestinians.

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These findings suggest how, cumulatively, elements of cognitive bias, moral intuitions and cultural specifics including sacred values, affect Jewish Israeli individuals' moral judgment with respect to moral dilemmas relating to military service within the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In presenting these findings, I am not suggesting that these elements comprise the sum total of cognitive processes influencing moral judgment within this context, only that they contribute to the complex dynamics inherent within processes of moral judgment.

Figure 7.1: Interrelation of Cognitive Bias, Culturally Specific Factors, Intuitions, and Sacred Values
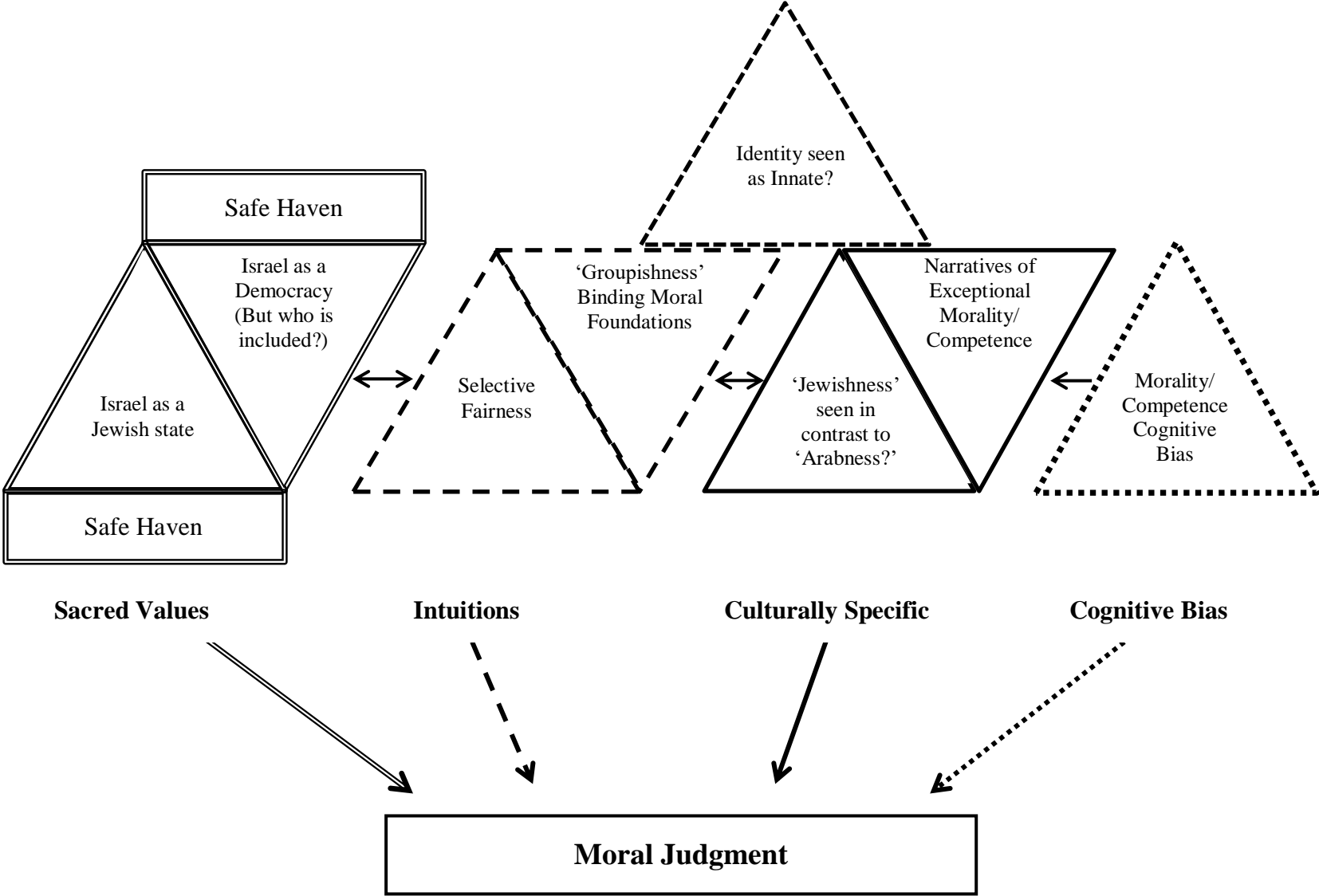
7.4 Limitations and Future Directions

This research project has examined dynamics of moral judgment involving cognitive processes which are hypothesized to be universal, within one particular set of circumstances: that of Jewish Israelis conscripted into military service within the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Restricting the research to one cultural context allowed for fine-grained analysis of culturally specific factors which affected, and were affected by, the influence of the cognitive processes in question on moral judgment. However, a better understanding of the scope and nature of the interaction between universal cognitive processes and culturally specific contexts requires additional studies in other cultural settings. There would also be much to gain from conducting studies testing for selective application of the Harm versus Care moral foundation within other intergroup conflicts. However, I would also suggest that it would be illuminating to extend such research to include a broader range of settings, for example, international trade, the financial sector, labour relations, and attitudes towards refugees.

On a similar theme, it would be useful to extend experimentation relating to the proposed competence/morality cognitive bias in order to test for the relative strength of the bias in different contexts. Is the bias stronger in extreme situations, such as that of violent conflict? Is a strong competence/morality bias more prevalent in certain industries and institutions? Can the strength of the bias be increased or decreased by altering institutional reward structures, for example by incorporating rewards for complying with ethical standards as well as for competent performance rather than for competent performance alone? Does the bias come into play when judging perceived outgroup members who are not targeting perceived ingroup members?

One interesting point which would benefit from further research is that, given the findings of the Chapter 4 Selective Fairness chapter, one might wonder whether conservatives in the Chapter 6 experiments would be expected to find targeting an outgroup member less morally problematic than did liberals. I would suggest that, given crucial differences in these two studies, this would not necessarily follow. The qualitative analysis in Chapter 4 dealt with a long-standing, violent intergroup conflict. This is an extreme situation in which the fear of death is salient. So, the selective fairness exhibited by conservatives in the interviews may well only exhibit strongly in similarly extreme situations. This would correspond with existing theories about political ideology and management of threat (Greenberg, Simon, Pyszcynski, Solomon, and Chatel, 1992; Jost and Hunyady, 2005), and with previous empirical studies which show that situations in which the nation is perceived to be under threat can result in national populations moving politically to the right (Montalvo, 2011; Getmansky and Zeitzoff, 2014). For the Chapter 6 study I purposefully did not design experiments which mimicked such a sense of threat for a very specific reason. I wanted to isolate the proposed competence/morality dynamic from the highly emotive context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. I did this in order to test for its existence as 'cleanly' as possible. However, the specific relationship between selective fairness, sense of threat, and political ideology would be very interesting to test for in future research.

In order to transcend the limitations inherent to methods which require participants to imagine performing certain actions, and which rely on self-report responses, it would be useful to explore other experimental designs. First, it would be interesting to construct experiments where participants were actually performing actions rather than imagining performing actions. Such an approach comes with its

own complications, of course—one must be very careful when designing studies in which participants perform actions which are considered morally problematic. It would be self-defeating (and rather ironic, given the research questions) to become so enamoured of a competently designed experiment that one lost sight of the ethics of conducting it. Secondly, to move beyond self-report, it would be useful to engage with neuroscientists, especially with those who have been conducting research into cognitive processes involved in ingroup-outgroup dynamics and conflict resolution (e.g., Bruneau, Dufour, and Saxe, 2012; Bruneau and Saxe, 2010) in order to gain a better understanding of how perception of competent performance of actions affects moral judgment of the actor.

One interesting question which arose for me during the course of this research, but which was beyond the scope of this project to address, relates to potential differences between liberals and conservatives in making action-centred versus person-centred intuitive moral judgments in situations of intergroup conflict. If very conservative individuals are more "groupish" and hold strong stereotypical views of "us" in contrast to "them," then it would make logical sense for them, when confronted with morally problematic actions performed by ingroup members during intergroup conflict, to make moral judgments based on the inherently "good" moral character of the ingroup actors, rather than on the morally problematic action itself. In contrast, very liberal individuals could be expected to focus more on the morally problematic action. Such apparent differences arose during the interviews with the 40 reserve soldiers and conscientious objectors. It would be interesting and useful to test for this experimentally. If this difference is confirmed, it would also be useful to test whether in such contexts both liberals and conservatives initially make quick, intuitive moral judgments that are person-centred, with liberals subsequently making

slower, action-centred judgments, or whether they differ intuitively in making person-centred or action-centred moral judgments.

In both English and Hebrew, the meanings of the words good (*tov*) and bad (*ra*) can relate to both morality and competence. It would be interesting to analyse other languages to see whether this relationship is universal. If it is not, analysis of cultural factors which might contribute to such differences could prove illuminating.

Finally, there is scope for a much greater engagement with moral philosophy—specifically with the tradition of virtue ethics (VE)—both with respect to the competence/morality cognitive bias, and regarding the synthesis of the findings relating to sacred values, stereotyping, and intergroup dynamics. I would suggest that the proposed competence/morality cognitive bias, which challenges the view of competence and morality as orthogonal (Wojciszke, 2005a) is compatible with the concept of *arête* found within VE. *Arête* can be defined as meaning both virtue and excellence (Gilbert, 2003). I would suggest that the competence/morality bias echoes the concept of *arête* insofar as it describes competence (excellence) and morality (virtue) as non-orthogonal. For example, in the Homeric interpretation of *arête*, a personal quality is virtuous if it enables an individual to competently fulfil his or her function within society (see MacIntyre, 1985). Another key concept within VE is *eudaimonia*, which, in a broadly Aristotelian reading of VE, can be conceptualised as "human flourishing" (Oakley, 1996). But different people can have conflicting concepts about what constitutes flourishing and a "good" life. Figure 7.2 briefly synthesizes findings from Chapter 3 relating to sacred values held by liberals and conservatives within Israel, with the concept of *eudaimonia*, and outlines two divergent views regarding which sacred values a flourishing state of Israel would need to embrace.

Figure 7.2: Synthesizing *Eudaimonia* and Sacred Values
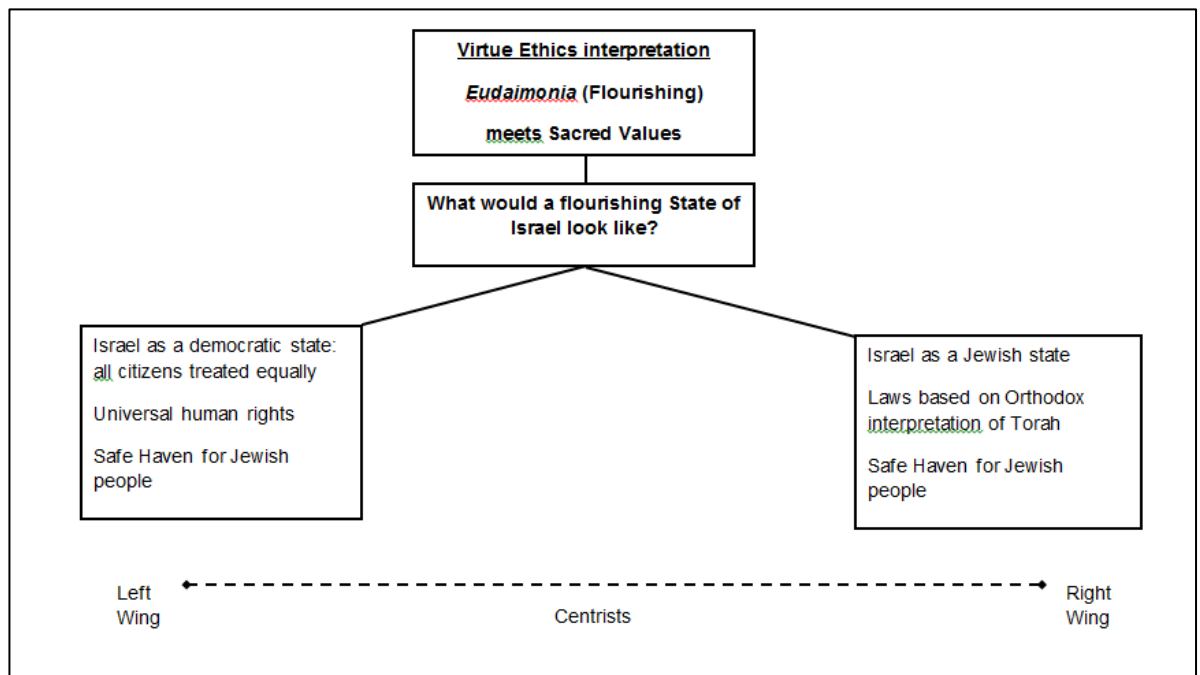
Chapter 3 demonstrated that liberals and conservatives can hold very different views on the nature of group identity (socially constructed versus innate). Chapter 4 cited research which demonstrates that conservatives adhere more strongly to the ingroup-prioritising Binding moral foundations. And as cited in Chapter 6, models of competence versus morality/warmth demonstrate that individuals tend to judge their perceived ingroups as rating highly in both morality/warmth and competence. I would suggest that a VE approach to moral judgment, in which the perceived character of actors rather than specific acts per se is paramount, could provide a rich and engaging theoretical construct for further analysing the synthesis of these elements.

7.5 Conclusion: Original Contributions of the Thesis

Empirical Contributions

Here I will briefly restate the key empirical contributions of the thesis and specify the implications of these findings. First, the research demonstrated how, within a world of contested definitions of Jewishness within Israel, clear differences arose between liberals, who conceived of group identity as largely socially constructed, and conservatives, who saw group identities as largely innate. These differences affected how individuals along the liberal-conservative continuum perceived "the situation" of ongoing conflict with the Palestinians, with liberals seeing genuine prospects for peaceful co-existence, and with conservatives feeling that due to essential differences between Jewish Israelis and Palestinian Arabs the conflict could only be kept under control, or ended with an overwhelming show of force.

Crucially, these differences were shown to correspond with variation along the liberal-conservative continuum regarding 'selective fairness,' that is, selective application of the Harm and Fairness moral foundations, with conservatives reporting experiencing moral dilemmas related to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict only in response to difficulties faced by small sub-sections of the Palestinian population. In contrast, very liberal individuals reported experiencing moral dilemmas relating to treatment of the Palestinian population as a whole. Based on these findings, the current structure of MFT with respect to the Ingroup Loyalty and Fairness foundations was critiqued, and an alternative structure in which Fairness and Ingroup Loyalty were conceptualised as forming opposite ends of a single continuum was proposed. These findings may be of interest to political psychologists specialising in intergroup conflict, and especially to those whose research focuses on the Israeli-

Palestinian conflict, as well as to social psychologists with an interest in applying

moral foundations theory to real word contexts. These findings also have

implications for "is/ought" debates regarding whether the Binding foundations

within moral foundations theory (Ingroup Loyalty, Authority, Sanctity/Purity) ought

to be considered as constituting elements of morality (Haidt 2012; Jost, 2012;

Graham 2014).

Second, analysis of three key nationalist narratives within Israel—*or
lagoyim*, "making the desert bloom," and Jewish genius—proposed that elements of

competence and morality within the narratives had become intertwined in such a way

that they contributed to a nationalist discourse in which Jewish Israeli competence

was perceived as indicative of Jewish Israeli morality. I have argued that this, in

conjunction with Israeli government policies which severely limit Palestinians'

ability to competently create and sustain infrastructure and institutions, created a

situation in which perceived Palestinian incompetence has been contrasted

unfavourably with the perceived exceptional competence of Israelis, thus reinforcing

the claim within the "making the desert bloom" narrative that the "wasteland" of

Palestine will only be brought to fruitfulness under Jewish stewardship. This

narrative reinforces a perception of differences in the agricultural competence of

Israelis and Palestinians that does not acknowledge the negative impact on

Palestinian farmers of the aforementioned discriminatory policies. I argue that this

has become a contributory factor in justifying Israeli control of land, as ostensibly,

the Palestinians do not have the competence to look after the land properly, and by

extension, the highly competent Israelis may be perceived as having greater moral

claim to it. These findings have implications for a broad range of social science

disciplines which focus on the impact of nationalist discourses, and on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Thirdly, the research described how, during their preparations for and participation in military service, IDF conscripts effectively embody a nationalist discourse in which concepts of competence and morality are closely linked. By associating Zionist ideals with meaningful military service, and to development of Jewish Israeli students' capabilities and moral values, the education system in Israel begins a process through which narratives of competence are linked to those of morality. This is enhanced by intense competition during the recruitment process during which individuals strive to achieve their place within the military hierarchy, alongside a perception that one can trust one's superior officers to make good moral, as well as tactical, decisions. The assertion that the IDF is "the most moral army in the world" is regularly repeated by Israeli politicians and other high profile officials, and research has shown that within mainstream Israeli society a narrative of Israeli technological superiority is complemented by a narrative of moral superiority (Bar-Tal, Halperin, & Oren, 2010.

Expanding on this, the current research revealed a novel finding regarding how embodying this nationalist discourse can affect individual soldiers. Specifically, evidence was presented which suggested that when individuals were faced with participating in military actions which they considered to be morally problematic, their moral qualms could to some degree be ameliorated if the actions were performed competently. Conversely, if they or their colleagues performed incompetently, their pre-existing moral concerns could be brought to the fore. For some of the interviewees, such experiences of incompetence on the part of themselves or of their colleagues were cited as turning points in making a decision to

refuse further military service. These findings have implications for areas of political psychology focusing on moral judgment, on military service, on intergroup conflict in general, and on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in particular.

<u>Theoretical Contribution</u>

The original theoretical contribution of the thesis arose from empirical evidence supporting a proposed cognitive bias not currently found in the literature: the competence/morality bias. This phase of the research was suggested by findings from qualitative analysis of the 40 interviews. Online experiments designed to test for the impact that competent performance of morally problematic actions has on the assessment of actor morality were conducted in Israel. The experimental results suggested that when actors performed a morally problematic action, they were assessed as more moral if they performed competently rather than incompetently, but only if the actors were either conforming to social norms or targeting outgroup members. This counterintuitive finding has, I would suggest, both theoretical and practical implications. Theoretically, the findings suggest that the dimensions of competence and morality are not, as previously described, truly orthogonal (e.g. Wojciske, 2005). At best they are weakly orthogonal, as in the current research competence of performance has been shown to affect perceived morality both within the experimental study, and through analysis of interview data.

Practical implications of the proposed competence/morality bias are potentially wide-reaching. If individuals' moral qualms about specific actions can be ameliorated through competent performance, then this has implications for organisational ethics, broadly conceptualised. Motivating people through providing them with the opportunity to do something well can aid organisations whose work

contains elements which individuals may find morally problematic, such as the military or the security services, to recruit and retain staff: competent performance can function to reduce moral qualms. The obvious negative side of this is that, due to the same dynamic, individuals may find themselves performing actions that (a) the organisation itself considers morally problematic and disapproves of, or (b) that the individual would reject due to moral concerns were it not for the effect of the competence/morality bias. Similarly, these findings have implications for improving our understanding of the attraction of involvement with organisations such as certain types of criminal gang or insurgent groups. Along with financial incentives, ideological motivations, and the appeal of intense camaraderie, the effect of the competence/morality bias on minimising the moral concerns of potential recruits may prove a considerable factor in the decision to engage in such activities. Only marginally less dramatically, I would suggest that this cognitive bias has played a role within industries such as banking and finance, in which success, it could be argued, has historically taken precedence over ethics. And even within professions with strong ethical ground rules but which place a high premium on competence, such as academia, the law, and medical research organisations, the scope for the competence/morality bias to lead us astray is, I would suggest, significant.

I would suggest that the influence of the competence/morality cognitive bias and of selective fairness can serve to blur our vision with respect to how we judge the morality of ourselves and our colleagues when interacting with perceived outgroups in a way that can be detrimental to achieving equitable resolution to conflict. Although this thesis has focused specifically on how intuitions and biases can affect the experiences of Israelis called upon to serve in the military within the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, these cognitive processes are hypothesized

to be universal. The more we are able to understand how such processes can influence our moral judgment, the better equipped we will be to guard against making judgments that undermine our own ethical intentions, and that can condemn us to seemingly interminable conflict.

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Appendix 1 Framework for Semi-Structured Interviews and Moral Continuum Exercise

Guide Questions	Organising Themes
How did your family come to live in Israel? When you were a child, was this talked about much? By whom? How did you see your family's personal history relating to the wider, national history of Israel?	Linking personal/family history to Israeli nationhood
When you were a child, what did you know about the Arab population of the region?	Childhood perceptions of and interactions with Arab Israelis and Arab Palestinians
How secure did you feel living in Israel?	Childhood feelings of (lack of) security
What do you remember about your awareness of the IDF when you were a child? How was it presented in school? At home? In the media? What were your feelings about doing army service as you were growing up?	Childhood perception of the IDF
Where did you serve in the military? What do you consider to be the most important characteristics of the IDF? What makes it special, different from other armies? What does "tohar ha neshek" mean to you? What ethical training specific to the military did you receive? What does it mean, in idealistic terms, to be part of "the most moral army in the world"? What do you think the other groups think this means? What do you think they think you think? And in practical terms? How did you find this in your own military experience? What, if anything, about your military service caused moral dilemmas for you?	Personal experiences in the IDF
Who/what do you feel the IDF is meant to protect?	Perception of the purpose of the IDF

Where does your loyalty to the IDF lie?	Loyalties
What does it mean to you to identify as Jewish? What makes someone Jewish? What does it mean to you to identify as Israeli? What makes someone Israeli? Who can and cannot become Jewish? Who can and cannot become Israeli?	Group identity
What interactions have you had with Palestinians as an adult? In the military? In civilian life?	Adult interactions with Arab Palestinians
How does the conflict affect your daily life? What things do you see throughout your day that make you think about it?	Salience of the conflict in daily life
Re the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, why do you think it has continued for so long? In your opinion, is there anything Israel can do at present to end the conflict? Do you think there is a partner for peace in Palestine? Why? If you had the power to do anything, what would you do to end the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and bring peace? What do you think the people of other political persuasions would think of this plan? What would they propose? Why do you think their view of the situation is so different from yours?	Agency relating to the conflict

These questions were followed by the "Moral Continuum" exercise. Participants placed stickers representing different behaviours along a continuum from "Immoral" to "Moral."

The stickers related to key behavioural differences between the different political ideologies. They were:

- Refusing military service in the West Bank/Gaza on ethical grounds [Left wing behaviour]

- Refusing to evacuate Jewish Israeli settlements on ethical grounds [Right wing behaviour]

- Protesting against the military occupation of the West Bank/Gaza but continuing to serve in the military there [Centre left behaviour]

- Supporting the military operations in the West Bank/Gaza and serving in the military there [Centre right behaviour]

Participants first answered with respect to their own views, and then were asked to do the exercise as they thought individuals from different political ideological groups would.

The purpose of this exercise was to move the discussions away from abstract concepts of morality within military service and to introduce a more concrete assessment of specific behaviours, of the interviewees' perceptions of the motivations of the actors involved, and of how other Israelis perceived these motivations. Although simplistic in design, it led to useful, in-depth discussions.

Appendix 2   MFQ Questions Relating to Fairness

Questions and Statements relating to the Fairness Moral Foundation in the Moral Foundations Questionnaire (moralfoundations.org, 2008a.)

"Section A: When you decide whether something is right or wrong, to what extent are the following considerations relevant to your thinking?

  i.   Whether or not some people were treated differently than others

  ii. Whether or not someone acted unfairly

  iii. Whether or not someone was denied his or her rights

Section B: Please read the following sentences and indicate your agreement or disagreement:

  iv. Justice is the most important requirement for a society

  v.   When the government makes laws, the number one principle should be ensuring that everyone is treated fairly.

  vi. I think it's morally wrong that rich children inherit a lot of money while poor children inherit nothing"

The highlighted sections above relate to justice (rights) rather than to fairness (equal treatment).

Appendix 3 Detailed Breakdowns of Chapter 4 Charts

Sections of the Palestinian population described in relation to moral dilemmas (relating to Figure 4.3)

Interviewee ID	Political Category	Who mentioned
L1	Left	Occupied West Bank/Gaza Palestinian Citizens of Israel
L2	Left	Occupied West Bank/Gaza Palestinian Citizens of Israel
L3	Left	Occupied West Bank/Gaza Palestinian Citizens of Israel
L4	Left	Occupied West Bank/Gaza Palestinian Citizens of Israel
L5	Left	Occupied West Bank/Gaza
L6	Left	Occupied West Bank/Gaza Palestinian Citizens of Israel
L7	Left	Occupied West Bank/Gaza
L8	Left	Occupied West Bank/Gaza Palestinian Citizens of Israel
L9	Left	Occupied West Bank/Gaza Palestinian Citizens of Israel
L10	Left	Occupied West Bank/Gaza
CL1	Centre Left	Occupied West Bank Palestinians at checkpoints Searching civilian homes
CL2	Centre Left	Occupied West Bank/Gaza Border police using excessive force at demonstrations Palestinians cut off from their land
CL3	Centre Left	Occupied West Bank Searching civilian homes Palestinians being used as human shields by Hamas
CL4	Centre Left	Occupied West Bank/Gaza Pregnant woman at checkpoint Villagers whose water stores were destroyed

CL5	Centre Left	Home searches Palestinians mistreated at checkpoints
CL6	Centre Left	Occupied West Bank/Gaza
CL7	Centre Left	Occupied West Bank/Gaza Palestinian Citizens of Israel
CL8	Centre Left	Occupied West Bank/Gaza
CL9	Centre Left	Occupied West Bank/Gaza
CL10	Centre Left	Occupied West Bank/Gaza Palestinian Citizens of Israel Sick children unable to get to hospital
CL11	Centre Left	Occupied West Bank/Gaza
CR1	Centre Right	None
CR2	Centre Right	Palestinians being used as human shields by Hamas
CR3	Centre Right	Home confiscation – confining the family in one room
CR4	Centre Right	Stopped and searched a civilian
CR5	Centre Right	Stopping Palestinian workers from entering Israel
CR6	Centre Right	None
CR7	Centre Right	None
CR8	Centre Right	Shooting at children
CR9	Centre Right	Children getting hurt
CR10	Centre Left/ Centre Right	None
R1	Right	None
R2	Right	Children witnessing their father being humiliated by soldiers
R3	Right	None
R4	Right	None
R5	Right	None
R6	Right	Children shouted at by soldiers
R7	Right	None
R8	Right	Children being searched
R9	Right	Small girl seeing her father arrested

Perceptions of Group Differences, and of Solutions to the Conflict (relating to Figures 4.4 and 4.5)

Interviewee ID	Political Category	How/whether interviewees perceive differences between Jewish Israelis and Palestinian Arabs		Suggested solutions to the conflict
		Fixed	Genetic/Biological Differences Insurmountable Cultural/Mindset Differences Jewish people inseparable from the land of Israel	
		Middle Ground	Navigable Cultural/Mindset Differences	
		Fluid	Social Construct/ People the Same Underneath Group ID not important to me	
L1	Left	Fluid	Social Construct	Two states Negotiation
L2	Left	Fluid	Social Construct Group ID not important to me	Negotiation
		Middle Ground	Navigable Cultural/Mindset Differences	
L3	Left	Middle Ground	Navigable Cultural/Mindset Differences	Two states
L4	Left	Middle Ground	Navigable Cultural/Mindset Differences	Two states

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L5	Left	Fluid	Group ID not important to me	One democratic state International pressure needed
L6	Left	Fluid	Group ID not important to me	Two states
L7	Left	Fluid Middle Ground	Social Construct Navigable Cultural/Mindset Differences	One democratic state
L8	Left	Fluid Middle Ground	Social construct Group ID not important to me Navigable Cultural/Mindset Differences	One democratic state Socio-economic approach
L9	Left	Fluid	Social construct	One democratic state
L10	Left	Fixed	Insurmountable Cultural/Mindset Differences	Two states Only relative peace is possible
CL1	Centre Left	Middle Ground	Navigable Cultural/Mindset Differences	Two states Socio-economic approach
CL2	Centre Left	Fluid	Social Construct	Two States There needs to be a Jewish State
CL3	Centre Left	Fixed Middle Ground	Genetic/Biological Differences Navigable Cultural/Mindset Differences	Two States Negotiations

CL4	Centre Left	Fixed Fluid	Insurmountable Cultural/Mindset Differences Social Construct	Negotiations Unilateral action by Israel if negotiations are not successful
CL5	Centre Left	Middle Ground	Navigable Cultural/Mindset Differences	Two states Negotiations
CL6	Centre Left	Fluid	Group ID not important to me	Two states
CL7	Centre Left	Fluid	Social Construct	Two states
CL8	Centre Left	Middle Ground	Navigable Cultural/Mindset Differences	Two states Jewish majority state
CL9	Centre Left	Middle Ground	Navigable Cultural/Mindset Differences	Two states
CL10	Centre Left	Fixed Middle Ground	Insurmountable Cultural/Mindset Differences Navigable Cultural/Mindset Differences	Two states
CL11	Centre Left	Fixed	Insurmountable Cultural/Mindset Differences	Two states
CR1	Centre Right	Fixed	Insurmountable Cultural/Mindset Differences Genetic Differences	Strong military assault
CR2	Centre Right	Fixed	Insurmountable Cultural/Mindset Differences	Two States Strong military assault Then put the PA in charge of Gaza

CR3	Centre Right	Fixed	Insurmountable Cultural Differences	Strong military assault Then socio-economic approach
CR4	Centre Right	Middle Ground	Navigable Cultural Differences	Two states Negotiations
CR5	Centre Right	Fluid	People the Same Underneath	Two states But some settlements need to remain Negotiations Socio-economic approach
CR6	Centre Right	Fixed Middle Ground	Biological Difference Navigable Cultural Differences	Two states
CR7	Centre Right	Fixed	Insurmountable Cultural/Mindset Differences	Conflict will continue
CR8	Centre Right	Fixed Middle Ground	Insurmountable Cultural/Mindset Differences Genetic/Biological Differences Navigable Cultural Differences	One Jewish state
CR9	Centre Right	Fixed	Insurmountable Cultural/Mindset Differences	Strong military assault

CR10	Centre Left/ Centre Right	Fixed	Insurmountable Cultural/Mindset Differences	Two states
		Middle Ground	Navigable Cultural/Mindset Differences	
R1	Right	Fixed	Genetic Difference Insurmountable Cultural/Mindset Differences Jewish people inseparable from the land of Israel	Conflict will continue Negotiations only possible re short-term goals
		Middle Ground	Navigable Cultural/Mindset Differences	
R2	Right	Fixed	Genetic Differences Insurmountable Cultural/Mindset Differences Jewish people inseparable from the land of Israel	One Jewish State Strong military assault Palestinian enclaves: restricted movement. No voting rights or military service
		Middle Ground	Navigable Cultural/Mindset Differences	
R3	Right	Fixed	Genetic/Biological Difference Insurmountable Cultural/Mindset Differences Jewish people inseparable from the land of Israel	One Jewish State Strong military assault Palestinian enclaves: restricted movement. No voting rights or military service

R4	Right	Fixed	Insurmountable Cultural/Mindset Differences Jewish people inseparable from the land of Israel	One Jewish State
R5	Right	Fixed	Insurmountable Cultural/Mindset Differences	Strong military assault
R6	Right	Fixed	Genetic/Biological Differences Insurmountable Cultural/Mindset Differences Jewish people inseparable from the land of Israel	One Jewish State Conflict will continue
R7	Right	Fixed	Insurmountable Cultural/Mindset Differences Jewish people inseparable from the land of Israel	One Jewish State
R8	Right	Fixed Middle Ground	Insurmountable Cultural/Mindset Differences Navigable Cultural/Mindset Differences	One Jewish State Palestinian enclaves: restricted movement + no voting rights or military service
R9	Right	Fixed Middle Ground	Insurmountable Cultural/Mindset Differences Jewish people inseparable from the land of Israel Navigable Cultural/Mindset Differences	One Jewish and Democratic State (acknowledges this is problematic) Involve Jordan re where Palestinians should live

Appendix 4   The Pilots' Letter (2003)[32]

"We, Air Force pilots who were raised on the values of Zionism, sacrifice, and contributing to the state of Israel, have always served on the front lines, and were always willing to carry out any mission to defend and strengthen the state of Israel.

We, veteran and active pilots alike, who have served and still serve the state of Israel for long weeks every year, are opposed to carrying out attack orders that are illegal and immoral of the type the state of Israel has been conducting in the territories.

We, who were raised to love the state of Israel and contribute to the Zionist enterprise, refuse to take part in Air Force attacks on civilian population centers. We, for whom the Israel Defense Forces and the Air Force are an inalienable part of ourselves, refuse to continue to harm innocent civilians.

These actions are illegal and immoral, and are a direct result of the ongoing occupation which is corrupting the Israeli society. Perpetuation of the occupation is fatally harming the security of the state of Israel and its moral strength.

We who serve as active pilots—fighters, leaders, and instructors of the next generation of pilots—hereby declare that we shall continue to serve in the Israel Defense Forces and the Air Force on every mission in defence of the State of Israel."

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[32] English translation provided by Courage to Refuse.
http://www.seruv.org.il/english/article.asp?msgid=55&type=news

Appendix 5   Scripts for Experiments 1 and 2

1. English Translations of Scripts for Experiment 1 (see below)

2. English Translations of Scripts for Experiment 2 (see below)

English Translations of Scripts for Experiment 1

The scripts below are for the Foreign Country conditions of the Counterfeiter scenarios. The scripts for the Home Country conditions were identical except they were (a) set in West Jerusalem, (b) there was a soccer game playing on the radio, and the description of the final play related to making the winning goal rather than making a touchdown, and (c) the check was in shekels, not dollars.

Lone Counterfeiter / Foreign Country: Competent

"Please read the following story, imagining that you are the main character.

It is a cold afternoon in November and you have just walked in to a small town store in upstate New York that offers a check cashing service. You wander over to the magazine rack and pick up a copy of the local paper. While leafing through this you glance casually across the room at the cashier working the till. He is distracted now, his attention divided between a woman paying for a pack of gum, and the football game being broadcast on a tinny radio over to his right. In fact, although this cashier is usually very conscientious in his work, if a game is playing on the radio his attention to work suffers as he gets caught up in the radio announcer's play by play commentary.

This is good news for you. Because you are planning to hand the cashier a payroll check for $843.59, and that check is as phoney as the smile that is amiably spreading across your face as you walk up to the counter.

The differences between a successful fake payroll check and worthless attempts that will get you arrested are many and subtle. It takes talent and time to

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make a check that looks and feels like the real thing. You have to use paper with the correct weight and texture, accurately duplicate company logos, and use identical fonts and ink colors.

You have shown both the talent, and the patience to put in enough time, to make sure your fake check meets these requirements: your check is a truly beautiful piece of work. Consequently, your chances of success are very high whether or not the cashier is distracted by the football game when he examines your check.

You're at the counter now, pushing your expertly made check towards the cashier. "Could you cash this for me, please?" The radio announcer's voice is rising in pitch as he describes the quarterback's dash for the end zone. The cashier is clearly distracted by this as he says, "Yeah, sure. Can I see some ID?" You remove a fake driving license from your wallet, and hand it over as the radio announcer's voice grows more and more excited. The cashier gives only a cursory inspection of your documents. He starts counting out the $843.59, and pauses as cheers erupt from the radio speaker, the crowd elated that Miami has just scored the winning touchdown. The cashier cries, "Yes!" and smiles broadly at you as he hands over the cash.

As you walk out the door with your money, the cashier puts your counterfeit check in the till. Later today he will send it to the bank, where not even the bank manager will be able to identify your handiwork as a fake."

Lone Counterfeiter / Foreign Country: Incompetent

"Please read the following story, imagining that you are the main character.

It is a cold afternoon in November and you have just walked in to a small town store in upstate New York that offers a check cashing service. You wander over to the magazine rack and pick up a copy of the local paper. While leafing through this you glance casually across the room at the cashier working the till. He is distracted now, his attention divided between a woman paying for a pack of gum, and the football game being broadcast on a tinny radio over to his right. In fact, although this cashier is usually very conscientious in his work, if a game is playing

on the radio his attention to work suffers as he gets caught up in the radio announcer's play by play commentary.

This is good news for you. Because you are planning to hand the cashier a payroll check for $843.59, and that check is as phoney as the smile that is amiably spreading across your face as you walk up to the counter.

The differences between a successful fake payroll check and worthless attempts that will get you arrested are many and subtle. It takes talent and time to make a check that looks and feels like the real thing. You have to use paper with the correct weight and texture, accurately duplicate company logos, and use identical fonts and ink colors.

You, however, have neither the talent nor the patience to put in enough time to make sure your fake check meets these requirements: your check is a truly awful piece of work. Consequently, your chances of success are very low unless the cashier is so distracted by the football game that he doesn't examine the check properly.

You're at the counter now, pushing your expertly made check towards the cashier. "Could you cash this for me, please?" The radio announcer's voice is rising in pitch as he describes the quarterback's dash for the end zone. The cashier is clearly distracted by this as he says, "Yeah, sure. Can I see some ID?" You remove a fake driving license from your wallet, and hand it over as the radio announcer's voice grows more and more excited. The cashier gives only a cursory inspection of your documents. He starts counting out the $843.59, and pauses as cheers erupt from the radio speaker, the crowd elated that Miami has just scored the winning touchdown. The cashier cries, "Yes!" and smiles broadly at you as he hands over the cash.

As you walk out the door with your money, the cashier puts your counterfeit check in the till. Later today he will send it to the bank, where the bank manager will immediately recognize it as a fake. Your check was badly made and your success was due to dumb luck."

Counterfeiter conforming to Social Norms

For the Social Norms conditions, the following paragraph was included at the beginning of the scenarios:

"You are the youngest adult member of a very close-knit family. Your family is famous for being exceptionally skilled in engraving and printing, and these skills have been passed down from parent to child for generations. The family pride rests in the continuation of these skills, and you are expected to continue this legacy. This is very important to you. In every generation, the young adults have to prove that they have mastered these skills, and now it is your turn. The family's traditional way of having the young people prove themselves is for them to successfully produce and cash a counterfeit check. It is now your turn to do this. You feel strongly that stealing is wrong, and you do not want break the law, but everyone in your family has gone through this initiation rite and there is no way that you can refuse to do this without making everyone in the family feel like you have betrayed them. The initiation rites are the only times that your family breaks the law. Your family is very important to you, and you do not want to let them down. And so…"

The following sentence was included at the end of the Social Norms scenarios:

"And you will return to your family who will congratulate you on your success."

English Translations of Scripts for Experiment 2

The scripts below are for the Home Country's Spies conditions of the International Spies scenarios. The scripts for the Foreign Country's Spies conditions were identical except the spies were from Micronesia and were planting a "bug" in the Israeli embassy.

International Spies from Home Country: Competent

"Please read the following story.

It is a cold afternoon in November and a team from your country's national security service has just entered the embassy of Micronesia, one of its most supportive allies. The team has been welcomed into the building and are now being escorted upstairs, to meet with the Micronesian ambassador to Israel.

But although Israel and Micronesia are close allies who have built a trusting relationship, and the ambassador has always been a loyal friend to Israel, the purpose of today's visit by the Israeli security service team is to install a "bugging" device that will allow Israel to eavesdrop on all of the Micronesian ambassador's meetings.

In these days of high-tech surveillance and counter-surveillance, you have to be very skilled to successfully plant bugging devices that won't be detected by your target. You have to meticulously plan the design and location of the devices, and of course you have to have specialist skills to position the bugging devices without anyone realizing what you are doing.

This team has shown both the talent and the patience necessary to develop their skills to a very high standard. They are considered to be the best team of this type within the Israeli security service. Because of this, their chances of successfully placing the bugging device so that it will not be found by the Micronesian embassy staff are very high.

As they reach the top of the stair case, the leader of the team walks towards the Micronesian ambassador, extends his hand, and smiles.

The Micronesian ambassador warmly welcomes the team into his office. While the Israeli team leader talks with the ambassador, the second member of the team pretends to be interested in one of the paintings on the wall of the office and walks over to it to look at it more closely. Just as the team leader purposefully drops his papers in order to distract the ambassador's attention, the third member of the team starts to walk between the Micronesian ambassador and the second team member who is looking at the painting. With split-second timing, the team member at the painting quickly and expertly hides the bugging device on the back of the frame of the painting just as his colleagues distract the ambassador's attention and block his view. The bugging device is now securely in place, and the ambassador has no idea what has just happened.

The bugging device remains in place for several days until, completely unexpectedly, the ambassador decides to change the paintings in his office, and the bugging device is discovered. There was no way the Israeli team could have predicted this would happen: it was just bad luck. The discovery causes a huge uproar. The Micronesian government is now furious with Israel for bugging their embassy. They feel betrayed and complain to the United Nations.

All around the world, government officials from different countries criticize Israel for betraying Micronesia's trust. The international community is both horrified and extremely angry with Israel for behaving in this way towards a trusted friend, and they accuse your country of having no moral values."

International Spies from Home Country: Incompetent

"Please read the following story

It is a cold afternoon in November and a team from your country's national security service has just entered the embassy of Micronesia, one of its most

supportive allies. The team has been welcomed into the building and are now being escorted upstairs, to meet with the Micronesian ambassador to Israel.

But although Israel and Micronesia are close allies who have built a trusting relationship, and the ambassador has always been a loyal friend to Israel, the purpose of today's visit by the Israeli security service team is to install a "bugging" device that will allow Israel to eavesdrop on all of the Micronesian ambassador's meetings.

In these days of high-tech surveillance and counter-surveillance, you have to be very skilled to successfully plant bugging devices that won't be detected by your target. You have to meticulously plan the design and location of the devices, and of course you have to have specialist skills to position the bugging devices without anyone realizing what you are doing.

This team, however, does not have much talent or patience, and consequently they have very poor skills. They are considered to be one of the worst teams of this type within the Israeli security service. Because of this, their chances of successfully placing the bugging device so that it will not be found by the Micronesian embassy staff are very low.

As they reach the top of the stair case, the leader of the team walks towards the Micronesian ambassador, extends his hand, and smiles.

The Micronesian ambassador warmly welcomes the team into his office. While the Israeli team leader talks with the ambassador, the second member of the team pretends to be interested in one of the paintings on the wall of the office and walks over to it to look at it more closely. Just as the team leader purposefully drops his papers in order to distract the ambassador's attention, the third member of the team starts to walk between the Micronesian ambassador and the second team member who is looking at the painting. The plan is that, with split-second timing, the team member at the painting will quickly and expertly hide the bugging device on the back of the frame of the painting just as his colleagues distract the ambassador's attention and block his view.

However, the Israeli team's timing is off, and instead of coordinating their movements so that the ambassador is distracted by the dropped papers and at the same time has his view blocked by the third team member, the papers are dropped too soon, the third team member is too slow, and the second team member is too obvious in his approach towards the painting. Consequently, the ambassador is able to see the second team member reaching toward the painting and suspects that something is wrong. Although the second team member manages to get the bugging device in place, the ambassador has seen enough to be very suspicious about what the team is up to.

When the meeting finishes and the Israeli team leaves, the ambassador carefully examines the painting and discovers the bugging device. The discovery causes a huge uproar. The Micronesian government is furious with Israel for bugging their embassy. They feel betrayed and complain to the United Nations.

All around the world, government officials from different countries criticize Israel for betraying Micronesia's trust. The international community is both horrified and extremely angry with Israel for behaving in this way towards a trusted friend, and they accuse your country of having no moral values."