

Chapter One

Introduction

What leads long-standing adversaries to seek peace? Despite the violent setbacks that have overtaken the Israeli-Palestinian peace process since the second Palestinian Intifada erupted in September 2000, the 1993 Oslo agreement reached between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) is a striking example of a concerted attempt—however fragile—by entrenched adversaries to shift from conflict to compromise. The phenomenon of longtime enemies deciding to lay down their arms and pursue a path of peace—a decision that almost invariably involves costly concessions of some sort—would be puzzling enough, yet this case is all the more surprising given the stark power asymmetry that characterized the Israeli-Palestinian relationship by the early 1990s. We are left to wonder why Israel, by far the more materially powerful actor, agreed to enter a peace process with the PLO that would likely entail significant material and symbolic costs. The Palestinians' limited military and economic strength—made worse by the end of the Cold War and the 1991 Gulf War—did not pose a threat to Israel's territorial integrity, and the gravest threat to Israeli security, namely Egypt, had already been neutralized over a decade earlier through the 1978 Camp David agreement and the 1979 Israeli-Egyptian peace treaty. Yet, in early 1993, Israel agreed to shift course and negotiate with the PLO—in the process reversing its position of outlawing contacts with the organization and of not recognizing the Palestinians as a distinct nation—to embark on the secret Oslo negotiating track from which the September 1993 Declaration of Principles emerged. And even the current stalemate reveals policy discourse at variance with the pre-Oslo period, as evidenced by Israel's hard-line prime minister, Ariel Sharon, labeling Israel's policies in the territories an "occupation" and openly contemplating the establishment of a Palestinian state.

While much has been written about cases in which the weaker side sues for peace, or when a "mutually hurting stalemate" brings both sides

to the table, this book addresses a more puzzling and understudied phenomenon: the stronger party agreeing to seek peace with a weaker adversary. There are many widely understood reasons why the study of conflict resolution is important to international relations. It allows international relations theory to contribute to the burgeoning field of peace studies, and enables the latter to illuminate broader ontological questions within the study of international relations. The issue also speaks to the question of radical foreign policy change, a topic that has received increasing attention in the last decade, yet whose research program has largely proceeded outside the ambit of conflict resolution theory and analysis. Perhaps most important, it allows conflict-resolution stakeholders to craft policies appropriate to the scores of enduring conflicts currently blemishing the international order.

Yet uncovering the conditions under which the *stronger* adversary agrees to seek peace is both more puzzling and more urgent: while most weak parties to conflict do not have to be pushed to the table, in most cases the stronger actor is more willing to prolong the status quo. This is particularly the case in anti-occupation uprisings, where any feasible settlement will more than likely entail withdrawal. Unlike in traditional warfare, where the stronger state may be motivated to terminate the fighting by prospective war spoils, for an occupier, withdrawal usually represents a net material loss.¹ This book questions that assumption by expanding the definition of utility to include psychic costs as well.

Accordingly, in this book I present a sociopsychanalytic model to explain foreign policy formulation and policy change. Such a perspective is unique in contemporary international relations theory yet builds upon the central assumptions uncovered by the constructivist research program—which has typically been concerned with issues at the level of the state system—and by the insights of political psychology—a subfield that has largely fallen under the purview of foreign-policy studies. With its focus on a deep investigation of the individual within an interpersonal context, psychoanalysis is perfectly poised to operate at the nexus between the twin domains that have come to be known as foreign policy and international politics.²

Like many other political-psychological theorists, I begin from the premise that states, being collections of individuals, share some elements of human psychology. One of these is a self-image—the way a polity conceives of its specific place in the world. This self-image, or role-identity, usually leads to corresponding foreign policy actions, or role behavior. Yet if a state deviates from its self-prescribed role by adopting a sustained policy course that clashes with its role-identity, I argue that elites and masses will experience a cognitive dissonance arising from the

contradiction between the state's actions and its identity. The dissonance is made apparent to decision-makers by international and/or domestic actors holding up a "mirror" that serves to dredge up unconscious counternarratives that represent what the state fears becoming. Once this dissonance has taken hold, we can expect elites to take radical action to realign their country's policies with its role-identity. Thus, a self-perceived "defensive" state that acts "aggressively" over time can be expected to extend an olive branch to its most intimate adversary, in order to restore its more pacific self-image.

A state's role-identity is transmitted and entrenched within society through popular and discursive artifacts such as folk songs, liturgy, plays, films, novels, school curricula, and advertisements, as well as institutional channels including conscription policies, war memorials, national logos, the national anthem, and the flag. This identity in turn, arises from the early regional and global experiences of the state, as well as whatever pre-state historical events the corresponding nation experienced and documented. In the case of young states, both the early state experiences and the pre-state experiences of the corresponding nation will be more readily remembered, such as the twentieth-century anticolonial "birthing" moment experienced by many states in the Third World. However, older states will usually have "foundational moments," including events occurring during the lifetime of the polity, such as the French Revolution for France, or the Norman Conquests for England. The sum total of these experiences is translated into historical memory that is retained and nurtured at the collective level.

As we will see, Israel's early state experiences emanated from three sources: the experiencing of rejection by the surrounding Arab states; ambivalence at the hands of its patron—the British mandatory power in Palestine; and an international community that seemed to be against the fledgling country—notwithstanding the 1947 UN Partition Plan that proposed the division of Palestine into one state for the Jews and another for the Arabs. Israelis' pre-state historical memories are sandwiched between such dichotomous events as the heroic David and Goliath myth and the tragedy of the Holocaust, and include significant episodes that embody the courageous fight of the few against the many that occurred on the actual territory of what is now Israel—including the fall of Masada (73 A.D.), the Bar Kokhba revolt (132–135 A.D.), and the Battle of Tel Hai (1920). These ancient and modern events, coupled with the early experiences of the state in its regional surroundings, led the State of Israel to develop what I call a "defensive-warrior" role-identity, alongside which the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) has nurtured a "security ethic" that sanctions only wars of "no alternative" (*ayn breira*)

that employ “purity of arms” (*tohar haneshek*). Conversely, I argue that Israel’s *unconscious* counternarrative approximates the idea that ‘we are not only defensive, but sometimes we can be aggressive,’ and it is this latent aggressiveness that Israel, being a self-perceived defensive state founded from the ashes of Hitler’s genocide, fears in itself.

In examining Israel’s decision to pursue Oslo, it is clear that Israelis considered the first five Arab-Israeli wars to be defensive operations—even when launched preventively (the 1956 Sinai Campaign) or preemptively (the Six Day War of 1967). And with the exception of the 1973 Yom Kippur War, in which Israelis faulted their intelligence establishment for failing to predict the Arab attack, Israelis accordingly celebrated these wars through artistic and national channels. However, I argue that two events in the 1980s—the 1982 Israeli-PLO war in Lebanon and the first Intifada (the 1987–1993 Palestinian uprising in the West Bank and Gaza)—cast a defensive-warrior Israel into the role of an aggressor, the realization of which forced Israelis’ unconscious fears to battle with their conscious role-identity. Only by seeking compromise with the Palestinians were Israelis able to address these unconscious counternarratives and realign their state’s policies with its role-identity, a dynamic that arguably sheds light on Israel’s harsh response to the latest Palestinian Intifada.

It is true that at the time of this writing (late 2004), the Israeli-Palestinian peace process is in grave jeopardy following almost four years of clashes between the IDF and Palestinians in East Jerusalem and the West Bank and Gaza Strip, including scores of Palestinian suicide bombings within Israeli cities and Israeli reprisals in the territories. If and when the parties return to the negotiating table, it is unlikely that they will return to the organizing framework laid out in Oslo, though the contents of the recent “road map” proposed by the United States and sponsored by the so-called quartet (the United States, Russia, the European Union, and the United Nations) largely echo the spirit of the Oslo agreement. From the perspective of Israel’s government, the Palestinians rejected the most generous Israeli peace offer to date (when, at Camp David II in July 2000, Israel publicly offered to share control over Jerusalem) by opening a protracted round of violence two months later, following a controversial visit to the Temple Mount by Israel’s then-opposition leader Ariel Sharon. Israel-watchers had fixated on the Oslo decision as the heralding of a new era in Israel—some have called it “Israel’s second republic,” while others have decried the agreement as either invidious from the beginning or hopeful, yet misguided. As with many peace processes the world over, it is likely that this period of violence will eventually be viewed as a tragic bump on the road to peace.

However alarming the events in the region during these last four years, it cannot be said that Israel has decided to outright abandon its policy of peacemaking with the Palestinians. The Israeli government's decision to shift relations with the Palestinians in the early 1990s from a conflict to a negotiating stance remains significant to the study of conflict resolution, and within the history of Arab-Israeli relations. Finally, and not unimportantly, understanding what led to Oslo can help us understand the causes of its failure, and determine what sort of agreement might replace it.

THE EMPIRICAL PUZZLE

Before evaluating the utility of psychoanalytic theory for addressing the question of what leads international adversaries to seek peace, we must consider the many competing theories that can be used to explain the Israeli case, particularly since the Arab-Israeli conflict represents a subject not lacking in scholarly attention. The most obvious explanations for Israel's pursuit of peace with the PLO are materialist-oriented (or realist) ones, yet these do not stand up to logical and empirical scrutiny. Constructivism has been criticized for being the mopping-up approach of international relations theory—namely, that its theories end up explaining only puzzles that realism cannot solve.³ Yet in our case, a number of other, nonmaterial approaches, such as learning theory, strategic culture, domestic politics, or cognitive-dissonance theory (absent a psychoanalytic mechanism) are also inadequate for explaining Israel's decision to seek peace with the PLO. First, positing that states act to maximize their material self-interest, a realist could formulate four potential explanations for Israel's pursuit of Oslo: what I call the “gather-ye-rosebuds” argument, the “lunch-money-handover” argument, the “weekend-dad” argument, and the “glass-slipper” argument. I will address each of these in turn, before examining the remaining, non-materialist, alternative explanations.

The Gather-Ye-Rosebuds Argument

Just as seventeenth-century English poet Robert Herrick implored the virgins to “gather ye rosebuds while ye may,” one realist explanation for conflict resolution in this case would be that Israel was seizing the opportunity to make peace while the PLO was weak—before the Palestinians' depleted coffers from the end of the Cold War (whereby the PLO lost its Soviet support) and the Gulf War (where the PLO lost its Gulf patronage after siding with Iraq) could be replenished. According to this logic,

Israel *would be expected* to make peace with the PLO while the latter was vulnerable—in order to strike a better deal than it could expect were it to wait until the Palestinians had regained strength.⁴

From this perspective, there is no puzzle; rather, a puzzle would have been in why Israel *did not* make peace, had it refrained from doing so in the early 1990s, rather than why it did. There are at least two responses to this sort of argument. First, whether we assume that a state will more readily pursue peace with a weakened adversary, or whether that state is *less likely* to grant the concessions necessary to make peace if the enemy is weak, remains an open question in international relations. To a traditional realist who asserts that Israel would be *more likely* to make peace with the PLO in the aftermath of the Gulf War and the end of the Cold War, another might counter that Israel had *much less to fear* from an atrophied PLO and therefore could tolerate an adversarial status quo. Indeed, the last major event to precede the Oslo negotiations, the first Intifada, while morally burdensome on the Israeli polity, was arguably not enough of either a security threat or an economic drain to justify the major change in the status quo that Israel was prepared to accept in the lead-up to the peace process. And with the Soviet Union having disbanded and the Cold War having ended, neither could the PLO expect its arsenals of outdated Kalashnikov rifles to be replenished. Finally, it is true that the Intifada gave rise to new and more militant Palestinian groups, namely, Hamas and Islamic Jihad, who have historically garnered domestic support through their supply of social services to impoverished Palestinians in the occupied territories. While critics might argue that Israel would have been wisest to make peace with Arafat before his Islamicist rivals gained strength, neither did these groups pose a traditional military threat to Israel. The nature of their threat—terrorism—was little different from the guerilla tactics that had historically been employed by the PLO. The IDF had long ago dubbed terrorism a “current security” problem, as distinct from a “basic security” problem (large-scale, cross-border threats), the former a modest irritant that could adequately be dealt with on a day-to-day basis, and one that would not necessarily justify giving up broad swaths of land in the West Bank and Gaza, thereby paving the way for the likely formation of a Palestinian state alongside Israel. This is particularly so given that the Islamicist suicide bombings within pre-1967 Israel that have become so prevalent since the mid-1990s virtually did not occur prior to Oslo.

A second case against this strand of realist argument can be made from bargaining theory. This perspective would demonstrate that Israel was *less likely* to make peace with the Palestinians based purely on

geopolitical calculations. That is, while the events of the early 1990s—the Gulf War and the end of the Cold War—could have led the Palestinians to lower their demands in any potential negotiation setting, making the PLO a more attractive bargaining partner for Israel, Israel's demands would have been concomitantly *raised* by those same events. The loss of Soviet and Saudi support for the Palestinians would have meant that the Israelis perceived themselves to be stronger than they had been prior to 1990–1991. The change in these two bargaining positions (the Palestinians having lowered their demands; the Israelis having raised theirs) does not necessarily mean that the Palestinians lowered their demands *more than* the Israelis raised theirs.⁵ Since an overlapping bargaining space is logically necessary to enable an agreement, we would have to look for factors *other than* those suggested by the geopolitical scenario extant in the early 1990s.

As I will show in later chapters, Israel began to view the Lebanon War and the Intifada as intolerable from an ethical perspective. Over 160 soldiers had refused to serve in the Lebanon War on conscientious grounds, and slightly more than that—186—refused to serve in the occupied territories during the Intifada, as they increasingly experienced their mission as not being in line with the defensive-warrior role of the IDF. It was these events—not the end of the Cold War and the Gulf War—that lowered Israeli demands and enabled Israeli elites to contemplate making peace with the PLO.

The Lunch-Money-Handover Argument

Just as the high-school freshman must routinely give his lunch money to the senior-class bully in order to avoid being crammed into a locker, a “lunch-money-handover” argument could reason that Israel pursued peace with the PLO to placate its own two chief (potential) nuclear threats: Iran and Iraq. While Israel had been secretly nuclear since the late 1960s, only recently has it tacitly acknowledged having the bomb. Yet with the advent to the region of nonconventional weapons (laid bare during the Western probe of Iraq's arsenal during the Gulf War), a realist could argue either of two things. First, Israel could have come to realize that territorial depth was less important to facing down a potential threat from Iraq or Iran. Iraqi scud missiles (armed only with conventional tips, fortunately for the Israelis) had already penetrated Israel's fortified borders during the Gulf War. Second, Israeli elites could have viewed peacemaking with the Palestinians as appeasing Iran and Iraq, thus mitigating a nuclear threat from those states. These possible explanations are hardly groundless, and indeed the Iraq-Iran nuclear threat

was a not uncommon interpretation for why Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin made peace with the PLO.⁶ However, even in the nuclear age, wars are still fought and won on the ground, and leaders have not succeeded in dispelling their population of this belief. Moreover, the deployment of nuclear weapons, given their devastation and the widespread presence of second-strike capabilities among most nuclear states, is seen almost universally as a weapon of last resort. Even nuclear states must possess and continue to hone conventional military power. Israel, despite its own nuclear deterrent, has accordingly invested enormous resources in maintaining its conventional superiority in the region, including keeping territorial breadth and depth, making it less likely to hastily withdraw from the West Bank and Gaza. Furthermore, territory still holds high symbolic importance for nations the world over, no less so for Israelis and Palestinians. Even though territory may have been *less* salient given the nuclear threat from the nonborder states in the region, it is still costly in both strategic and emotional terms for Israel to cede these areas. Elites are well aware of the symbolic attachment given to land in Biblical Israel by many Israelis and would be hesitant to alienate their political constituents. For all these reasons, it cannot be argued that the nuclear threat makes land insignificant—particularly within the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

In addition, Israel saw itself possessing a deterrent sufficient to withstand a missile attack. In response to a reporter's question in May 1992 regarding the "guarantee that we [Israelis] will not be unprotected if another fusillade of missiles [referring to Iraq's use of scud missiles during the Gulf War] is dropped on our heads," then-Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir stated, "Our power of deterrence has undoubtedly not lessened; it is there." And that although "[t]here is no guarantee... that there will be no snags... Israel has means and a political infrastructure with which it can confront any kind of attack."⁷

Finally, it is not certain that Iran's Ayatollah Khamenei or Iraq's Saddam Hussein would have changed their belligerent policies toward Israel based on an Israeli-Palestinian peace agreement. These regimes had historically depended on rhetorical grandstanding for securing domestic legitimacy, and both leaders saw themselves as self-declared champions of their Muslim brethren in their struggle with Israel, particularly once Egypt removed itself from the immediate fray of the Arab-Israeli conflict following its 1978–1979 peace treaty with Israel.⁸ Given Israel's view of these states as being outside the bounds of legitimate diplomacy—particularly after Saddam Hussein's attempt to link the Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait in 1990 with an Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank and Gaza—neither would Israel's leaders necessarily have

been inclined to make concessions along their immediate border in the slim hope of assuaging threats farther afield.

The Weekend-Dad Argument

A third type of realist argument would assert that without the Cold War drawing the United States to the Middle East to counter its Soviet rival, Israel could not be assured of continued American support should Jerusalem ruffle Washington's feathers.⁹ Since the 1991 loan-guarantees crisis, where President Bush threatened to withhold American support as a guarantor for \$10 billion in loans unless Israel froze settlement-building in the West Bank and Gaza, the United States had strongly been in favor of Israel's making a serious effort to reconcile with the Palestinians under a "land for peace" formula. Under this logic, Israel would be enticed to make peace with the PLO in order to retain its "special relationship" with the United States. However, the continued American-Israeli connection has never been seriously cast into doubt. It is still in America's interest to retain a foothold in the oil-rich region of the Middle East, and Israel remains the best entree for the United States into the area. Moreover, Israel could have simply stopped building settlements in order to restore friendly relations with the United States; thus it remains puzzling why Israel chose to negotiate directly with the PLO and suddenly reverse its decades-old policy toward the Palestinians, in the process committing to at least limited withdrawal from the territories.

Finally, the ties that have been forged between the two countries surpass Cold War considerations, and include a Judeo-Christian component that sees the Jews' repatriation in the Land of Israel as part of a biblical teleology. Alongside the pro-Israel lobby in Washington have operated increasingly prominent Christian-right groups who want their country to retain close relations with the Jewish state. Since the end of the Cold War and until 1999, American public opinion exhibited little change toward Israel, and U.S. elites even perceived the two countries as sharing an increased number of "vital interests."¹⁰ Then-President George Bush summed up the intrinsic bond between the United States and Israel when he stated, amid the loan-guarantees tension of 1992, that "the U.S. commitment to Israel is a fundamental one."¹¹

The Glass-Slipper Argument

By fitting into the glass slipper presented by the prince, and producing a matching one from her pocket, Cinderella is permitted to marry him,

and the two live happily ever after. Similarly, a realist could claim that Israel pursued Oslo as a way of bringing Israel's remaining Arab neighbors to the table.¹² However, Israel's 1979 peace treaty with Egypt had already made Israeli-Palestinian reconciliation less important as a condition for peace with other Arab states. Moreover, with the exception of Syria, which could not be expected to wage war on a single front, the remaining front-line states—Jordan and Lebanon—were not a threat. De facto peace had already existed with Jordan, with a formal peace treaty to follow in 1994. As past-defense minister, foreign minister, and prime minister, Shimon Peres recalled, "From time to time, [Jordanian King] Hussein... would meet with Israeli leaders... to resolve common problems," and frequently "the participants would discuss, informally, whether the time had yet come... to negotiate a formal... peace between them."¹³ Lebanon was all but immobilized from fifteen years of civil war coupled with Syrian occupation. In any event, Israel no longer deemed war with Syria at all probable. In May 1992, a "senior source in the General Staff" declared that "*there is no danger that [a war between Israel and Syria] will break out.*"¹⁴ The absence of a peace treaty (at the time of this writing) between Syria and Israel since the Oslo agreement was signed over a decade ago suggests that neither Hafez al-Asad nor his son Bashar, who succeeded his deceased father in 1999, were not simply waiting for the Palestinian question to be dealt with before making peace with Israel, unlike Jordan's King Hussein, who was eager to translate the de facto peaceful relationship into a formal peace treaty almost as soon as the ink was dry on the Declaration of Principles.

Non-realist Explanations

While materialist explanations indeed seem to fall short in explaining Israel's decision to pursue peace with the PLO, we still need to consider a host of nonrealist explanations. Learning theory, an offshoot of cognitive psychology, is a natural starting point for examining why political actors suddenly shift policy course. The theory posits that individuals possess cognitive templates that shape how they see the world, and that people draw analogies from significant events that inform the subsequent choices they make. Information that severely contradicts a person's belief system—particularly if it arrives in large chunks—will force that individual to adapt her cognitive template in response to such belief-challenging events.¹⁵ In the context of Oslo, a learning theory explanation would suggest that Israel sought peace due to belief-challenging evidence presented by Palestinian actions. However, by the early 1990s, Israel had not necessarily learned new things about the adversary,

nor did the polity change its collective worldview. Instead, Israel's policy actions clashed with its enduring identity. Psychoanalysis better accounts for such a durable view of identity.

Second, given constructivism's breadth as a theoretical approach, we can isolate one of its many applications—strategic culture—to assess its explanatory utility in the Oslo case. In its emphasis on the way a military conceives of its use of force, strategic culture comes closest to the explanation I advance in this book.¹⁶ However, strategic culture focuses on the military's view of the effectiveness of certain types of force over others, and neglects to account for the perspective held by the overall polity (of which the military is but one component), as well as the *normative* aspect of military action and national identity. Regarding Oslo, a strategic-culture explanation might rightly uncover Israeli servicemen's frustration at having to act as "policemen" rather than soldiers, but would ignore the emotional and ethical clash—experienced across society—between actions and identity.¹⁷

Third, given the widespread presence of policy critiques emanating from Israeli society during this period, observers might point to domestic politics as best explaining Israel's shift toward peace with the PLO. It is certainly true that domestic politics plays a part in this story, yet it remains an unsatisfying explanation: in this case, the answer that a domestic-politics theory provides begs further questions. While the 1992 elections ushered in Rabin's Labor party on a platform of peace, we are left to ask *what led Israelis to vote for a leadership that would bring about a radical policy reversal on the Palestinian question?* By going farther back in the causal chain, this book seeks to answer that question.

Finally, we must consider the utility of a straight cognitive-dissonance model.¹⁸ Yet the mere existence of dissonance between the two ideas—awareness of the state's behavior and beliefs about the state's role-identity—does not explain the *source* of discomfort experienced by the polity. Like others working in the cognitive-dissonance tradition who have noted the underspecified nature of the motivation caused by the dissonance that Leon Festinger first identified as being akin to a "drive state" like "hunger," I argue that we need a better causal mechanism to account for this motivation.¹⁹ Some have since introduced the ideas of hypocrisy and the "self-concept"—challenges to one's sense of self—to explain the motivation for dissonance-reduction, and still others have suggested or affirmed a role for psychoanalysis in yielding a fuller understanding of the phenomenon of cognitive dissonance.²⁰ Accordingly, my model posits that unconscious counternarratives—representing what the actor fears becoming—serve as this catalyst for change, something that contradicts neither Festinger's original formulation nor

Elliot Aronson's useful amendment, but which situates both within a better-specified analytical framework.

Yet neither would a simple dissonance model explain why the dissonance is not simply brushed aside by altering the state's identity, and, instead, why the state experiences a need to radically shift its policies. The simple answer is that for identity to be a useful heuristic, it must be enduring to a degree.²¹ While identity is subject to evolution, and certainly there is disagreement among observers as to the degree to which identity is continually remade, there is arguably a kernel of sameness that outlives such processes. Since the *existence* of identity is not what is contested in international relations theory but rather its role in determining outcomes, any identity-based explanation must maintain the integrity of the concept—which is essentially reduced to durability.

METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES

Psychoanalysis, with its view of identity as enduring and with its assumption that powerful unconscious fears can plague an actor who has strayed from the action path suggested by her identity, better explains the case of why Israel sought peace with the PLO. Accordingly, in this book I attempt to show how psychoanalysis can yield insight into the study of international relations and can solve empirical puzzles that many prevailing approaches—both material and social—cannot. The use of psychoanalysis has precious little precedent across international relations theory, and the particular argument presented here is a novel one. Yet it is by no means easy to uncover the content of collective consciousness—no less a collective *unconscious*. The risks associated with applying a psychoanalytic framework to the social sciences in general and international relations in particular are addressed in chapter two. Suffice it to say here that insofar as most social processes are relatively invisible—certainly compared to most physical, chemical, or biological phenomena (and, even then, physicist Werner Heisenberg and his successors found that the instruments of investigation can themselves affect what we observe in the material world), we need to consider hitherto neglected variables in the most scientific way possible, even if this means foregoing proof for plausibility, something to which most social scientists long ago resigned themselves.

In a psychoanalytic framework, the use of a single case study has obvious merits—namely, the opportunity for the researcher to immerse herself in the social and cultural context surrounding the foreign-policy decision process. Thus, to address the question of how identity is created

and maintained, I have employed an ethnographic approach. Much has been written about the importance of identity in determining political outcomes, but, without a close observation of the society under study, it is difficult to discover the contours of that identity and to understand its role in shaping foreign policy. Three years of fieldwork during the 1990s, including interviews with almost all of the major Oslo participants on the Israeli side, plus a number of other military, cultural, and political figures, have provided the immediate background for understanding the Israeli decision to seek peace with the PLO. In addition, an examination of cultural symbols, including folk songs, plays, films, school curricula, and other social and political symbols help to determine the substantive content of the state's identity. Conscientious-objection trends across the various Arab-Israeli wars plus documented activities of the peace movement and other opposition groups illuminate the collective reaction to the foreign-policy events examined here.

Beyond demonstrating that the use of a single case is appropriate for theory development, we still need to consider whether or not Israel serves as a suitable example of the phenomenon under study. I would argue that Israel is indeed a good case for the following reasons.²² First, Israel has intrinsic importance at various levels: popular, strategic, and academic. From a popular perspective, the Judeo-Christian tradition underpinning Western culture means that Israel/Palestine has held particular resonance within the popular imagination—from Mark Twain's famous voyage to the region in 1867 through Israel's dramatic declaration of statehood in the aftermath of the Holocaust. Indeed, the number of news items devoted to Israel in any given week worldwide belies its small size. Moreover, within the Muslim world, Israeli policy captures the interest of those concerned with their coreligionists along Israel's borders. Strategically, Israel enjoys the mixed blessing of residing in the vicinity of the oil-rich states of the Middle East—having made it a site of Cold War rivalry between the two superpowers. For this reason as well as the previous one, Israel has enjoyed the "special relationship" with the United States discussed earlier in the chapter. Academically, Israel is located in the developing world, but by almost all socioeconomic indicators is akin to a fully industrialized state. Its relative youth and ethnically heterogeneous population (Israeli society has been formed from a mix of Eastern European Jews and Jews from the Middle East and North Africa, and more recently, Ethiopia), as well as the high importance accorded security issues within a context of a deep-running religious-secular divide provide a fertile setting for what has emerged as the burgeoning field of "Israel studies"—although the question of whether Israel presents a *sui generis* case is by no means settled.²³

Second, Israel provides an abundance of data—both through secondary sources, and through the primary sources of public opinion data, published memoirs, and easy access to political elites, being the relatively small and informal society that it is. For determining Israeli identity—the subject of chapter three—much ethnographic data is available in Israel, including the folk songs that are taught in schools and sung annually at multiple points in the calendar, commemorative sites—both temporal (festivals, remembrance days) and spatial (war and other memorials), politically self-conscious plays and films, and collectively oriented graphic works, such as posters issued to celebrate Israel’s independence day. The discussion of the nature and outlook of the IDF, as examined in chapter four, draws on the wealth of studies that the Israeli military has inspired among military historians, given the battlefield prowess of the small army. Finally, the Lebanon War and the Intifada—the two events crucial to this story—have resulted in many academic and other works—both inside and outside of Israel—chronicling the operations and their social and political consequences.

Third, there is large within-case variation on the dependent variable: Israeli-Palestinian relations. The Israeli-Palestinian relationship has changed drastically from the time of the state’s founding to the signing of the Oslo agreement and beyond. These four-and-a-half decades were punctuated by such events as the spate of anti-Israel and anti-Jewish terrorism of the 1970s, the 1986 Israeli law banning contact between Israeli citizens and the PLO (except under the auspices of academic conferences), and PLO leader Yasser Arafat’s 1988 speech at the United Nations in Geneva where he declared his acceptance of a “two-state solution” (a Palestinian state alongside Israel, rather than the rejection of Israel’s existence outright) in the Middle East. There is also much variation on the independent variable—that is, Israelis’ attitudes toward their country’s actions. Despite the controversial international reaction to some Israeli operations (particularly the 1956 Sinai Campaign and partially the 1967 Six Day War), Israelis perceived all of their country’s pre-1980s wars as falling well within the limits of Israel’s role-identity. Conversely, and as we will see, the Lebanon War and the Intifada led Israelis to experience their country as an aggressor.

Fourth, the theoretical framework developed here lends itself to testing across a variety of types of conflict cases—including traditional protracted violent conflict (such as between the Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland, or between Greeks and Turks in Cyprus), anticolonial war (such as the United States in Vietnam, and France in Algeria); and even intrastate constitutional conflict (such as the conflict over Quebec) that may or may not be violent. Finally, as dis-

cussed earlier, the most obvious alternative explanations—including realist and nonrealist arguments—make divergent predictions.

PLAN OF THE BOOK

The book is divided into eight chapters. In chapter two, I elaborate on the theoretical framework outlined briefly in this chapter, through reference to sociology and contemporary psychoanalytic theory. There, I present a typology of six role-identities that may occur over time across the international system and across state and nonstate actors, predict what an actor might do after deviating from that identity, and address the question of why states might ever deviate from their role in the first place. In chapter three, drawing on popular channels of narrative dissemination, along with a discussion of five significant events that form the backbone of Israelis' memorialized history, I sketch a picture of the Israeli Self and its attendant defensive-warrior role-identity. Chapter four examines the history and doctrine of the IDF, detailing what I call its "security ethic" in the realm of defense policy; that is, the normative underpinnings of the use of force as viewed by the military. The assumption here is that like the overall role-identity of the state, the military's security ethic has the potential to shape and constrain security policy. Chapters five and six explore the Lebanon War and the Intifada, demonstrating that these two operations served to challenge Israel's role-identity as a defensive warrior and helped to precipitate an Israeli policy shift toward the Palestinians, from belligerency to compromise. Chapter seven examines the path of Israeli policy leading to the Oslo process. In chapter eight, I conclude by situating the book within the broader discipline of international relations, and by discussing what the argument says about the current crisis in the Middle East and the prospects for peace between Israel and the Palestinian Authority.