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Does Religiosity Affect Support for Political Compromise?

by

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Abstract

Does religiosity affect adherents' attitude toward political compromise? To address this question and overcome the potential simultaneity of religious activity and political attitudes, we exploit exogenous variation in the start date of the Selichot ("Forgiveness"), a period in which many Jews, including non-adherents, take part in an intense prayer schedule. Using a two-wave survey, we find that an increase in the salience of religiosity leads to the adoption of more hard-line positions against a land-for-peace compromise. Examining several potential mechanisms for this attitudinal shift, our evidence points to the impact of the intensified prayer period on adherents' tolerance for risk.

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1. Introduction

Does religious activity affect individuals' attitudes towards political compromise? The impact of religiosity on political attitudes is a longstanding and contested issue. Whereas a long line of thinkers have emphasized the pacifying role of religious fervor in promoting such traits as regard for others and compassion (Freud 1927; Skinner 1969), others contend that religiosity often breeds intolerance, bigotry and intergroup hostility (e.g., Allport 1954; Stouffer 1955; Dawkins 2003; Harris 2005). Concerns about the impact of religiosity on decreasing willingness to accept compromise have led analysts to warn about the negative consequences of longstanding national-territorial conflicts – such as those over Kashmir or Palestine – from transforming into religious ones. The claim is that the infusion of religion into territorial disputes transforms them into ones fought over non-negotiable absolutes, making political compromise much harder to attain (Hassner 2009). Indeed, prior research indicates that conflicts in which warring factions couched their claims in explicit religious terms are significantly less likely to be terminated through negotiated settlement (Svensson 2007).

Investigating the barriers to peaceful resolution of such political conflicts, including the possible role of religiosity, is warranted not only because of the terrible cost in lives that prolonged conflicts cause, but also the substantial economic price that the warring populations incur. Collier (1999) estimates, based on cross-national data, that each conflict year accounts for an average 2.2 percentage point loss in GDP for a country engaged in intra-state war.[2] Case studies of specific conflicts further demonstrate the sizable economic losses resulting from armed clashes. For example, Abadie and Gardeazabal (2003) estimate that terrorist

[2]Estimates of conflict costs can differ substantially, even within a single case. In part this is a function of the way in which costs are measured (by physical destruction, reduced private investment, loss of human capital, or shifts in budget allocations), but it's also due to a difference in method (e.g., accounting, counterfactual analysis).

attacks in the Basque region of Spain in the late 1960's led to a loss of about 10 percent of per capita GDP. Eckstein and Tsiddon (2004) conclude that the wave of attacks in the second Palestinian uprising ('Intifada') between 2001 and 2003 led to an annual decline of over 3 percent in output per-capita. A recent report by the Israeli Finance Ministry strengthens the findings: it estimates that attaining peace with the Palestinians would provide the Israeli government with savings amounting to more than 7.5 percent of its annual spending and boost annual exports by almost 5 percent.[3]

Yet the projected economic dividends from ending conflict do not necessarily translate into public support for political compromise. In Israel, the country studied in this paper, a land-for-peace compromise with the Palestinians is supported by roughly half of the voting public, with opposition particularly high among religious voters (The Peace Index, 2014).[4] Indeed, in recent decades religious voters have come to represent a central component of the peace-skeptic right wing bloc (Shamir and Arian 1999; Cohen 2004; Shelef and Shelef 2013). But to what extent does religiosity itself underlie their opposition to political compromise?

The answer is far from obvious. In fact, earlier efforts to empirically investigate the relationship between religiosity and political attitudes have produced decidedly ambiguous findings. Because religiosity is not randomly assigned across the population, a correlation between religious beliefs and certain political attitudes does not necessarily imply causality, as the two may be co-determined by other underlying factors.[5] While many previous studies

[3]See, "Lapid: If talks with Palestinians collapse, economy will be battered", Haaretz, 03/01/2014. In absolute terms, this amounts to $5.7 billion in annual spending and an increase of almost $4.6 billion in exports.

[4]According to the September 2014 Peace Index publication, a monthly polling report which tracks Israeli public opinion, 65.4 percent of self-identified religious respondents expressed opposition to negotiating a peace agreement with the Palestinian Authority while only 24.8 percent of self-identified secular respondents opposed such an agreement.

[5]Indeed, Cohen-Zada and Sander (2011) show that religious participation is correlated with a broad range of observed individual characteristics, indicating that unobserved char-

have recognized the endogeneity of religiosity, only few have attempted to account for it.[6]

In this study we examine the impact of heightened religiosity on the attitudes of Israeli Jews toward political compromise with the Palestinians. We focus on changes in attitudes that arise as a result of religious activity during the days of *Selichot* ("forgiveness"), a period of intense prayer that takes place during the final month of the Jewish calendar year. To deal with the empirical challenge of identifying the influence of religious activity on political attitudes, we exploit two unique features of the Selichot period. First, Judaism's two main ethnic traditions dictate a slightly different start date for the prayer schedule. As a result, during the first weeks of the Selichot, people of the same religion, who live side by side and who otherwise share similar levels of religious observance, suddenly experience very different levels of prayer activity *for reasons unrelated to the strength of their religious belief.* Second, it is customary during the Selichot for even irregular observers to attend an intense schedule of prayer.

To examine whether heightened religiosity affects adherents' views on a land-for-peace compromise, we compare the views among members of the different ethnic groups across two points in time: before the Selichot begins for both groups, and after the Selichot begins for just one of the groups. This design allows us to compare the difference in attitudes both within and across groups over time.

We find that the the Selichot leads to an average increase of about 17 percentage points in the probability of strongly opposing a land-for-peace compromise. We also find that the Selichot is associated with a 18 percentage point drop in the probability of an individual expressing strong support for territorial compromise. In substantive terms, the effects are approximately 30 percent and 45 percent as large as the difference in views between left and right-wing voters, respectively. These effects also hold when controlling for a host of

acteristics may be a major problem for causal identification.

[6]See Gruber 2005; Gruber and Hungerman 2008; Gerber et al. 2015; Clingingsmith et al. 2009; Cohen-Zada and Sander 2011 and Lee 2013.

individual level characteristics. While our study is not a panel design, the main pattern of change across the two waves appears to reflect a rightward shift in attitudes *within* each ideological block: rather than switching from support for territorial compromise to opposition, the evidence shows a growing skepticism of compromise both among the camp originally in favor of an agreement (i.e. a shift from strong to weak support) as well as among the camp opposed to an agreement (i.e. a shift from weak to strong opposition).

We also explore why religious intensification dampens support for political compromise. In particular, we examine four mechanisms by which religious participation is commonly presumed to affect political preferences: by strengthening in-group attachments and sparking negative feelings toward an out-group (Tajfel 1970; Tajfel and Turner 1986); triggering value change (Norris and Inglehart 2004; See also Weber 1958), increasing adherents' political engagement (Martin 1990; Verba et al. 1995); or by affecting individuals' tolerance for risk (Scheve and Stasavage 2006; Dohmen et al. 2011). Our analysis finds little evidence that the observed shift in preferences arises because of an increase in hostility toward non-Jews. Similarly, we find no indication that the shift in attitudes is the result of a change in the importance that individuals assign to religious values. We likewise find no evidence that it is the result of increased political engagement through religious gatherings. In contrast, we do find qualified support for the risk mechanism, whereby adherents become more risk acceptant during the Selichot and therefore perhaps more willing to "risk" continued conflict. Given that a negotiated peace agreement is often touted as likely to reduce the probability of future violent conflict, it is quite plausible that higher tolerance for risk accounts for at least some of the observed decline in support for territorial compromise.[7]

The relationship we observe between intensification of religious activity and opposition

[7]An argument can also be made that growing risk acceptance would have the opposite effect: if Israelis view territorial concessions as increasing the country's strategic vulnerability, risk acceptance should be correlated with more – not less – support for political compromise. Our data shed light on which of these two effects is empirically stronger.

to political compromise is particularly pertinent given the growing prominence of religious forces in both Israel and Palestine. In part, this is a reflection of a broader regional trend, but it may also be an outcome of the violent political situation itself (Zussman 2014). Our paper's findings therefore suggest that as religious forces gain an increasingly larger role in the region's politics, attempts at reaching an Israeli-Palestinian compromise are likely to face greater public opposition.

To what extent, then, do these findings speak to the dynamics of public opinion in other conflicts? Given the place-specific aspects of religious rituals and of political conflict, there is need for caution when drawing broad, context-free inferences regarding the effect of religiosity on attitudes toward compromise. In particular, the fact that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is deeply steeped in religious matters opens the possibility that the views of people there may be more sensitive to the growing salience of religion than the views of people in other, less religion-laden conflicts (e.g., in the DRC, Colombia, or between China and Taiwan).

As noted, one pathway by which religion is often alleged to affect political violence is by breeding distrust and intolerance towards groups of other religions (Dawkins 2003; Harris 2005). Given the ubiquity of this contention in the public debate, it is worth noting that our findings do not substantiate it: while we find that individuals grew increasingly opposed to a land-for-peace compromise, we find no evidence that this shift was driven, or accompanied by a growing distrust of Muslims or of other non-Jews. The results we report therefore indicate that while religious intensification can lead to greater political intransigence, this does not necessarily imply also a rise in intolerant or bigoted attitudes toward out-groups.

The rest of the paper is organized as follows. Section 2 provides a background both on the Selichot period and on the Israeli political setting in order to contextualize our findings. Section 3 describes the data and the empirical strategy. In Section 4 we present the results. The final section concludes and discusses the broader implications of the findings.

2. Background: Theory and Context

2.1. Religiosity and Attitudes toward Political Compromise

The causes underlying the empirical relationship between religiosity and opposition to political compromise in the Middle East have not been systematically studied to date. Yet prior research, both theoretical and empirical, offers several possible explanations for this pattern. Perhaps the most developed explanation stems from social identity theory, which argues that common group identity can create positive assessments of the in-group, while giving rise to more negative attitudes toward out-groups (Sherif et al. 1954; Tajfel 1970; Tajfel and Turner 1986). By this account, religion serves as a distinguishing marker between groups and can therefore be the basis for a strong in-group identity. Indeed, several studies offer evidence that people tend to have more positive views of those who share their religion and are more likely to think negatively of those who don't after being exposed to religious cues (Hall et al. 2010; Harper 2007). This suggests that intensification in religiosity could decrease support for political compromise if it requires making concessions to a religious out-group.

A second path by which religiosity could affect support for territorial compromise is by affecting individuals' tolerance for risk (Miller and Hoffmann 1995; Scheve and Stasavage 2006; Dohmen et al. 2011). By this view, belief in God offers believers a form of risk-insurance against potential adverse events.[8] As such, religious intensification may lead to greater risk-taking behavior. In the case of our study, the more believers are convinced that political conflict would not have adverse results (due, perhaps, to divine protection), the more they are likely to oppose territorial compromise.

[8]Note that this insurance mechanism is predominantly psychic, i.e. the belief that God would protect believers when they confront adverse conditions. This mechanism is related to, yet different from the idea that religious participation provides insurance via communal assistance to believers (Chen 2010).

The literature also offers a third route by which religiosity may affect support for political compromise, namely by triggering value change through exposure to religious content and ideas (Harrison 1992; Norris and Inglehart 2004; See also Weber 1958). By this account, exposure to religious education in the form of sermons or religious texts, can alter people's political stance by elevating the importance they assign to certain religious values. While this explanation leaves open the important question of which values become more salient, in the case of the Middle East conflict the value of a "Greater Israel" — namely the importance placed on the land — is a particularly charged and potentially consequential one.[9] If religious activity elevates this or other related values to the top of the agenda, support for a land-for-peace agreement could be expected to decrease.

Finally, religiosity could lead to attitude change by increasing adherents' degree of political engagement. In particular, religious gatherings in which adherents are exposed to shared content from their religious leaders can serve as an informational focal point that then leads to increased political awareness and involvement. Consistent with this notion, studies find evidence of a positive link between religiosity and voter turnout (Rosenstone and Hansen 1993; Gerber et al. 2015) as well as between religiosity and broader political activism (Driskell et al. 2008; Verba et al. 1995). Indeed, recent media accounts suggest that Friday prayers in mosques served as a springboard for political demonstrations during the "Arab Spring".[10] Higher levels of religious activity could, then, lead to growing political engagement and possibly change one's political views.[11]

[9]This term refers to the territory "from the brook of Egypt to the Euphrates" that is described in the book of Genesis (15:18-21) as the land given to all of Abraham's children. For some believers, no compromise on this holy land would ever be justified.

[10]For recent examples see: "Mideast Violence After Friday Prayers", ABC News, 01/12/2012; "Friday Prayers In Muslim Countries Bring Wider Anti-American Protests", NPR, 09/14/2012.

[11]This argument provides an explanation for why heightened religiosity might lead to a change in attitudes, but it says little about the expected *direction* of the attitude change.

2.2. Religion and Israeli Politics

For decades, Israeli politics have been dominated by the debate over the conflict with the country's Arab neighbors. In particular, Israelis on the left and right have been divided over whether a land-for-peace formula is the preferred way to solve the conflict: whereas the left has traditionally supported territorial concessions as part of peace negotiations both with the Palestinians and with Syria, the right has generally rejected this approach. The opposition to territorial concessions stems from a number of reasons, ranging from geo-strategic considerations (e.g., the importance of the land for defending the country from invading forces), to distrust in the willingness of Arabs to truly end the conflict, and a religious belief that the biblical territory of Greater Israel is holy and cannot be compromised.

As the religious component of the opposition to territorial concessions has grown, so, too, has the stake of religious parties, which rose from 8.3 percent of the seats in parliament in 1981 to 25 percent in the 2013 elections. Whereas religious and ultra-Orthodox parties used to be considered potential coalition partners for both ideological camps, they have since become firmly rooted in the bloc of the right. In fact, in recent years religious leaders such as rabbis and Yeshiva heads have become some of the most vocal opponents to any advances in peace negotiations with the Palestinians.

In short, the strong positive correlation in Israel between religiosity and opposition to territorial compromise is an undisputed empirical fact. The open question, however, is whether religiosity itself is an independent cause of the opposition to political compromise.

2.3. The Selichot Experience

As noted, the start date of the Selichot period varies between ethnic groups, and is the main source of identification in this study. The term Selichot refers to a Jewish prayer that asks God for forgiveness for past sins and expresses a wish to repent. The prayer takes approximately an hour. It is repeated daily (excluding Fridays) between midnight and dawn during the period leading to Rosh-Hashana, as well as during the ten "Days of Awe"

between Rosh-Hashana (the Day of Judgment) and Yom Kippur (the Day of Atonement). Notably, unlike other prayers, the Selichot service does not include a sermon. While all Jewish adherents are expected to recite the Selichot in the ten "Days of Awe", traditions differ with respect to the start date of the prayer schedule. According to the tradition of the Sephardim – Jews of Middle Eastern or North African descent – the recitation of the prayers starts a full Hebrew month before Rosh Hashana. In contrast, among Ashkenazim – Jews of European or North American descent – the recitation starts only a week before Rosh Hashana. There is therefore a period of three weeks during which only Sepharadim are required to pray intensely while Ashkenazim are not. Figure 1 presents a timeline of the repentance period for the year of the study. As can be gleaned from the graph, Sepharadim started the ritual on September 2$^{\text{nd}}$ while Ashkenazim did so only on September 25$^{\text{th}}$.

On Rosh Hashana, according to Jewish belief, God passes judgment on a person's actions in the preceding year. It is further believed that a person can improve their chance of receiving a favorable judgment by conducting intense prayers and asking repentance in the days before Rosh Hashana. The tradition holds that while God passes judgment on Rosh Hashanah, the "books of life and death" remain open during the Days of Awe so that believers have the opportunity to change God's judgment before it is finally sealed on Yom Kippur itself. For this reason, the Selichot is seen as an important period in Jewish tradition, even among people who are less religiously active during the rest of the year. Indeed, a substantial number of non-religious people (who self identify as either secular or "traditionalist") attend the Selichot prayers.[12]

[12]As a recent article in the newspaper *Haaretz* reports: "It may be the most booming business in Jerusalem these days, but despite its religious character, it caters - rather paradoxically - to a largely secular crowd... today, in Israeli society, we are seeing this trend of going back to tradition, which has little to do with religious observance." ("Midnight Selichot prayers in Jerusalem drawing huge crowds", 11/9/2012). Indeed, our survey offers further evidence of this pattern.

3. Data and Empirical Strategy

3.1. Data

The data we use is based on a survey we carried out using the services of TNS/Teleseker, a global marketing survey organization. Our study was administered online in two waves. The first wave ran during the week before the first day of repentance for Sephardim, starting from August 23rd and going through to August 25th, 2011 (see Figure 1), resulting in 1,009 completed questionnaires. The second wave was administered between September 6-8th, i.e. after the Sephardim – but before the Ashkenazim – began the Selichot prayers. The second wave of interviews resulted in 1,031 completed questionnaires. In both waves, the survey was fielded between Tuesday and Thursday. Importantly, each wave consists of approximately equal shares of religious and secular respondents. The data are weighted to ensure that the demographic profiles (age, education, and religiosity) of the respondents in the survey match those of all Jewish men in Israel aged 18-70.

Our measure of the willingness to compromise for peace is based on the question: "Do you support or oppose the proposal that in return for a full peace agreement between Israel and the Palestinians, Israel evacuates all the territories in Judea and Samaria except for the large settlement blocs?". Respondents were offered five response options. Among those who chose to answer the question, 35.9 percent expressed strong opposition, 16.9 percent some opposition, 25.3 percent some support and 22.0 percent strong support. 3.1 percent chose the "Don't know/ refuse to answer" category. For ease of interpretation, we focus on three binary outcome variables. The first takes the value '1' if the respondent expressed support for a peace agreement and zero otherwise. The second and the third variables take the value '1' if the respondent expressed either strong support or strong opposition for an agreement, respectively.

Our key independent variable is a measure of the intensity in which the respondent observed the *Selichot*. The variable takes values between 0 and 5, indicating the number of

nights the respondent recited Selichot prayers during the five days preceding the survey.

We provide summary statistics for all variables in Table 1. The table also includes a comparison across waves in the mean values of all variables (column [3]). Since the identification strategy builds on comparing the differences over time between the attitudes of members of the two ethnic groups, it is important to confirm that these differences in attitudes are not a result of a difference in the composition of the sample across the two waves. Columns [4] and [5] report the change in the sample composition across the two waves, and show that among both ethnic groups, the sampled populations were very similar on most dimensions. The one noteworthy difference is the share of secular respondents among the Sephardim interviewed in the two waves (28.1 percent vs. 34.7 percent, respectively). Note however that this compositional difference means that the Sephardim are likely to be more pro-compromise in the second wave, since religious individuals tend to be more hawkish. This goes *against* finding a Selichot effect among the Sephardim, yet as we report below, this is what we find.[13]

3.2. Empirical Strategy

Studying the effect of religiosity on attitudes toward political compromise is challenging. A "naïve" approach of correlating measures of religiosity and respondents' attitudes to compromise will yield biased and inconsistent estimates because unobserved determinants of these attitudes, such as cultural background, are likely to be correlated with religious participation. The ideal experiment to deal with this problem is one in which the researcher can randomize the degree of religiosity assigned to different participants, an option which of course is not feasible. As an alternative, we exploit the exogenous variation in the dates in which the two main ethnic traditions in Judaism begin the Selichot period. The fact that there are about three weeks in which only Sephardim are required to add additional

[13]In the robustness section, we report results of regressions using entropy balancing. These results provide additional evidence that the attitudinal differences we observe in the study are not a function of changes in the composition of the samples across the two waves.

prayers to their daily routine while Ashkenazim are not, provides an opportunity to examine the causal effect of an intensification of religious activity.[14] As only one group experiences the intensification, we have a plausible control group of individuals who live together, share similar religious beliefs and that, for reasons unrelated to the individuals' own preferences, are yet to enter the period of increased religious activity.

As noted, the study was designed such that at the time of the first wave of the survey neither of the groups had begun the Selichot, while only Sepharadim (but not Ashkenazim) experienced the Selichot in the days prior to the second wave. If all respondents in the survey perfectly "complied" with this design, i.e. if all Sepharadim attended the Selichot and all the Ashkenazim did not, the empirical set up for estimating the causal effect of the Selichot would naturally be analyzed using a difference-in-difference specification of the following form:

$$Y_i = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 \cdot After_i + \alpha_2 \cdot Sephardic_i + \alpha_3 \cdot After_i \cdot Sephardic_i + \epsilon_i \quad (1)$$

where $After_i$ is a dummy variable that indicates whether respondent i was surveyed in the second wave and $Sepharadic_i$ indicates whether respondent i identifies himself as being from Sepharadic origin. Using two waves of interviews to account for temporal changes in attitudes toward political compromise, one would compare the differences over time between the two groups and exploit the exogenously-determined difference in religious activity. The identifying assumption in this approach would be that the nature of the time effect in attitudes on political compromise is ethnic-invariant. That is, that other than the Selichot, there was no event between the two waves that affected the conflict-related attitudes of the two groups in a differential manner. This assumption seems particularly plausible in the context of only

[14] For sure, an exogenous source of increased religious activity is not the same a randomizing religiosity. Rather, we view this setting as an instructive proxy for the effect of heightened salience of religiosity.

a three-week gap between the two surveys.

Yet unsurprisingly, the data indicates that the compliance with the tradition-based treatment assignment rule was only partial: since among both ethnic groups many rarely attend synagogue, only 32 percent of Sepharadim in our sample attended the Selichot schedule. In contrast, among the Ashkenazim, only 83 percent did not attend the Selichot. In other words, percent of Ashkenazim participated in the Selichot even though according to tradition they were not expected to do so. This imperfect compliance may be explained by the social nature of the Selichot ritual, i.e. some Ashkenazim may have joined synagogue services with their Sepharadic friends or relatives. Crucially, employing a difference-in-difference approach while ignoring the imperfect compliance would result in a downward biased estimate of the effect of Selichot attendance.

To deal with this issue, we use the quasi-random assignment to the treatment as determined by the different traditions as an instrument for the actual treatment (i.e., Selichot attendance). Specifically, we use the interaction term between $After$ and $Sepharadic$ (an indicator variable) as an instrument for Selichot attendance. In addition, given that ethnic origin has been documented to be correlated with political attitudes, and since the timing of the waves can affect political attitudes regardless of the Selichot, we allow political compromise to vary by ethnic group and over time, irrespective of Selichot attendance.[15] This approach allows us to estimate the average treatment effect of Selichot attendance on political attitudes among compliers: (i) Sepharadis that attended Selichot but that would not have done so had they been from Ashkenazi origin, and (ii) Ashkenazim that did not attend Selichot but that would have done so had they been Sepharadic.

Formally, we estimate the following specification:

$$(2) \qquad Y_i = \beta_1 + \beta_2 \cdot After_i + \beta_2 \cdot Sephardic_i + \gamma \cdot Selichot\_Intensity_i + \delta X_i + \epsilon_i$$

[15]See Arian and Shamir (1993) and Roumani (1988) for evidence on the correlation between ethnic affiliation and political attitudes in Israel.

where the variable $After_i \cdot Sephardic_i$ serves as an instrumental variable for the endogenous variable $Selichot\_Intensity_i$. The vector X_i includes all the respondent demographics described earlier: age, income, marital status, degree of religiosity, number of children, education, occupation, ethnicity and region of residence.[16] Since shifts in attitudes may have occurred within the ideological camps, we estimate three specifications that differ only in the definition of the outcome variable. The three outcome variables are dummies that indicate strong rejection, support and strong support of a land-for-peace agreement. The main parameter of interest is γ, which corresponds to the local average treatment effect of heightened religious participation on the probability of supporting political compromise. Sampling weights are used in all specifications.[17]

As noted in Section 2 above, the literature points to several potential channels through which elevated religious participation may affect political attitudes. To assess which of the channels best accounts for the change in support for compromise (if indeed such a change takes place), our survey included a set of items designed to examine whether each of the purported mechanisms was triggered by heightened religious participation.

To construct a measure that captures the out-group bias mechanism, respondents were asked to rate their level of trust in a set of social groups on a five-point scale where 1 corresponds to the lowest level of trust and 5 to the highest. As a measure of out-group hostility, we use respondents' degree of reported trust in Muslims. To assess change in religious values, we asked respondents to rank the relative importance of four concepts/goals debated in Israeli politics: a democratic state, a welfare state, peace and the Greater Israel. Our interest is in whether the relative importance of the latter concept, which refers to the biblical territory that God is believed to have promised to the Israelites. To evaluate

[16] See Table 1 for the breakdown of the coding categories.

[17] Weights are calculated to reflect the population distribution with respect to age, religiosity and education. Note that the results presented below are robust to being estimated without sampling weights.

the merits of the political engagement channel, we asked respondents to rate the extent to which they discussed a set of topics during the previous week (sports, television and movies, politics, and religion). Answers again ranged on a five-point scale, where 1 corresponded to "not discussed at all" and 5 to "had many discussions". We focus on the frequency of engagement in political discussion. Finally, to measure individuals' tolerance for risk we asked them what price they would be willing to pay for a lottery ticket that pays out 50,000 NIS with a winning probability of one in a thousand. We coded respondents as risk-acceptant if they were willing to pay above the expected value of the lottery ticket (i.e., above 50 NIS).[18] See Appendix for the full wording of all the survey items on which the analysis relies.

4. Results

4.1. Selection

The causal interpretation of the coefficient in Equation [2] relies on the assumption that conditional on the variables $After$ and $Sephardic$, the instrumental variable $After \cdot Sephardic$ is not correlated with unobservables that determine attitudes toward political compromise. To test whether selection of the instrumental variable (IV) on unobservable characteristics is a concern, we measure the correlation between the IV and the entire set of observed covariates, conditional on the variables $After$ and $Sephardic$.[19] Column [1] of Table 2 reports the slope from regressing each of the control variables on the instrument in a model that also controls for the variables $After$ and $Sephardic$. More formally, we report the estimates of δ_3 obtained from the following model:

[18] We excluded respondents who reported a willingness to pay an extremely high sum (over 200 NIS) for the lottery ticket, since these individuals had in all likelihood misunderstood the question. However, results are not sensitive to this exclusion threshold.

[19] By doing so, we follow the idea presented in Altonji et al. (2005) that the degree of selection on observables serves as a guide to the degree of selection also on the unobservables.

$$X_i = \delta_0 + \delta_1 \cdot After_i + \delta_2 \cdot Sephardic_i + \delta_3 \cdot After_i \cdot Sephardic_i + \nu_i \quad (3)$$

Table 2 shows that conditional on $After$ and $Sephardic$, the association between the IV and each of the observed characteristics is very weak. Except for the variable *some college* which is significant at the 5 percent level, and the variables *student* and *3 or more children* that are significant at the 10% level, none of the other 27 covariates is significant even at the 10 percent level. This is roughly the ratio one would expect to obtain by pure chance.[20] One might propose an alternative empirical strategy of exploiting data only from the second wave and using $Sephardic$ as an instrumental variable for Selichot attendance. Note however that this strategy is invalid since being Sephardic, while correlated with Selichot attendance, is also likely to be correlated with a range of unobservables. The extent of this problem can clearly be gauged from column [2] of Table 2, which reports the slope of univariate regressions of each of the variables on $Sephardic$. In contrast to the results for our preferred instrument, the degree of selection of $Sephardic$ on observables is substantially greater. In fact, the results indicate that eleven variables are significantly correlated with $Sephardic$ at the 1 percent level. The difference between this alternative estimation approach and our preferred identification strategy is important to emphasize: for the alternative estimation strategy to be valid, one needs to assume that being Sephardic does not have any direct association with attitudes toward political compromise, an assumption clearly at odds with our own data as well as with previous research.[21]. In contrast, our preferred strategy makes the much weaker assumption that in the absence of Selichot, the *change* in respondents' attitude toward compromise over the three weeks of study would be similar among both

[20]In the robustness section, we provide additional evidence from estimates using entropy balancing to further show that the small differences across the composition of the samples cannot account for the main results we report.

[21]See Arian and Shamir (1993) and Roumani (1988)

ethnic groups.

Furthermore, columns [3] and [4] of Table 2 show the degree of selection of the observables on religious affiliation and on Selichot intensity, our key endogenous variable. Again, the degree of selection on these variables is substantially greater than the degree of selection on the IV. For the Selichot intensity variable, we find that 13 characteristics are significant at the 5 percent level and three additional variables are significant at the 10 percent level. In contrast, the selection observed on the instrument $After_i \cdot Sephardic_i$ is minimal, suggesting that selection on unobserved individual characteristics is far less of a concern.

4.2. Impact on Support for Political Compromise

In Table 3 we present the results from estimating Equation 1. The results indicate that heightened religiosity is associated with a statistically significant increase of 10.1 percentage points in the probability of strongly rejecting an agreement as well as a slightly smaller decrease (7.5 points) in the probability of strongly supporting the agreement. While sizable, these effects are significantly smaller than those associated with being religious (as opposed to secular), which are between three and five times as large. Recall however that this estimation ignores the imperfect compliance of individuals with their respective ethnic traditions concerning the beginning of the Selichot prayers. Thus, if Selichot attendance affects support for political compromise, the trend captured here represents a *lower-bound* effect of the actual effect of heightened religiosity on respondents' attitudes.

To address this issue of imperfect compliance we estimate Equation [2], and in Table 4 report the marginal effects obtained from IV probit specifications. As noted, these estimations include the full set of controls of the benchmark specification.[22] Each column in the table corresponds to one of the three outcome variables. The table also presents the first stage F-Statistic on the excluded instrument, which indicates that the IV is not weak. The re-

[22]The results presented in Table 4 do not report the coefficients for the controls. See Table A1 in the Online Appendix for the results pertaining to the full set of controls.

sults suggest that a unit increase in Selichot attendance increases the probability of strongly opposing territorial compromise by 17.3 percentage points and decreases the probability of expressing strong support for the agreement by 17.8 percentage points. These results are in line with the contention that the figures obtained when ignoring the imperfect compliance (Table 3) constitute a lower bound estimate of the Selichot effect.

The magnitude of these estimated effects is sizable. For example, the drop in probability of strong support for compromise is more than twice the magnitude of the effect associated with obtaining a high school diploma (7.7 percentage points). Moreover, in this estimation the effect is more comparable to the effect associated with being religious. Note that these results are not sensitive to the set of control variables included in the estimation; when re-estimating the regressions after omitting all controls, the results remain qualitatively similar.

The results in Table 4 also point to the fact that the Selichot does not appear to convert individuals from one camp to the the opposing one, but rather to weaken support for compromise *within* each camp. As column [2] indicates, the effect associated with Selichot on bringing about a switch from one camp to the other is substantively smaller and statistically indistinguishable from zero. Figure 2 provides further evidence of this dynamic of within-camp shifts. The figure shows the difference between the two ethnic groups in terms of the change over time in the attitudes over political compromise. The figure shows a clear increase in the more rightward position within each bloc.[23]

Finally and perhaps unsurprisingly, Table 5 shows that the effect of Selichot on support for political compromise is driven primarily by the first days of participation, particularly by

[23]The shift within the political camps is observed also when tested more formally. We create a binary variable that takes the value 1 if the respondent holds the more skeptical attitude of compromise within each camp (i.e. is strongly opposed or weakly supportive of compromise) and zero otherwise (i.e., is weakly opposed or strongly in favor of the agreement). Indeed, we find that the effect of Selichot on a rightward shift is significant both statistically and substantively (see Appendix Table A2).

the change from no participation to the first night of participation in Selichot prayers. For example, in terms of increasing strong opposition to compromise, the effect of the first night of prayer is more than three times greater than the effect of the fourth night of prayer; the decline in the marginal effect of Selichot is even more pronounced with respect to reducing the share of respondents expressing strong support for compromise.

One interpretation of these results is that they reflect a meaningful discontinuity in citizens' views on the land-for-peace formula; support for such an agreement requires acceptance of a dovish worldview whereas opposition rests on a more hawkish stance. Thus, shifts in attitudes can occur within a given stance, but an outright conversion between the two opposing world-views is far less likely. However, the results may also reflect the fact that a short period of intensified prayer schedule is a fairly moderate 'treatment'. As such, it is perhaps expected that actual switches across ideological camps will be rare.

4.2.1. Magnitude of the Selichot Effect in a Comparative View

How does the magnitude of the Selichot effect compare to other studies examining the impact of heightened religiosity? The comparison is obviously limited given that the type of "shock" to religious activity differs across studies (the Blue Law Repeal, winning the lottery for the Hajj pilgrimage), the fact that the time lag between the shock and the measurement varies greatly, and of course the outcome measures of interest are all quite different. Nonetheless, a comparison can provide some useful insight regarding the relative magnitude of the reported effects. To this end, we use the figures reported in the most relevant set of studies and calculate the estimated effect of a standard deviation (henceforth SD) increase in the religiosity measure.

In our main analysis, a one SD increase in Selichot attendance leads to a 0.42 SD increase in probability of strong opposition to compromise and a 0.5 SD decrease in probability of strongly supporting compromise. This is smaller than the implied effect that Gerber et al. (2015) report with respect to the impact of a one SD increase in church attendance on charity

giving and on attitudes toward Marijuana use (1.17 SD and 1.3 SD, respectively).[24] It is also a good deal smaller than the effect that Cohen-Zada and Sander (2011) estimate that Church attendance has on self-reported happiness (1.28 SD). In contrast, the attitudinal effect of Selichot is larger than that associated with Hajj attendance (Clingingsmith et al. 2009). In this latter instance, the authors find that the Hajj pilgrimage is associated with a 0.13-0.32 of a SD on tolerance for other groups,[25] a shift of 0.11 SD on their Peaceful Inclinations index,[26] a 0.09-0.16 SD shift in attitudes on gender equality, and a 0.21 of a SD change in self-reported well-being. These smaller effects may be attributed in part to the significant time lag (5-8 months) between the study and the participation in the Hajj pilgrimage.

4.2.2. Effect Heterogeneity and Robustness

One of the most theorized about and studied mediators of intergroup conflict is the degree of exposure to members of the outgroup. The scholarly debate centers on what the effect of such exposure does to people's views (Allport 1954; Blalock 1967; Pettigrew 1998).[27] In our context, the question of interest is whether living in more religiously-mixed areas, where presumably the exposure to the Arab population makes the religious divide more salient year round, affects individuals' responses to the Selichot in a different manner than it affects individuals who live in more religiously segregated areas? Ex ante, neither the strength nor the direction of the mediating effect of exposure to members of the religious outgroup are

[24]This effect is calculated based on the authors' reported figures and the method they suggest (p. 16).

[25]This index is calculated based on responses to questions asking respondents to compare their group to: other sects; different religions; different ethnicities.

[26]Peaceful inclinations is calculated as an index of responses to questions pertaining to issues such as the Bin Laden's goals and methods, Pakistan's relations with India, suicide attacks and honor's killings.

[27]The opposing predictions regarding the effect of exposure to outgroup members reflect two widely-used sociological approaches labeled as the 'intergroup threat theory' and the 'contact theory'.

obvious. One might conjecture that a sudden spike in the salience of religion would have a weaker effect on the attitudes of individuals who are regularly exposed to the religious divide. Yet it could also be that individuals who reside in more religiously-mixed areas would have a lower baseline of outgroup animus, and as such would be more prone to change their views in response to a sudden increase in the salience of religion.

To compare the empirical support for the two theories, we estimate the effect of Selichot separately for areas with more mixed populations versus religiously segregated areas.[28] The results, reported in Table 6, are not conclusive. They show that the effect of Selichot is somewhat stronger among individuals residing in mixed areas, where the effects are both larger in magnitude and more narrowly estimated. However, the bounds of the estimated effects across region types overlap quite significantly, which means that the mediating effect of the religious composition of one's area of residence is not clear cut. We also examined the interaction of Selichot with other theoretically-interesting individual characteristics, including age, educational attainment and marital status. In all these other instances, we found no significant evidence of systematic heterogeneous effects.

Next, we examine the persistence of the Selichot effect over time. We focus on respondents that participated in the Selichot at least once, and estimate how political attitudes are affected by the number of days that passed between the last participation in Selichot and the time the respondent filled the survey. However, since the number of days elapsed is affected by the intensity of the Selichot, we estimate the relationship separately for respondents with low and high Selichot intensities. The results, which are presented in Table 7, reveal no association among both groups between the number of days elapsed and political attitudes toward territorial compromise.

To assess the robustness of the main finding, we conducted a number of additional tests. First, in line with the arguments made in favor of linear models by Angrist and Krueger (2001), we examine whether the results hold up when using a linear instrumental variable

[28]Mixed areas are defined as those with over 30 percent Arab, the sample median.

specification. Reassuringly, the results reveal a high degree of similarity to the treatment effects shown in Table 4. For example, columns [1], [4] and [7] in Table 8 present the 2SLS estimation results that correspond to Table 4. The findings are qualitatively similar, albeit the coefficients of the Selichot variable obtained in the linear IV specification are estimated slightly more narrowly than those obtained from an IV probit specification.

To further address the concern that the results may be partly driven by differences in the composition of respondents across the two waves, we conducted an entropy balancing exercise to re-weight the data collected in the second wave such that within each ethnic group, the background variables are distributed evenly across the two waves (Hainmueller 2012). Figure 3 shows that even though background variables were fairly balanced in the raw data (e.g. column [1] in Table 2), the weighting from the entropy balancing makes the within-ethnicity composition of the samples across the two waves almost identical. More pertinently, the results presented in Table 9, which show the marginal effects from the benchmark specification after re-weighting the data, are robust to this improved balancing. This indicates that the main findings are not driven by differences in the groups' composition across the two waves.

Finally, to verify that the observed change in political attitudes is driven by heightened religious participation per se and not by the interview's proximity to Rosh-Hashana (the Jewish New Year) or to the weekend prayers, we estimate two variations of our basic specification. The first variation includes a day-of-the-week fixed effect; the second variation controls for the distance from Rosh-Hashana instead of the second wave indicator ($After$). The estimation results for the main specification are presented in Table 8. As the table shows, our main parameter of interest is robust to the inclusion of these different timing effects.[29]

[29]The shift-within-bloc specification results are also found to be robust to estimation using 2SLS, as well as to the inclusion of day fixed effects and controls for the number of days from Rosh-Hashana.

4.3. Channels of Attitude Change

Why did the period of heightened religious activity lead to a hardening of views on territorial compromise? To address this question, we consider a set of four possible channels discussed in the literature. As noted earlier, our survey included a set of variables that proxy for these channels. We therefore begin the analysis by comparing the change over time in the average values of the variables corresponding to each of the channels. The results, presented in Figure 4, show the average values among Ashkenazi and Sephardi Jews both before (wave 1) and after (wave 2) the Selichot period had begun for the latter group.

The first channel we consider is a change in the weight individuals assign to various values. The hypothesis we explore is that if intense prayer causes believers to assign greater weight to the preservation of the Greater Israel promised in the bible, their willingness to support territorial compromise might drop. Panel (a) shows the mean rating that respondents assigned to the value of Greater Israel as compared to the three other values. As the flat horizontal lines clearly indicate, the period of the Selichot was not associated with any discernible change in the importance assigned to this value. In panel (b) we examine whether the Selichot led to greater out-group hostility, measured through respondents' reported level of trust in Muslims. As before, the flat horizontal lines reveal no movement on this measure either, suggesting that the attitudinal change with respect to the agreement did not come about as a result of increased distrust of the out-group.

Similarly, panel (c) shows results pertaining to the third mechanism, namely people's level of political engagement. As the graph shows clearly, the degree to which respondents engaged in political conversations remained unchanged throughout the Selichot period. In other words, we find no evidence that the Selichot led to an attitudinal change by increasing the degree of political engagement among Sephardim.[30] Finally, in contrast to the other channels, panel (d) reveals a fairly notable increase in the level of risk acceptance among

[30]However, we cannot rule out the possibility that the religious spike around the Selichot increased other forms of political engagement such as following the news via the media.

respondents of Sephardic origin. The share of risk-acceptance respondents – i.e. those willing to pay for participation in the lottery more than its expected value – has increased by almost 70 percent, a sharp and statistically significant change. At the same time, tolerance of risk among Ashkenazi respondents remained almost unchanged.

To explore these potential channels in a more formal manner, we proceed by utilizing a regression framework. To this end, we estimate Equation 2, but use each of the channel variables as a dependent variable rather than the degree of support for a land-for-peace compromise. As before, we account for the endogeneity of heightened religious participation by instrumenting for it using the $After * Speharadic$ interaction term.

The results, obtained from using an IV probit specification, are presented in Table 10. The dependent variable in column [1] indicates whether the Greater Israel was ranked among the top two values. In column [2], the dependent variable indicates the lowest possible value of trust in Muslims, i.e. no trust.[31] In the third column, the dependent variable takes the value 1 if the respondents had no, little or some political discussions in the week prior to taking the survey. The dependent variable in the fourth column indicates whether the respondents is risk acceptant or not.

Similar to the graphical evidence presented in Figure 4, we again find that the only channel variable that significantly changed following the Selichot is the risk acceptance measure. Specifically, the result in column [4] implies that a unit increase in Selichot attendance increases the probability of being risk-acceptant by 14 percentage points. Treating the different channel variables as continuous and employing 2SLS procedure does not change the results substantively, though the estimated effect on risk tolerance drops below statistical significance. This finding is suggestive of a non-linear effect of religiosity on risk acceptance.[32]

[31]It is noteworthy that the results of column [2] are qualitatively unchanged even if we control for the trust level in people they first met as a proxy for respondents' basic level of trust.

[32]See Appendix Table A3. Note also that including the lottery measure of risk acceptance in Equation 2 reduces the effect associated with the instrument for risk, but does not com-

In sum, while these results are merely correlational, they nonetheless suggest that heightened religious activity did not increase opposition to political compromise by leading to a change in values, by sparking ill feelings toward Muslims or by increasing political engagement. Instead, the evidence points to the attitudinal shift coming about, at least partly, as a result of an increase in respondents' tolerance for risk.[33]

5. Discussion

This study presents evidence that intensified religious activity during the Selichot period resulted in a hardening of views against political compromise. For many casual followers of politics in the Middle East this finding is probably not surprising. Religious holidays and days of communal prayers are often regarded in the region as politically charged periods.[34] This phenomenon is often attributed to the fact that during religious holidays many men coalesce for prayer, and are exposed to religious sermons with content that can rouse out-group hostility. Yet while our analysis shows that heightened religiosity can indeed affect political attitudes, we find no evidence that the shift in attitudes was a result of increased distrust towards non-Jews, including Muslims. Rather, our data indicates that other mechanisms of influence may be more consequential, in particular a rise in risk tolerance during the intensified prayer period.

pletely eliminate it. This probably implies that our measure does not capture all aspects of risk acceptance.

[33]As explained, the change in risk acceptance is measured using respondents' willingness to pay for a hypothetical lottery. Yet we cannot rule out a possibility that this measure could also capture a mechanism other than risk attitudes, such as greediness, which in turn could also affect opposition to any territorial concession. Teasing out the exact mechanism captured by the lottery measure merits further research.

[34]For recent examples see: "Syrians Planning for Stepped Up Protests During Ramadan", New York Times, 6/28/2011; "Friday Prayers In Muslim Countries Bring Wider Anti-American Protests", NPR, 9/14/2012.

This finding is consistent with the notion that religion serves for believers as a psychological form of a risk-insurance mechanism (Scheve and Stasavage 2006). If religion provides an alternative source of perceived insurance against adverse outcomes, periods of heightened religious activity could indeed bring about more bellicose political attitudes that reflect greater risk acceptance. While our results pertaining to this alternative mechanism are merely suggestive and open to interpretation, they clearly highlight the need for a more systematic analysis of the link between religiosity and attitudes toward risk.

But how lasting is the observed effect and what is its political significance? In addressing these issues, it is perhaps worth reiterating that the so-called treatment we study consists of a relatively limited and short-term change in people's engagement with religion. What's more, our focus is not on the difference between a secular person and a religious person, but rather on a much subtler comparison of people with varying levels of intensity in their prayer schedules. Our results therefore represent what is mostly likely a lower bound estimate of the effect that religiosity exerts on certain political attitudes; the full impact of a transition from secularism to religious observance is therefore likely to be more significant and longer lasting.

With respect to the duration of the effect, our analysis shows a trend of weakening influence over time, but the short period of investigation does not permit strong enough conclusions about the effect's endurance. For that, multiple waves of study over an extended period of time, are needed. Yet even if heightened religious activity is shown to affect attitudes towards political compromise only in the short run, the effect may still be politically consequential. For example, politicians in countries with many religious voters can stand to benefit from timing elections as a function of their proximity to religious events. An Israeli prime minister from the right – the ideological camp traditionally more opposed to territorial concessions – could perhaps gain electorally if elections were set soon after a religious holiday. This logic can also extend to other political contexts in which religion is salient to a large segment of the citizenry, such as when scheduling mass demonstrations or rallies.

The effect we observe of religious intensification on attitudes toward political compromise occurs in the context of an inter-communal, religion-laden conflict. However, this may not be the case when inter-personal compromise is at stake. Indeed, a set of studies find that religious beliefs are often associated with higher levels of trust, greater charitable giving and other pro-social behavior (Clingingsmith et al. 2009; Guiso et al. 2003; Putnam and Campbell 2012). The finding of a decreased support for a land-for-peace compromise is therefore not indicative of a broader effect of religion on tolerance and other-regarding concerns. Exploring these varying effects of religiosity in political, as opposed to interpersonal, contexts is surely a task worthy of further study.

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Table 1

Descriptive Statistics

	Variable	Wave 1	Wave 2	t-stat.	2nd Wave vs. 1st Wave (t-stat.) Ashkenazim	Sepharadim
		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Max. Educational Attainment	High School	10.4%	8.2%	1.428	0.549	1.413
	High School + Matriculation	15.3%	18.5%	1.594	1.970	0.309
	Some College	28.5%	24.8%	1.678	2.948	0.381
	College Graduate or Higher	45.9%	48.4%	1.020	1.195	0.340
Marital Status	Single	18.7%	23.2%	0.626	1.308	0.604
	Married	69.1%	65.6%	2.107	1.898	1.057
	Other	12.0%	10.9%	1.421	0.676	1.292
Income	Well Below Average	14.1%	13.8%	0.173	0.536	0.559
	Below Average	14.8%	15.1%	0.149	0.631	0.658
	Average	24.2%	26.8%	1.109	0.740	0.807
	Above Average	32.6%	33.3%	0.246	0.856	1.308
	Well Above Average	14.3%	11.1%	1.790	0.843	1.666
Occupation	Full Time	55.2%	52.3%	1.134	1.132	0.314
	Part Time	4.9%	7.8%	2.488	1.932	1.929
	Self Employed	13.5%	12.4%	0.660	1.289	0.511
	Unemployed	12.9%	8.8%	2.592	1.529	2.294
	Soldier	2.6%	4.7%	1.950	0.829	1.857
	Student	10.9%	13.9%	1.705	2.634	0.436
Number of Children	0	38.6%	42.0%	1.358	1.458	0.490
	1-2	36.7%	32.4%	1.837	0.702	1.980
	3 or More	24.7%	25.6%	0.448	0.929	1.505
Age	18-29	24.5%	30.2%	2.427	2.257	1.064
	30-40	24.6%	28.1%	2.261	1.845	1.388
	41-64	46.7%	39.1%	3.853	3.386	1.912
	65+	4.2%	2.6%	1.776	0.810	2.348
Region	Jerusalem	12.9%	12.6%	0.198	0.053	0.333
	Center-South	29.2%	32.5%	1.435	0.899	1.074
	Center-North	11.9%	12.2%	0.217	0.294	0.318
	North	25.3%	23.2%	0.912	0.664	0.590
	South	20.7%	19.4%	0.650	0.476	0.569
Ethnicity	Sepharadim	41.9%	42.7%	0.325		
	Ashkenazim	56.2%	55.4%	0.338		
Religious Affilation	Secular	48.3%	53.0%	1.852	0.501	2.201
	Traditionalist	26.9%	24.1%	1.234	1.078	0.876
	Religious	24.8%	22.9%	0.960	0.277	1.789
Selichot Attendance in Previous 5 Nights	0	.	81.1%	.		
	1-2	.	8.2%	.		
	3-5	.	10.7%	.		

Notes: Columns [1] and [2] report the mean value of the respondent characteristic in each wave of the survey. Column [3] presents the t-statistic of a comparison of means between the two waves. Columns [4] and [5] report the t-statistic obtained from a separate comparison of means across the two waves for respondents of Ashkenazi and Sephardi ethnicity, respectively.

Table 2

Testing for Selection

		Sephardic X After	Sephardic	Religious Affiliation	Selichot Intensity
	Variable	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Max. Educational Attainment	High School	-0.027	0.042***	-0.001	-0.010**
	High School + Matriculation	-0.041	0.059***	-0.017	0.027***
	Some College	0.094**	0.047**	0.036***	-0.011
	College Graduate or Higher	-0.027	-0.148***	-0.018	-0.006
Marital Status	Single	0.044	-0.007	-0.054***	-0.018***
	Married	-0.012	0.091***	-0.029**	0.002
	Other	-0.029	-0.083***	0.084***	0.017*
Income	Well Below Average	-0.029	0.014	0.049***	0.015*
	Below Average	-0.036	0.007	0.022**	-0.006
	Average	0.010	0.081***	0.002	0.017
	Above Average	0.078	-0.078***	-0.041***	-0.021**
	Well Above Average	-0.024	-0.025	-0.032***	-0.005
Occupation	Full Time	0.025	-0.003	0.012	0.000
	Part Time	0.002	-0.007	0.015**	0.009
	Self Employed	0.043	-0.019	-0.022**	-0.008
	Unemployed	-0.023	-0.015	-0.023***	-0.013***
	Soldier	0.023	0.020*	-0.006	0.018**
	Student	-0.071*	0.024	0.023**	-0.007
Number of Children	0	-0.028	0.028	-0.073***	-0.014
	1-2	-0.048	-0.065***	-0.034**	-0.028***
	3 or More	0.077*	0.037*	0.106***	0.042***
Age	18-29	-0.027	0.065***	0.058***	0.027**
	30-44	-0.003	0.048**	0.073***	0.025**
	45-64	0.040	-0.081***	-0.109***	-0.047***
	65+	-0.010	-0.032***	-0.023***	-0.005**
Region	Jerusalem	-0.008	-0.011	0.058***	0.010
	Center-South	0.013	0.031	0.005	0.020*
	Center-North	0.001	-0.023	-0.001	-0.007
	North	-0.001	-0.020	-0.045***	-0.019**
	South	-0.005	0.023	-0.017	-0.003

*** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$

Notes: Column [1] displays the coefficient on *After*Sephardic* in OLS regressions of the variables listed on the left. The regressions also include *After* and *Sephardi* as controls. Columns [2] - [4] report the slope from a univariate OLS regression of each of the variables listed on the left on the variable listed in the column heading.

Table 3

The Effect of Selichot on Attitudes towards Compromise
(DID Estimation)

Dependent Variable :	Strongly Oppose	Support	Strongly Support
	(1)	(2)	(3)
After*Sephardic	0.101*	-0.015	-0.075*
	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.04)
After	-0.045	0.009	0.032
	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.03)
Sephardic	0.064	-0.155***	-0.074**
	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.03)
Religious	0.477***	-0.506***	-0.231***
	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.02)
Control Variables	✓	✓	✓
Observations	1711	1711	1711

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Notes: Entries denote marginal effects from a probit specification. The dependent variable is an indicator for respondent's position on political compromise. The regressions include the full set of respondent characteristics. Observations are weighted to match the sample demographic profile with that of the Israeli Jewish male population.

Table 4

The Effect of Selichot on Support for Compromise: IV Approach

Dependent Variable :	Strongly Oppose	Support	Strongly Support
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Selichot	0.173**	-0.019	-0.178*
	(0.08)	(0.12)	(0.11)
After	-0.103**	0.014	0.096
	(0.05)	(0.08)	(0.07)
Sephardic	0.048	-0.120***	-0.075**
	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)
Religious	0.210**	-0.439***	-0.198**
	(0.09)	(0.07)	(0.08)
Control Variables	✓	✓	✓
First Stage F-Stat.	15.92	15.92	15.92
Observations	1711	1711	1711

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Notes: Entries denote marginal effects from an IV probit specification. The dependent variable is an indicator for respondent's position on political compromise. The regressions include the full set of respondent characteristics: household income, marital status, number of children, education, age, level of religiosity, occupation and the region of residence. The Selichot variable is instrumented with an indicator for being a Jew of Sepharadic ethnicity interviewed in the second wave. Observations are weighted to match the sample demographic profile with that of the Israeli Jewish male population.

Table 5

The Effect of Selichot Attendance by Selichot intensity

Dependent Variable:	Strongly Oppose (1)	Support (2)	Strongly Support (3)
Selichot Intensity			
0-1	0.2032**	-0.0186	-0.1522*
	(.094)	(.117)	(.082)
1-3	0.1805**	-0.0186	-0.0597**
	(.056)	(.088)	(.029)
3-5	0.0631**	-0.0185	-0.0064
	(.032)	(.049)	(.017)
Control Variables	✓	✓	✓
Observations	1711	1711	1711

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Notes: Entries denote marginal effects from an IV probit specification. Coefficients correspond to the average marginal effect of an additional attendance of Selichot prayers within the indicated range. The dependent variable in each column is an indicator for respondent's position on territorial compromise. Regressions include the full set of controls from the benchmark specification. The Selichot variable is instrumented with an indicator for being a Jew of Sepharadic ethnicity interviewed in the second wave. Standard errors were computed using 500 bootstrapped repetitions. Observations are weighted to match the sample demographic profile with that of the Israeli Jewish male population.

Table 6

The Effect of Selichot on Support for Compromise by Share of Arabs in the Population: IV Approach

Dependent Variable:	Strongly Oppose		Support		Strongly Support	
	Segregated	Mixed	Segregated	Mixed	Segregated	Mixed
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Selichot	0.177**	0.279**	-0.046	-0.053	-0.167	-0.325*
	(0.08)	(0.14)	(0.14)	(0.35)	(0.12)	(0.18)
After	-0.117**	-0.141*	0.038	0.013	0.109	0.151
	(0.06)	(0.08)	(0.09)	(0.19)	(0.08)	(0.10)
Sephardic	0.040	0.040	-0.116***	-0.118**	-0.028	-0.105
	(0.04)	(0.05)	(0.04)	(0.06)	(0.04)	(0.09)
Control Variables	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Observations	1086	625	1086	625	1086	625

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Notes: Entries denote marginal effects from an IV Probit specification. The dependent variable in each model is an indicator for respondent's position on territorial compromise. Odd (even) columns correspond to regions with a below (above) median share of Arabs. The regressions include the full set of respondent characteristics in the benchmark specification. The Selichot variable is instrumented with an indicator for being a Jew of Sepharadic ethnicity interviewed in the second wave. Observations are weighted to match the sample demographic profile with that of the Israeli Jewish male population.

Table 7

The Effect of the Time Elapsed Since Last Selichot on Support for Compromise

	Low Selichot Intensity			High Selichot Intensity		
Dependent Variable:	Strongly Oppose	Support	Strongly Support	Strongly Oppose	Support	Strongly Support
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Number of Days since Last Selichot	-0.0157	0.0431	-0.0328	-0.0197	-0.00275	-0.0325
	(0.0453)	(0.0397)	(0.0228)	(0.117)	(0.0554)	(0.0352)
Control Variables	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Observations	85	85	85	119	119	119

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Notes: Entries denote coefficients from linear regressions. The dependent variable in each model is an indicator for respondent's position on territorial compromise. The sample consists of respondents who participated in the Selichot at least once. The Number of Days since Last Selichot refers to the time that passed between respondents' last participation in Selichot prayers and the date in which they took the survey. Low (High) Selichot Intensity refers to participation in less (more) than half of the five Selichot days of prayer. The regressions include the full set of respondent characteristics in the benchmark specification. Observations are weighted to match the sample demographic profile with that of the Israeli Jewish male population.

Table 8

Attitudes Towards Compromise: Robustness Tests Using Time Effects

Dependent Variable:	Strongly Oppose			Support			Strongly Support		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
Selichot	0.212	0.175**	0.189***	-0.003	-0.019	-0.037	-0.153	-0.179*	-0.171
	(0.13)	(0.08)	(0.07)	(0.13)	(0.12)	(0.12)	(0.12)	(0.11)	(0.11)
Wednesday FE		0.020			-0.017			0.016	
		(0.03)			(0.03)			(0.03)	
Thursday FE		-0.045			-0.032			0.040	
		(0.09)			(0.10)			(0.10)	
Days from Rosh Hashana			0.008**			-0.002			-0.007
			(0.00)			(0.01)			(0.00)
Control Variables	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Observations	1711	1711	1711	1711	1711	1711	1711	1711	1711

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Notes: The dependent variable is an indicator for respondent's position on political compromise. The regressions include the full set of respondent characteristics in the benchmark specification. Entries denote marginal effects from linear probability models (columns [1], [4] and [7]) and IV Probit regressions (columns [2]-[3], [5]-[6] and [8]-[9]). The Selichot variable is instrumented with an indicator for being a Jew of Sepharadic ethnicity interviewed in the second wave. Three variations of the basic specification are estimated for each of the three outcome variables: The first specification is a linear probability model, the second includes day-of-week fixed effects, and the third includes the number of days from Rosh-Hashana. Observations are weighted to match the sample demographic profile with that of the Israeli Jewish male population.

Table 9

The Effect of Selichot on Support for Compromise: Entropy Balancing Re-Weighted Data IV Approach

Dependent Variable :	Strongly Oppose	Support	Strongly Support
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Selichot	0.184***	-0.029	-0.177*
	(0.06)	(0.11)	(0.09)
After	-0.128***	0.025	0.112*
	(0.05)	(0.08)	(0.07)
Sephardic	0.045	-0.123***	-0.076**
	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)
Religious	0.189**	-0.401***	-0.181**
	(0.08)	(0.06)	(0.07)
Control Variables	✓	✓	✓
First Stage F-Stat.	16.81	16.81	16.81
Observations	1711	1711	1711

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Notes: Entries denote marginal effects from IV probit specifications. The dependent variable is an indicator for respondent's position on political compromise. The regression includes the full set of controls from the benchmark specification. The Selichot variable is instrumented with an indicator for being a Jew of Sepharadic ethnicity interviewed in the second wave. Observations are weighted to match the sample demographic profile with that of the Israeli Jewish male population.

Table 10

The Effect of Selichot on Different Channels by which Religious Participation May Affect Attitudes Toward Political Compromise

Dependent Variable:	Values: "Greater Israel"	Outgroup Bias: Trust in Muslims	Political Engagement	Risk Acceptance
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Selichot	0.088	0.061	-0.019	0.141**
	(0.13)	(0.12)	(0.13)	(0.07)
After	-0.015	-0.089	-0.020	-0.073*
	(0.08)	(0.07)	(0.08)	(0.04)
Sephardic	-0.114***	0.101**	-0.003	-0.052***
	(0.03)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.02)
Control Variables	✓	✓	✓	✓
Observations	1645	1754	1754	1726

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Notes: Entries denote marginal effects from IV probit regressions. Each column corresponds to a different channel, in which the dependent variables are indicators denoting whether the respondent: ranked Greater Israel among the top two values (column [1]) ; reported having the lowest value of trust in Muslims (column [2]); had much political discussion in the week prior to taking the survey (column [3]); is risk acceptant (column [4]). Each regression includes the full set of respondent characteristics in the benchmark specification. The Selichot variable is instrumented with an indicator for being a Jew of Sepharadic ethnicity interviewed in the second wave. Observations are weighted to match the sample demographic profile with that of the Israeli Jewish male population.

Figure 1: Timeline of Selichot and Survey Waves

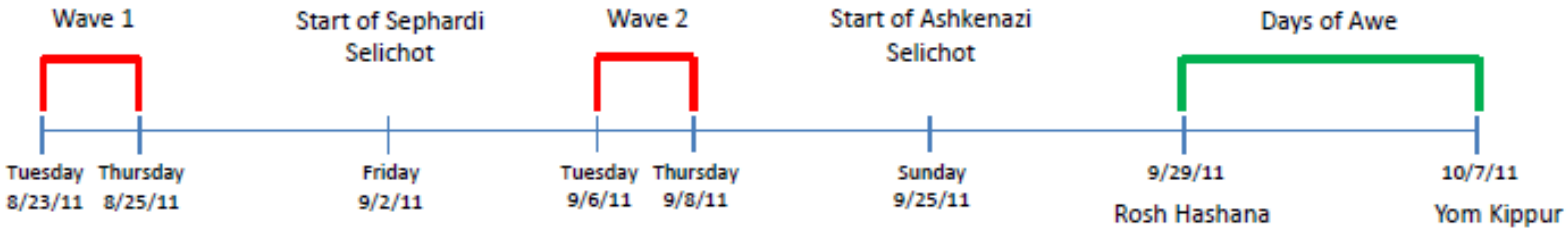
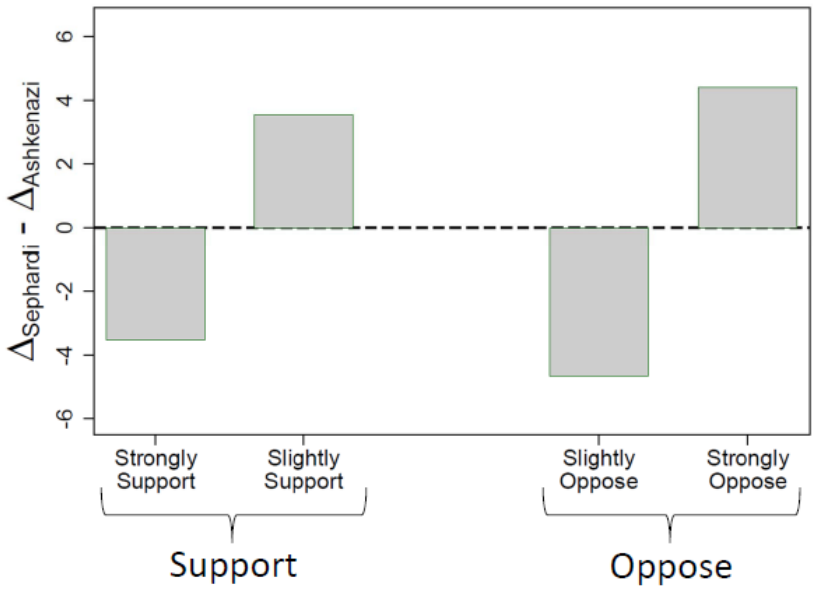
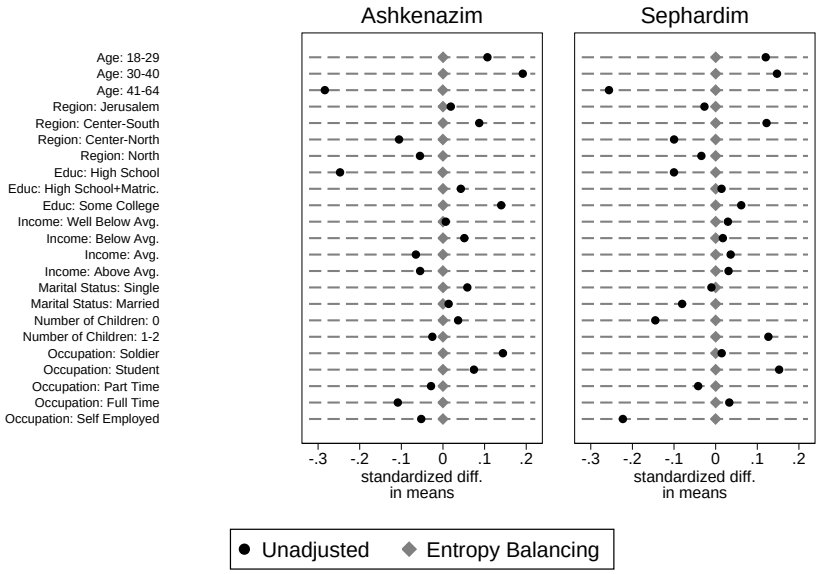


Figure 2: Change in Attitudes Toward Compromise



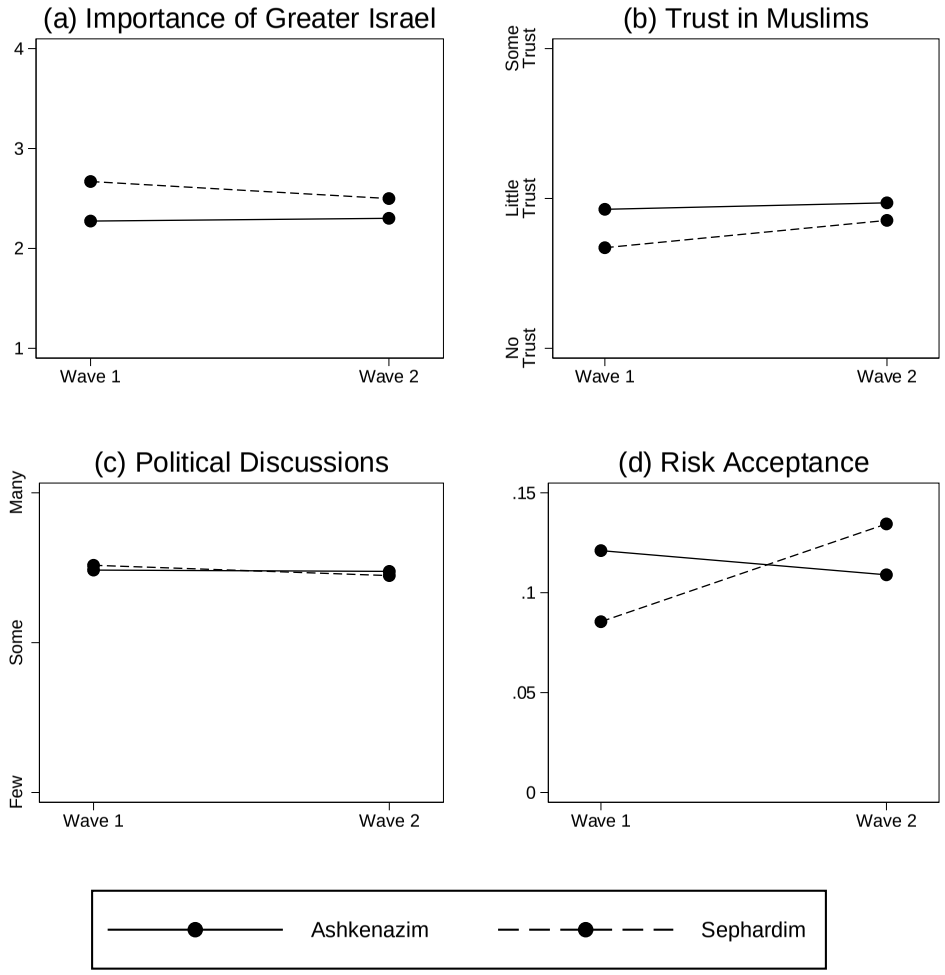
Notes: Each bar denotes the difference over time in support for territorial compromise between Sephardim ($\Delta_{Sephardis}$) and Ashkenazim ($\Delta_{Ashkenazi}$).

Figure 3: Covariate Balance



Notes: The figure presents the standardized differences in the mean values of each background variable across the two waves. Unadjusted differences are presented as black circles; entropy balanced differences are presented as gray diamonds.

Figure 4: Channels



Notes: The figure presents the weighted average values of variables corresponding to potential channels through which heightened religious participation can affect the degree of support toward territorial compromise. For each channel, average values are calculated by the survey wave and the respondents' ethnic affiliation.