

**Social identification with an ideological group and its effects in multi-party systems:  
The case of Israel**

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*Abstract*

Recent literature contends that, in addition to being a system of values, "ideology" also includes an identity-based component, such that identifying with an ideological group can have distinct effects on the behavior of voters. However, existing research focuses predominantly on ideological identities in the U.S., where liberal-conservative ideological self-placement has been shown as incoherent and a weak predictor of political behavior. In contrast, in Israel, left-right ideology, which pertains to security and foreign policy, is highly predictive of vote choice. At the same time, members of the Israeli left and right are also part of competing socio-cultural groups. This paper thus examines ideological identities in Israel. We show that a multi-item ideological-identity scale accounts for Israelis' vote choice, political judgments, and attitudes toward different ideological groups, even controlling for "issue-based" ideology. Furthermore, a vignette experiment attests to the power of Israelis' ideological identities to elicit emotional reactions to either threats or reassurances regarding the status of their ideological camp. In conclusion, we discuss the implications of the findings for the ideological-identity literature.

**Keywords:** Ideology, ideological identity, Israel, survey experiment.

**Words:** ~ 9,500

Considerable research attention has recently been accorded to the study of identity-based ideology. The literature on this subject has documented the effect of citizens' social identification with an ideological group on various political outcomes, including political activism (Huddy, Mason, and Aarøe 2015), attitudes toward the ideological rivals (Mason 2018a), and conformity to cues from their ideological group (Malka and Lelkes 2010). To date, however, studies on identity-based ideology have been conducted solely in the American context, characterized by a two-party political system and by substantial alignment between partisan and ideological affiliations (e.g., Levendusky 2009). In many studies, US citizens have been described as ideologically naïve, in the sense that they embrace a non-coherent amalgam of liberal and conservative issue positions (e.g., Converse 1964; Kinder and Kalmoe 2017). The question whether, and to what extent, citizens' identity-based ideology influences their political judgment and behaviour in other democracies, and notably, in countries where citizens hold more coherent issue positions, has not been sufficiently investigated.

In this paper, we examine whether identity-based ideology affects voters' political behaviour and attitudes in Israel. Unlike the United States, Israel is small country with a multi-party political system, and as we show below, is considered a highly ideological polity. Relying on a survey of 617 Israeli respondents, including an embedded vignette experiment, we document a substantial effect of Israelis' social identification with an ideological 'bloc' on their vote choice, political judgment, attitudes toward political rivals, and reactions to new information. These results, we believe, provide additional support for the contention that, irrespective of issue positions or issue-based ideology, identity-based ideology is a strong predictor of voters' political judgment and behaviour around the globe.

### **Ideology as social identity [perhaps: Identity-based Ideology]**

The political importance of ideological labels such as "left" and "right" – or their equivalents "liberal" and "conservative" – has been widely acknowledged (Arian and Shamir 1983). Not only do these designations point to “a system of beliefs” (Converse 1964) structuring voters' political perceptions and issue positions (Lau and Redlawsk 2006; Heit and Nicholson 2010), but they also organize party groupings in the political space and guide voters' expectations regarding the likelihood of political alliances (Pioro, Schwartz, and Davidov 2011; Fortunato, Stevenson, and Vonnahme 2016). Traditionally, the left-right ideological spectrum has been analysed as either a one- or a two-dimensional continuum representing a broad

worldview captured by positions and beliefs regarding multiple social and economic issues (Pioro, Schwartz, and Davidov 2011; Feldman and Johnston 2014; Bølstad and Dinas 2017).

Yet, the left-right division extends beyond issue-driven ideology. Left versus right, or liberal versus conservative ideological affiliations also reflect symbolic group identities that carry considerable affective significance for voters (Conover and Feldman 1981; Claassen, Tucker, and Smith 2015; Devine 2015; Ellis and Stimson 2012; Popp and Rudolph 2011). Ideology has been increasingly framed in the literature in terms of social identity, including studies by Malka and Lelkes (2010), Popp and Rudolph (2011), Ellis and Stimson (2012), Devine (2015), and Mason (2018a). These scholars distinguish between two separate ideological facets: issue-based, on the one hand, and identity-based, or symbolic, on the other (see also Bølstad and Dinas 2017). The former reflects the traditional understanding of ideology as a coherent set of issue positions, while the latter focuses on one's attachment to the ideological group to which one belongs and to its members, and is anchored in social identity (e.g., Mason 2018a). Ideology can thus be conceptualized as substantive policy preferences as well as a social identity, and these two notions can be separated, both theoretically and empirically. In the words of Mason (2018b, 22), "ideology is not simply a system of values and preferences that constrain policy positions. It is also an identity that... can guide political behavior without relying on policy preferences".

The case for identity-based ideology rests on voters' attachment to, and social identification with, an ideological group. This argument is based on the widely recognized inherent and fundamental human tendency to cling to social groups. Social categorization theory posits that people organize reality by classifying objects into groups according to salient characteristics (Turner et al. 1987). And just as we categorize others, so do we apply this logic to ourselves, thereby also adapting our behavior to group norms and expectations. In social contexts, categories govern judgment, in that we classify others as in- or out-group members, and this, in turn, affects our perception and evaluation regarding them (e.g., Turner et al. 1987; Mason 2018b). In particular, for many citizens, the labels "left" (or "liberal") and "right" (or "conservative") also designate who is "us" and who is "them" (e.g., Mason 2018a). Moreover, voters' knowledge to which political camp they belong is acquired in the early stages of socialization and becomes entrenched in their cognition and psyche (e.g., Green, Palmquist, and Schickler 2002). Accordingly, we contend that such a deep sense of belonging to an ideological camp has a strong and independent effect on political judgment and behaviour. It follows that people's voting behaviour and perceptions of the rival camp are

affected not only by their issue preferences, but also by their group attachment: the stronger the attachment, the stronger the motivation to act in the group's interests.

Thus far, research on identity-based ideology has focused almost exclusively on the American two-party political arena, where ideological and party labels at present largely coincide (e.g., Levendusky 2009). We build on the existing research on identity-based ideology in the US and apply it, for the first time, to a multi-party context. Specifically, we test the effect of the identity-based ideological element on voters' political behaviour and judgment in Israel. Studying the effects of identity-based ideology in Israel is an instructive project. Various studies have shown that issue-based ideology among American voters tends to be weak and incoherent, and that Americans' ideological self-placement is largely symbolic and, at best, moderately correlated with main policy issues (e.g., Converse 1964; Conover and Feldman 1981; Kinder and Kalmoe 2017). Under these circumstances, it is perhaps not surprising that Americans' political behaviour and judgment are strongly influenced by their ideological identity and group attachments. By contrast, as we show below, Israelis' political behaviour and judgment are powerfully affected by their issue-based ideology, which for that matter has also shown to be quite coherent. Hence, Israel can serve as a productive case-study for testing the effect of ideological identity on political attitudes and voting patterns.

### **Left-right ideology in Israel**

Since its independence, Israel's political life has been structured by the left-right ideological division over its relations with its neighboring Arab countries, and later on over the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (Arian and Shamir 2001). Unlike many other democracies, in Israel the left-right ideological axis pertains mainly to the domain of security and foreign affairs: Those on the "left" (or "doves") are generally supportive of territorial compromises intended to advance peace agreements with the neighboring Arab countries and the Palestinians, while those on the "right" ("hawks") for the most part oppose such compromises and favor a more forceful stance which foregrounds security and the need to deter potential enemies (e.g., Shamir and Arian 1999). Israel is a geographically small country that operates under a perpetual threat of attack. Over the years, it has been involved in numerous and varied armed conflicts and has suffered several periods of widespread and deadly terror attacks. The army service is mandatory, and most Israelis serve at least 2–3 years in the Israel Defense Forces.

For over 50 years, Israel has been occupying the Judea and Samaria regions, where the majority of the population are Palestinians. In such a reality, it stands to reason that the division along the left-right, hawkish-dovish ideological lines should be substantive and relevant for many Israelis. Indeed, Israel has been described as "a polity that is highly ideological, where ideology is widely thought to play an important role, and where ideological discourse is strong" (Arian and Shamir 1983, 143; see also Shamir, Dvir-gvirsman, and Ventura 2017).

Under these conditions, Israelis' left-right ideological self-placement is indeed predictive of main policy preferences. Thus, not only is the hawkish-dovish ideology a powerful predictor of the vote (e.g., Shamir and Arian 1999) and other political attitudes and behaviors (e.g., Enos and Gidron 2018; Manekin, Grossman, and Mitts 2018; Yair and Sulitzeanu-kenan 2018), but the correlation between Israelis' ideological self-placement and major policy issues is quite strong as well. For example, data from the Israel National Elections Study (INES) show that, between 2006 and 2015, the average correlation between Jewish Israelis' self-placement on a 7-point ideological self-placement item and a scale of 4 policies related to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict stood at 0.54, ranging from 0.44 in 2006 to an impressive 0.60 in 2015.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, Shamir and colleagues (2017) show that, when asked to verbally explain the concepts of "left" and "right," about 80 percent of Israelis came up with a meaningful response. More importantly, the same study demonstrates that, for whopping 68 percent of Jewish Israelis, security and foreign-affairs constitute the core component of left-right ideology in Israel, while no other dimension (e.g., economy or state-religion) was stipulated as such by more than 25 percent of respondents.<sup>2</sup>

It could thus be argued that, unlike the United States, where ideological self-placement is at best symbolic and is largely divorced from issue-based ideology (e.g., Conover and Feldman 1981; Ellis and Stimson 2012; Chen and Goren 2016; Mason 2018a) – and according to some scholars, has barely any effect at all (e.g., Kinder and Kalmoe 2017) – in Israel, one's ideological self-placement genuinely taps issue-based ideology. Moreover, as already stated, in Israel, ideology relates primarily to issues of peace and conflict, territorial

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<sup>1</sup> In comparison, Chen and Goren (2016) show that, between 1988 and 2012, the average correlation between Americans' 7-point ideological self-placement and more extensive policy-issue scales (5–8 items) was only 0.36. For more data on our four items, see the Methodology section below and Section **#F#** in the online appendix.

<sup>2</sup> A majority among both leftists, centrists, and rightists in Israel considered the security and foreign affairs dimension as the core element of the left-right ideology, allaying concerns of differential item functioning (cf. Bauer et al. 2017; Simas 2018).

compromise and occupation, while Israelis' issue-based ideology is more constrained compared to Americans. Accordingly, Israel serves as a promising venue for testing the argument that, even controlling for issue-based ideology, voters' ideological identity is a major determinant of their political attitudes and behavior.

### Ideological identities in Israel

We contend that, in Israel, the "left" and "right" ideological labels also capture distinct *social identities*, which could affect political judgment and behavior even controlling for issue-based ideology. The left-right political division overlaps with other major social cleavages such as secular-religious, Ashkenazi-Sephardic, and center-periphery (e.g., Shamir and Arian 1999). This patterning, in turn, gives rise to stereotypes regarding citizens who support either the right- or the left-wing ideological bloc. Combined with parental and communal socialization, such generalizations help people understand which political *qua* social group they are closer to, and wish to be part of (see, e.g., Green, Palmquist, and Schickler 2002). Scholars have established that group identities grow more cohesive and salient when multiple identity dimensions reinforce rather than cut across one another (Brewer 2000; Mason 2018b). And what makes our case even more robust is that Israelis tend to identify strongly not with a particular political party, but rather with an entire ideological 'bloc' (e.g., Arian and Shamir 2001).<sup>3</sup>

At this juncture, let us consider a hypothetical Israeli citizen who identifies with the ideological right and regards her membership in that political camp as an important aspect of her self-concept. That person's political judgment and behavior will differ substantially from those of her compatriot who identifies with the ideological left – and not only because of their divergent attitudes toward the Israeli-Palestinian conflict or other policy preferences, i.e., their issue-based ideology. Rather, these differences might also stem from the social group of which they feel part, and on whose success they pin their hopes. It is not coincidental that public figures and political elites in Israel regularly target the socio-cultural groups comprising a specific ideological bloc, especially during electoral campaigns; indeed, as a strategy to garner the support of the in-group, they often denigrate the ideological rivals as being part of supposedly inferior socio-cultural groups (e.g., Amran 2015). As shown in the

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<sup>3</sup> For example, data from the 2015 INES show that 90 percent of Jewish Israelis identified with a "political tendency" (left, center, or right) while only 59 percent reported feeling close to a political party.

literature on ideological identities in the US, such group attachments, or *social identities*, are sufficiently meaningful and strong to have important political implications (e.g., Huddy 2001; Huddy, Mason, and Aarøe 2015). Accordingly, we anticipate that Israelis' social identification with an ideological bloc will affect their political behaviors and attitudes on a par with their issue-based ideological leanings and other socio-demographic indices. In this regard, we set forth and test several hypotheses.

## **Testable hypotheses**

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The first hypothesis relates to the influence of Israelis' ideological identities on their vote choice. Israel is a multiparty system in which dozens of parties compete in each election, and ten or more of these regularly gain seats in Parliament (the Knesset). Many of these parties diverge substantially in terms of their ideological positions. These differences do not escape voters' attention (e.g., Bargsted and Kedar 2009), and in all probability affect their vote choice.

At the same time, Israelis' voting decisions must likewise be affected by their ideological identities (see also Bølstad and Dinas 2017). A strong social identity entails a strong emotional attachment to a social group and an impetus to conform with its norms (e.g., Huddy 2001). Thus, an Israeli who strongly identifies with, say, the political right, might feel compelled to vote for a party from the right-wing ideological bloc even if her issue-based ideology is more congruent with the platform of a centrist party. The reason for such a dissonance is that, in voting for the right-wing bloc, this individual conforms with the norms of her in-group, signals her support for it, and increases its chances of winning the election. The choice of a particular party within one's favorite ideological bloc might depend more on specific ideological considerations or idiosyncratic preferences (see Bølstad and Dinas 2017). At the same time, voting for a party from another bloc – or for that matter not voting at all – would be deemed as tantamount to failing one's in-group and violating its norms. Hence, we hypothesize that:

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<sup>4</sup> We did not pre-register our hypotheses, yet they are based on hypotheses enumerated in a grant proposal (available upon request from the authors) which was submitted three months prior to our surveys' distribution.

*H1: The stronger one's ideological identity, the more one is likely to vote for a party from one's ideological bloc.*

In addition, we suggest that, above and beyond issue-based ideology, ideological identity should also increase affective polarization in the sense of positive attitudes toward the political ingroup and hostility toward political rivals (e.g., Iyengar and Westwood 2015; Iyengar et al. 2019). Various studies have argued that, in the US, current hostility between Democrats and Republicans – or between liberals and conservatives – stems in part from group-based factors (e.g., Ahler and Sood 2018; Mason 2018b; Iyengar et al. 2019; see also Huddy and Yair 2019). Another recent study shows that, outside the US, too, strong partisan identities increase affective polarization, in particular when the electoral system is competitive such that each major party poses an electoral, and thus also a status, threat to its rivals (Huddy, Bankert, and Davies 2018).

As regards the Israeli context, we propose that, even controlling for voters' issue-based ideologies, their ideological identities will increase affective polarization. At the individual level, Israelis with stronger ideological identities are expected to harbor more positive attitudes toward supporters of their respective ideological camps (in-groups) and more negative attitudes toward supporters of rival camps (out-groups). The underlying logic is that stronger social identification with a particular ideological bloc and its supporters is likely to manifest in a more benign and warm attitude toward other supporters of that bloc, consistent with the notion of *in-group favoritism*. Conversely, the supporters of a rival bloc, who are also part of a rival socio-cultural group, are perceived as a threat to the electoral chances and social status of one's own bloc, and are thus evaluated more negatively, consistent with the notion of *out-group derogation* (e.g., Huddy, Bankert, and Davies 2018; Mason 2018b). We thus hypothesize that:

*H2: The stronger one's ideological identity, the stronger will be one's level of affective polarization.*

Finally, as shown by Huddy and colleagues (2015, 2018), even controlling for issue-based ideology, those holding strong partisan identities exhibit higher levels of political participation and engagement, with a view of helping their preferred party to win the election. They also tend to display strong emotional reactions to either threats or reassuring



developments with respect to their in-party's electoral success. As a corollary, we predict that the strength of one's ideological identity will condition one's emotional reaction to prospective electoral losses or gains of one's ideological camp. Emotions in general, and anger and enthusiasm in particular, are known to propel political action and are therefore a strong predictor of political participation (e.g., Valentino et al. 2011; Huddy, Mason, and Aarøe 2015; Mason 2018b). We thus expect Israelis with a stronger ideological identity to exhibit stronger emotional reactions to information that either raises or diminishes the likelihood of their respective ideological bloc's electoral success. Such information can be perceived by those individuals as implicating the status and political standing of their in-group and, in the latter case, as a call to rally in its defense. Hence, our third hypothesis:

*H3: The stronger one's ideological identity, the more one is likely to react emotionally to threats or reassurances regarding the status of one's ideological bloc.*

## **Methodology**

To examine our hypotheses, we conducted a survey among Jewish Israelis, who comprise the majority ethnic group in Israel. As mentioned earlier, the main ideological competition in Israel has always been between the left and the right. Our survey instruments were thus geared to supporters of those two ideological blocs. Our analyses, as well, focus on Israeli respondents who identify themselves as either left or right, and relate to supporters of the center bloc only briefly in the online appendix.

## **Sample**

Using *Panel Hamidgam*, a company conducting online surveys in Israel, we surveyed 617 Jewish Israelis. The survey was carried out in July 2018. The "participation rate" (AAPOR 2016, 49–50) was 14.1%.<sup>5</sup> We used quotas for gender and age to generate a balanced sample on these covariates. The sample is broadly representative of the Jewish population of Israel, with the mean age – 38.9 ( $SD = 12.8$ ), and the percentage of women – 50.1. In terms of political views, 53.7 percent of the sample self-identified as right-wing, 18 percent as center, and 28.4 percent as left-wing. Our sampling strategy was designed to compare between

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<sup>5</sup> The survey company sent out a total of 4,385 invitations to complete the survey, and 617 respondents provided "a usable response" (AAPOR 2016, 49):  $617 / 4,385 = 0.141$ .

leftists and rightists; accordingly, centrists were intentionally undersampled while leftists – oversampled (for more details on the sample and its comparison with a nationally representative sample, see Table #A1# in the online appendix).

## Measures

*Issue-based ideology:* As noted earlier, Israeli voters' policy choices on security and foreign affairs are captured to a great extent by the 7-point ideological self-placement item termed here *Hawkish-Dovish Ideology* (1- right, 4- center, 7- left; in our sample:  $M = 3.40$ ;  $SD = 1.77$ ). In addition, we asked respondents four questions to tap their policy preferences concerning the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, targeting the following issues: (1) the establishment of a Palestinian state; (2) the future of Arab neighborhoods in Jerusalem; (3) a peace agreement with the Palestinians; and (4) the perceived aspirations of the Palestinians. These items showed high inter-correlation ( $\text{Alpha} = .87$ ), and we averaged them into an *Ideological-issues scale* that varies between 0 and 1. This scale, in turn, emerged as strongly correlating with the *Hawkish-Dovish Ideology* item ( $r = .76$ ;  $p < .001$ ). Since the *Hawkish-Dovish Ideology* item might capture more than one's attitudes regarding these four items, in our main analyses we use the 7-point item (or an ideological strength variable created by folding the 7-point item at the middle category; see more below), but as shown in the online appendix, similar results would have been obtained if we had used the *Ideological-issues scale* instead.

*Ideological-identity scale:* To examine ideological identity in Israel, we adapted the 8-item partisan identity scale used by Bankert et al. (2017) and Huddy et al. (2018). According to these researchers, their partisan-identity scale is designed to tap "a subjective sense of group belonging, the affective importance of group membership, and the affective consequences of lowered group status – all of which are crucial ingredients of a social identity" (Huddy, Bankert, and Davies 2018, 179). Respondents first answered a branching question gauging their political leaning: 'right,' 'moderate right,' 'center,' 'moderate left,' 'left,' and 'other.' Those who identified with right or moderate right were considered as rightists (55.9%); left or moderate left – leftists (27.2%); and center – centrists (16.9%). Respondents then completed the items of the ideological-identity scale, adapted such that the original "group" figured as the respondent's ideological camp (left; center; right). Table #A3# in the online appendix presents the full wording of the 8-item scale and the distribution of the

responses in the sample. The properties of the adapted scale are elaborated in the Results section.

*Voting intention:* To test the first hypothesis, we asked respondents about their voting intention, as follows: "If Knesset elections were held today, which party would you vote for?" Respondents were presented with a list comprising all parties which at the time had seats in the Knesset. In addition, respondents could choose the option labeled "other" and manually add another party, as well as indicate if they were undecided or did not intend to vote. The first two dependent variables, *Right vote* ( $M = .36$ ;  $SD = .48$ ) and *Left vote* ( $M = .21$ ;  $SD = .41$ ), are dummy variables, with the value 1 denoting the intention to vote for parties considered as part of the right-wing or left-wing ideological blocs, respectively, and 0 otherwise.<sup>6</sup>

*Attitudes toward Netanyahu's investigations:* As an additional test of the potential effect of ideological identity on political judgment, we asked respondents two questions tapping their attitudes regarding the ongoing police investigations of Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. At the time, Netanyahu was being investigated for allegedly receiving bribes from several media tycoons (e.g., Winer 2018). Respondents were asked to indicate, on a 5-point scale (from 'to a very great extent' to 'not at all'), (1) the extent to which they believed that the suspicions against Netanyahu are true, and (2) the extent to which they agreed with the claim that the investigations against Netanyahu are politically driven. The correlation between these two items was sufficient ( $r = -.47$ ;  $p < .001$ ) to create a single scale, termed *Netanyahu's investigations*, which varies between 0 and 1, with higher values indicating stronger conviction that the investigations are politically motivated ( $M = .42$ ;  $SD = .29$ ). As expected, rightists ( $M = .58$ ;  $SD = .24$ ) and leftists ( $M = .18$ ;  $SD = .18$ ) evaluated said investigations differently ( $t(511) = 19.11$ ;  $p < .001$ ) (two-tailed tests throughout).

*Affective polarization:* In testing the second hypothesis, that voters' ideological identities influence affective polarization, we followed previous studies (e.g., Huddy and Yair 2019; Iyengar et al. 2019) and created several affective polarization measures. (1) *Social distance:* Respondents were asked to indicate, on a 5-point scale ranging from 'very disappointed' to 'very pleased,' how they thought they would feel if a close relative were to marry (a) a rightist, or (b) a leftist (question order randomized). We then calculated, for each

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<sup>6</sup> Following commonly used classifications (e.g., Manekin, Grossman, and Mitts 2018), the Zionist Camp and Meretz were coded as left-wing parties, while the Likud, HaBayit HaYehudi, Yisrael Beiteinu, Yahadut HaTora, Shas, Yachad, Otzma Yehudit, and Zehut – as right-wing parties. [Perhaps add this in the Online Appendix?]

respondent, the difference in the answers to the two items. (2) *Warm feelings*: On an 11-point scale ranging from ‘hatred’ to ‘affection,’ respondents rated their feelings toward rightists and leftists (question order randomized). Then we calculated the difference between one’s attitudes toward rightists and toward leftists. (3) *Stereotypes*: Respondents were asked to rate, on a 10-point scale, two items pertaining to traits ascribed to rightists and leftists: moderate versus extreme, and moral versus immoral (question order randomized). We created, for each group (rightists and leftists) a traits scale by combining the two relevant items ( $r_s > .38$ ) and then calculated the difference between each respondent’s evaluation of the groups.

The above three affective-polarization measures were scaled to vary between -1 and 1, with higher values denoting (1) feeling socially closer to rightists ( $M_{rightists} = .28$ ,  $SD_{rightists} = .36$ ;  $M_{leftists} = -.16$ ,  $SD_{leftists} = .31$ ) ( $t(511) = 13.54$ ;  $p < .001$ ), (2) warmer feelings toward rightists ( $M_{rightists} = .45$ ,  $SD_{rightists} = .33$ ;  $M_{leftists} = -.33$ ,  $SD_{leftists} = .28$ ) ( $t(511) = 26.31$ ;  $p < .001$ ), and (3) ascribing more positive traits to rightists ( $M_{rightists} = .19$ ,  $SD_{rightists} = .37$ ;  $M_{leftists} = -.22$ ,  $SD_{leftists} = .28$ ) ( $t(511) = 12.65$ ;  $p < .001$ ). In addition, these measures of difference exhibited good reliability (Alpha = .83), and following Huddy and Yair (2019), we created a *difference scale* by averaging the three measures, as this scale could potentially reduce measurement error ( $M_{rightists} = .31$ ,  $SD_{rightists} = .29$ ;  $M_{leftists} = -.24$ ,  $SD_{leftists} = .23$ ) ( $t(511) = 21.58$ ;  $p < .001$ ).

*Control variables*: We control for the aforementioned *Hawkish-Dovish Ideology* item, age, gender (female), education (a 4-point item), relative income (a 5-point relative income item), and religiosity (a 4-point item). More information on these variables is provided in Table #A2# in the online appendix. We also control for respondents’ *economic*-based ideological orientation: Respondents were asked to indicate, on a 4-point scale, whether they favored a capitalist or a socialist approach to the structuring of economic life in Israel (ranging from ‘definitely socialist’ to ‘definitely capitalist’). As is usually the case in Israeli politics (see Shamir, Dvir-gvirsman, and Ventura 2017), this item emerged as only weakly correlated with *Hawkish-Dovish ideology* ( $r = -.15$ ;  $p < .001$ ). All control variables were then set to vary between 0 and 1.

### Emotional reactions to threatening and reassuring information

To test the third hypothesis, we implemented a vignette experiment as part of our survey. Following Huddy and colleagues (2015, 2018), we randomly exposed respondents to one of

two mock news articles that either threatened the status of their ideological bloc or contained reassuring information in this regard, and examined whether one's ideological identity conditions one's emotional reaction to the article. At the time of the survey, the date of the next election was still unknown, and the two mock news articles capitalized on the uncertainty regarding the outcome of PM Benjamin Netanyahu's investigations (see above). Netanyahu was the head of the right-wing Likud party and of a right-wing coalition. Therefore, we anticipated that a severe bribery indictment might compel Netanyahu to step down, hurting the prospects of the ideological right to stay in power, while the dropping of the charges against him could substantially improve their prospects.

The 'pro-left' article stated that seniors in the Attorney General office were certain that, in the coming weeks, the Attorney General would indict Netanyahu on charges of bribery, and that this was likely to significantly weaken the electoral prospects of the right-wing bloc to stay in power. Conversely, the 'pro-right' article reported that, in the opinion of these officials, the Attorney General would drop the charges, thereby significantly raising the chances of the right-wing bloc to stay in power (the full text of both articles is presented in Section #G# of the online appendix). We then created a *threatening condition* dummy variable which takes the value 1 if the respondent read a 'threatening' article (e.g., a rightist respondent reading the 'pro-left' article), and 0 otherwise.

After reading the article, respondents completed a manipulation check which asked whether the power of the right-wing bloc was expected to grow stronger, weaken, or remain unchanged in light of the Attorney General's anticipated decision. Next, we gauged respondents' emotional reaction to the article, as the main outcome variable of the experiment. Respondents were asked to indicate, on a 5-point scale, their emotional reaction with respect to four items: anger, enthusiasm, concern, and satisfaction (cf. Valentino et al. 2011; Groenendyk and Banks 2014). The scale ranged from 'I did not feel any [emotion in question]' to 'I felt a very great degree of [emotion in question]'.

Our anger and concern items correlated quite strongly ( $r = .48$ ;  $p < .001$ ), yet previous studies have shown that while anger and concern (or fear) tend to be highly correlated, they have distinct behavioral consequences, with anger increasing political participation while concern mostly increasing political contemplation (e.g., Valentino et al. 2011; Groenendyk and Banks 2014). Accordingly, we created a *Anger* item, scaled to vary between 0-1 ( $M = .29$ ;  $SD = .29$ ) and a *Concern* item, scaled similarly ( $M = .22$ ;  $SD = .28$ ). In addition, the

enthusiasm and satisfaction items were highly correlated ( $r = .70$ ;  $p < .001$ ) and they were combined into an *Enthusiasm* scale, which varies 0–1 ( $M = .14$ ;  $SD = .21$ ). As per *H3*, we expected one's ideological identity to condition one's emotional reaction to the news article, those with stronger ideological identity exhibiting more emotional reactions to the vignettes.

### Empirical strategy

The empirical strategy implemented in the analyses is straightforward: We estimate the effect of our *ideological-identity scale* among leftists and rightists (centrists were excluded from all main analyses) on a myriad of dependent variables, while controlling for a range of covariates. In testing the first two hypotheses, our analysis takes the following functional form:

$$(1) y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{Ideological identity} + \beta_2 \text{Right - wing supporter} + \beta_3 \text{Ideological identity} * \text{Right - wing supporter} + \Omega + \varepsilon$$

where  $y_i$  denotes the different dependent variables,  $\beta_1$  captures the effect of the *ideological-identity scale* among leftists,  $\beta_2$  captures the effect of being a rightist versus leftist when the ideological identity equals zero,  $\beta_3$  captures the difference in the effect of the *ideological-identity scale* between leftists and rightists,  $\Omega$  is a vector of the controls, and  $\varepsilon$  is an idiosyncratic error term. Note that an interaction between the *ideological-identity scale* and the dummy variable for a rightist respondent is necessary since the dependent variables are directional (i.e., higher values denote greater support for either the left or the right): We expect the effects of the rightist and leftist ideological identity to operate in the opposite direction.

To test the third hypothesis, which involves an experimental component, we estimate the following equation:

$$(2) y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{Ideological identity} + \beta_2 \text{Threatening condition} + \beta_3 \text{Ideological identity} * \text{Threatening condition} + \beta_4 \text{Right - wing supporter} + \Omega + \varepsilon$$

where  $y_i$  denotes the non-directional dependent variables (emotional reactions),  $\beta_2$  captures the effect of the 'threatening' versus 'reassuring' condition when the ideological identity equals zero,  $\beta_3$  captures the difference in the effect of the ideological-identity score for respondents in the 'threatening' versus 'reassuring' condition,  $\beta_4$  captures the net effect of

being a rightist versus leftist,  $\Omega$  is the vector of the same controls as detailed for Equation 1, except in this model we control for ideological strength using a 4-point ideological strength item – created by folding the 7-point *Hawkish-Dovish Ideology* item at its middle category – instead of the 7-point item, and  $\varepsilon$  is an idiosyncratic error term.

## Results

We start with describing the properties of our *ideological-identity scale*. It was created by averaging the eight items and scaling them to vary between 0 and 1, with higher values denoting stronger ideological identity. This scale is highly reliable, both for the entire sample (Alpha = .90) and within each ideological camp (Alphas = .87-.92). We also conducted an exploratory factor analysis for the eight items comprising the *ideological-identity scale*. Employing the iterated principal factor method, this analysis revealed only one factor with eigenvalue greater than 1 in the entire sample (eigenvalue = 4.45; 87% of the variance explained). Very similar results were obtained for each of the three ideological blocs separately, corroborating the scaling of the eight items used.

Overall, the rightists ( $M = .48$ ;  $SD = .23$ ) and the leftists ( $M = .53$ ;  $SD = .20$ ) in our sample displayed a stronger ideological identity than the centrists ( $M = .39$ ;  $SD = .22$ ) – possibly because the center bloc is relatively new in Israeli politics (Shamir 2015). Crucially, the correlation between the *ideological-identity scale* and the 4-point ideological-strength item<sup>7</sup> is moderate among both rightists ( $r = .42$ ;  $p < .001$ ) and leftists ( $r = .40$ ;  $p < .001$ ). This result suggests that, in Israel, ideological self-placement and ideological identity, although related, are distinct concepts (cf. Mason 2018a).

We now turn to examine our first hypothesis, according to which those with higher ideological identity scores are more likely to vote for a party from their respective ideological bloc. In Models 1–4 in Table 1, the dependent variables are dummy variables, representing votes for a party from the right-wing bloc (Models 1–2) and from the left-wing bloc (Models 3–4). To demonstrate the effect of the *Hawkish-Dovish Ideology* item on the vote, Models 1 and 3 do not include the *ideological-identity scale*. As can be seen in these models, *Hawkish-Dovish Ideology* is a strong predictor of the vote, even controlling for the factors that are

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<sup>7</sup> The few rightists or leftists (less than 2 percent) who placed themselves in the opposite ideological camp on the 7-point *Hawkish-Dovish Ideology* item were assigned a zero score on the 4-point item.

commonly considered predictive of voting behavior in Israel, such as religiosity (Shamir and Arian 1999).

--- Table 1 here ---

In Models 2 and 4, we add the *ideological-identity scale*, a dummy variable for a rightist respondent, and an interaction of these two variables (see Equation 1). The models capture the *ideological-identity scale* coefficient for leftists, with the calculated coefficient for rightists presented at the bottom of the table. Adding these three variables substantially reduces the effect of the *Hawkish-Dovish Ideology* item and clearly shows that ideological identities have a powerful net effect on the vote.<sup>8</sup>

The predicted probabilities of voting for right- (Model 2) and left- (Model 4) wing parties are presented graphically in Figures 1a and 1b. In Model 2, holding all other non-binary variables constant at their respective means, the probability that a female rightist with the lowest ideological-identity score will vote for a right-wing party is only 13.6% [95% CIs: 4.0-23.2], while the same probability for a female rightist with the highest ideological-identity score is 81.6% [64.1-99.1]. The exact opposite trend emerges when it comes to voting for left-wing parties (Model 4): The probability that a female leftist with the lowest ideological-identity score will vote for a left-wing party is only 11.7% [-2.8-26.2], while the same probability for a female leftist with the highest ideological-identity score is 83.7% [62.6-104.7]. Overall, these results provide strong support for the first hypothesis.

--- Figure 1a-1c here ---

The same analyses are repeated in Models 5–6, only this time the dependent variable is the *Netanyahu's investigations scale* (higher values denote stronger conviction that these investigations are politically motivated). In Model 5, the effect of *Hawkish-Dovish Ideology* is substantial, but is cut by more than half in Model 6. The *ideological-identity scale* emerges as a strong predictor of the *Netanyahu's investigations scale* among both leftists and rightists, as is depicted graphically in Figure 1c.

Table 2 displays the test of the second hypothesis, which pertains to affective polarization (for brevity, this table does not present models that do not include the *ideological-identity scale*). In all models, *Hawkish-Dovish Ideology* strongly predicts

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<sup>8</sup> All interaction models in this paper assume a linear interaction effect. We followed Hainmueller et al. (2019) and empirically tested this assumption. As shown in Section #D# of the online appendix, the assumption was supported.



affective polarization. Yet, in line with *H2*, the *ideological identity scale* also strongly predicts affective polarization, for both leftists and rightists, suggesting that ideological identities indeed affect Israelis' attitudes toward the ideological in- and out-group.

--- Table 2 here ---

To ascertain that the results displayed in Tables 1 and 2 are robust, we conducted several tests, detailed in Section #C# of the online appendix. First, to verify that these results hold for both blocs, we reran all models in these tables separately for leftists and for rightists. Second, since leftists (or rightists) with a low ideological-identity score might be different from leftists (rightists) with a high ideological-identity score on various covariates, we also conducted matching analyses intended to match respondents with low and high ideological identity scores on all observables. We likewise reran all models in Tables 1 and 2 using the *Ideological-issues scale* mentioned above. We also reran all models in these tables after applying multiple imputations. Overall, the results of all these analyses provide additional support for both *H1* and *H2*. Still, in testing these hypotheses, we have relied on observational data. We thus examine *H3* using the results of the vignette experiment described above.

### Results of the vignette experiment

In our experiment, leftists and rightists were randomly assigned to read a vignette that was either threatening or reassuring to the status of their respective ideological camp. Overall, the manipulation check corroborates our manipulation.<sup>9</sup> To test *H3*, we include an interaction of the *threatening condition* with the *ideological-identity scale* variables, as it is expected to affect one's emotional reactions to the article (see Equation 2).

Table 3 presents the results of the analyses pertaining to *H3*. In Model 1 ideological identity conditions respondents' angry reaction to the 'threatening' article: Those with low scores not exhibit an angry reaction to the 'threatening' article, while those with a high ideological-identity score do so to a great extent. In contrast, while a similar pattern emerges

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<sup>9</sup> In the 'pro-left' condition, 70.3 percent of respondents expected the right-wing bloc to become weaker in the next elections, whereas in the 'pro-right' condition, 90.1 percent of respondents expected the power of the right-wing bloc in the next elections either to remain unchanged (44.4 percent) or to increase (45.7). We did not predict that many would expect that the right-wing bloc would become *stronger* if the charges against Netanyahu were dropped. However, the article states that the right-wing bloc is expected to maintain its power and head the next coalition, which might have led some respondents to conjecture that dropping the charges would effectively strengthen the power of the right-wing bloc.

in the ‘reassuring’ condition, the effect of the ideological-identity score in the ‘reassuring’ article is positive but not nearly as strong. These results are presented graphically in Figure 2a. As an additional test for *H3*, and to examine whether one’s reaction to the article depends on one’s issue-based ideology, in Model 2 we added an interaction between the ‘threatening’ condition variable and the 4-point *ideological-strength* variable (cf. Huddy, Mason, and Aarøe 2015, pp. 12–14). In the latter interaction, the coefficient is small and statistically insignificant, while the interaction between the ‘threatening’ condition and the *ideological-identity scale* score remains a strong predictor of an angry response.

--- Table 3 here ---

In Model 3 (presented graphically in Figure 2b) we see that leftists and rightists with a strong ideological identity report a much more concerned reaction to a threatening information while exhibit no similar reaction in the ‘reassuring’ condition. These results do not change when we add an interaction between the *threatening condition* and the *ideological strength* variables in Model 4. The results of Model 5 (presented graphically in Figure 2c) show that, in the ‘reassuring’ condition, ideological identity strongly affects an enthusiastic reaction – but not so in the ‘threatening’ condition (see bottom row). These results change only slightly in Model 6, which adds an interaction between the *threatening condition* and the *ideological strength* variables. In sum, the results in Table 3 not only provide strong support for *H3*, but also suggest that it is mostly the ideological identity, rather than issue-based ideology, that conditions Israelis’ reactions to new politically-relevant information.

--- Figures 2a-2c here ---

## Discussion

Our results attest to a powerful effect that Israelis' ideological identities exert over their political judgment and behavior – above and beyond their issue-based ideology. Israel is a country with a highly ideological population (Arian and Shamir 1983; also Shamir et al. 2017), where issue-based ideology is known to have a substantial impact on citizens' political attitudes and vote choices. Yet, we have shown that, even among Israelis, ideological identity is a powerful predictor of voting behavior, political judgment, attitudes toward different ideological groups, and reactions to new politically relevant information. These results bolster the argument that ideological identities, qua *social* identities, are important in understanding public opinion in various countries—not only in the US.

In that regard, Israel is perhaps more similar to other multi-party Western democracies (e.g., Netherlands, Italy, Spain) than the US. That said, further research is required in order to ascertain the effect of voters' ideological identities in such polities.<sup>10</sup> Moreover, in this paper, we document a rather consistent, and at times substantial, effect of Israelis' issue-based ideology on their political behavior and judgments. However, whether voters in other countries exhibit similar effects of either issue-based or identity-based ideology remains an open question.

Future research might do well to examine the effects of social identity anchored in partisan versus ideological affiliations in multi-party systems (cf. Huddy, Mason, and Aarøe 2015). As noted above, Israel is a multi-party system where one's partisan affiliation is less important than one's support for an ideological camp. Yet, it is possible that social identification with a certain political party has political effects as well. Relatedly, Huddy et al. (2018) documented the effects of partisan social identities in various European multi-party systems. Comparing the effects of partisan and ideological social identities across various multi-party systems, including Israel, could improve our understanding of these societies.

This paper has for the most part analyzed the data pertaining to supporters of the right- and left-wing blocs in Israel. However, in recent decades, a new centrist bloc has emerged and gained ground in Israeli politics (e.g., Shamir 2015). Given that center parties are located ideologically in the middle of the left-right axis, one might wonder whether those who identify themselves as centrists vote based primarily on issue or identity considerations. In other words, are centrists' votes guided by ideology, identity, or both? In our study (see Section #E# of the Online Appendix), we find tentative support that the centrists are affected by their ideological identities (see also Klar 2014). That said, more research on centrist voters is needed, as today, in Israel and other countries alike, supporters of the ideological center constitute a substantial section of the electorate.

Finally, more advanced theoretical and empirical research is in order on the relationship between issue-based and group identities, preferably outside the American context. Studies to date have documented a strong correlation between voters' issue preferences and their identification with various political groups, but the causal ordering has not yet been resolved. Are our issue positions structured by our membership in a political

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<sup>10</sup> Importantly, Hagevi (2015) found that Swedish voters' identification with an ideological party-bloc affects their vote choice. While this finding is pertinent to our inquiry, Hagevi's "bloc identification" measure, unlike our *Ideological-identity scale*, does not capture a social identification with a certain ideological bloc, but rather the strength of one's support for an ideological party bloc.

'bloc'/party, or vice versa? Or perhaps the relation is reciprocal? Much progress in this matter has been achieved in respect of the American context (e.g., Goren 2005; Levendusky 2009; Chen and Goren 2016) Yet, research on multi-party systems, where issues arguably matter more, is lacking. In this aspect, our findings contribute to a deeper understanding of the importance of group identities. The Israeli case has allowed us to test the importance of political identities in the presence of a highly salient issue that is expected to determine citizens' voting decisions. Our results indicate that, today, when party systems grow more volatile and fragmented, when established political parties weaken and disintegrate, and when new parties gain increasingly more power – even at a time like this, political identities and loyalties matter.

This paper is not without limitations. First, our sample is not representative of the Israeli Jewish population, and it remain an open question whether a study using a probability-based, representative sample (such as the INES studies) would replicate our results. Furthermore, in our experimental vignettes we did not clearly manipulate threats to the advancements of important policy issues in Israel (e.g., the establishment of a Palestinian state), but manipulated only the future status of the right-wing ideological bloc. Future studies could also manipulate such issue threats (see Huddy et al. 2015) in order to examine whether respondents' emotional reactions to such threats will be conditioned by their ideological strength. These limitations none withstanding, we believe that the results of our study provide a strong support for the suggestion that ideological identities exert powerful effect on the political behavior and attitudes of citizens of many democracies.

**Table 1. Vote intentions and attitudes toward Netanyahu's investigations**

Dependent variable	(1) Intention to vote for right-wing parties	(2) Intention to vote for right-wing parties	(3) Intention to vote for left-wing parties	(4) Intention to vote for left-wing parties	(5) Attitudes toward Netanyahu's investigations	(6) Attitudes toward Netanyahu's investigations
Ideological-identity scale		-2.817 (2.888)		3.653** (1.182)		-0.238** (0.076)
Right-wing supporter		-0.284 (1.275)		-0.960 (1.054)		-0.026 (0.058)
Ideological identity X Right-wing		6.152* (3.023)		-6.067** (2.158)		0.445*** (0.102)
Hawkish-Dovish Ideology	-5.274*** (0.775)	-2.534* (1.058)	6.507*** (0.783)	1.370 (1.047)	-0.481*** (0.037)	-0.209** (0.063)
Economic (Soc./Cap.) ideology	1.345* (0.676)	1.246+ (0.693)	-1.839** (0.701)	-1.545* (0.733)	0.240*** (0.041)	0.225*** (0.038)
Age	0.192 (0.566)	0.134 (0.594)	-0.574 (0.659)	-1.076 (0.691)	0.005 (0.040)	0.002 (0.039)
Female	0.033 (0.308)	0.132 (0.343)	-0.010 (0.334)	0.005 (0.358)	0.002 (0.021)	0.004 (0.020)
Religiosity	2.502*** (0.474)	2.282*** (0.501)	-1.975** (0.702)	-1.906* (0.816)	0.173*** (0.036)	0.153*** (0.035)
Education	-0.204 (0.454)	-0.022 (0.457)	0.179 (0.531)	-0.583 (0.631)	-0.055+ (0.032)	-0.040 (0.031)
Relative income	-0.408 (0.545)	-0.479 (0.575)	0.012 (0.634)	-0.276 (0.682)	-0.014 (0.036)	-0.009 (0.034)
Constant	-0.095 (0.557)	-1.806 (1.410)	-3.397*** (0.847)	-0.332 (1.137)	0.504*** (0.043)	0.395*** (0.071)
Calculated coefficient for the ideological identity scale among right-wing supporters		3.334*** (0.808)		-2.414 (1.743)		0.208*** (0.062)
Observations	405	405	405	405	405	405
R-squared					0.534	0.573

Robust standard errors in parentheses; \*\*\* p<0.001, \*\* p<0.01, \* p<0.05, + p<0.1. Models 1–4 use a logistic regression. Models 5–6 use an OLS regression; the dependent variable in Models 5–6 varies 0–1, higher values denoting stronger conviction that the investigations are politically motivated.

**Table 2. Affective polarization – attitudes toward rightists and leftists**

Dependent variable	(1) Difference in attitude toward marrying a rightist and a leftist	(2) Difference in warmth toward rightists and leftists	(3) Difference in stereotypes of rightists and leftists	(4) Difference scale
Ideological-identity scale	-0.410*** (0.122)	-0.516*** (0.093)	-0.293** (0.107)	-0.406*** (0.078)
Right-wing supporter	-0.288*** (0.077)	-0.128+ (0.071)	-0.281*** (0.078)	-0.232*** (0.058)
Ideological identity X Right-wing	0.950*** (0.161)	1.089*** (0.146)	0.652*** (0.147)	0.897*** (0.118)
Hawkish-Dovish Ideology	-0.392*** (0.111)	-0.575*** (0.129)	-0.484*** (0.110)	-0.484*** (0.102)
Economic (Soc./Cap.) ideology	-0.198*** (0.057)	-0.084 (0.055)	-0.091 (0.059)	-0.124** (0.043)
Age	-0.180** (0.061)	-0.108* (0.051)	-0.018 (0.054)	-0.102* (0.042)
Female	0.064* (0.030)	0.077** (0.025)	0.039 (0.029)	0.060** (0.021)
Religiosity	0.095 (0.060)	0.055 (0.048)	0.162** (0.052)	0.104** (0.039)
Education	-0.005 (0.049)	-0.003 (0.043)	-0.108* (0.048)	-0.039 (0.033)
Relative income	0.015 (0.059)	-0.033 (0.050)	-0.014 (0.051)	-0.011 (0.041)
Constant	0.460*** (0.111)	0.428*** (0.108)	0.387*** (0.109)	0.425*** (0.087)
Calculated coefficient for the <i>ideological identity scale</i> among right-wing supporters	0.540*** (0.091)	0.573*** (0.090)	0.359*** (0.091)	0.491*** (0.072)
Observations	405	405	405	405
R-squared	0.467	0.745	0.423	0.695

Robust standard errors in parentheses; \*\*\* p<0.001, \*\* p<0.01, \* p<0.05, + p<0.1. The dependent variables vary between -1 and 1, with higher values denoting a more positive attitude toward rightists.

**Table 3. Emotional reactions to the experiment**

Dependent variable	(1) Anger	(2)	(3)	(4) Concern	(5)	(6) Enthusiasm
Ideological-identity scale	0.220* (0.090)	0.243** (0.091)	-0.034 (0.076)	-0.032 (0.073)	0.528*** (0.074)	0.520*** (0.076)
Threatening condition	-0.016 (0.064)	-0.040 (0.074)	-0.098 (0.065)	-0.099 (0.076)	0.104* (0.042)	0.113* (0.048)
Threat X Ideological identity	0.305* (0.126)	0.256* (0.130)	0.529*** (0.126)	0.525*** (0.127)	-0.497*** (0.090)	-0.479*** (0.095)
Right-wing supporter	-0.083* (0.033)	-0.083* (0.033)	-0.057+ (0.034)	-0.057+ (0.034)	0.020 (0.024)	0.020 (0.024)
Ideological strength	-0.037 (0.049)	-0.076 (0.071)	-0.013 (0.049)	-0.016 (0.061)	-0.007 (0.034)	0.008 (0.052)
Threat X Ideological strength		0.083 (0.096)		0.006 (0.096)		-0.031 (0.068)
Economic (Soc./Cap.) Ideology	-0.076 (0.051)	-0.074 (0.051)	-0.003 (0.052)	-0.002 (0.052)	-0.039 (0.034)	-0.039 (0.034)
Age	-0.064 (0.048)	-0.066 (0.049)	0.025 (0.047)	0.025 (0.048)	0.002 (0.039)	0.003 (0.039)
Female	0.047+ (0.027)	0.047+ (0.027)	0.031 (0.027)	0.031 (0.027)	-0.000 (0.019)	-0.000 (0.019)
Religiosity	-0.044 (0.046)	-0.043 (0.046)	-0.105* (0.044)	-0.105* (0.044)	-0.044 (0.037)	-0.044 (0.037)
Education	-0.011 (0.040)	-0.011 (0.040)	-0.012 (0.041)	-0.012 (0.041)	-0.091** (0.031)	-0.091** (0.031)
Relative Income	0.035 (0.049)	0.037 (0.049)	-0.001 (0.046)	-0.001 (0.047)	0.070+ (0.036)	0.069+ (0.036)
Constant	0.226** (0.071)	0.236** (0.075)	0.219*** (0.061)	0.220*** (0.064)	0.003 (0.050)	-0.001 (0.053)
Calculated coefficient for the <i>ideological identity scale</i> in the threatening condition	0.525*** (0.092)	0.500*** (0.092)	0.495*** (0.103)	0.493*** (0.106)	0.031 (0.055)	0.041 (0.057)
Observations	405	405	405	405	405	405
R-squared	0.193	0.195	0.184	0.184	0.297	0.298

Robust standard errors in parentheses; \*\*\* p<0.001, \*\* p<0.01, \* p<0.05, + p<0.1. The dependent variables vary 0–1.

**Figure 1. Graphical presentation of the results in Table 1**

Figure 1A. Results of Model 2 in Table 1

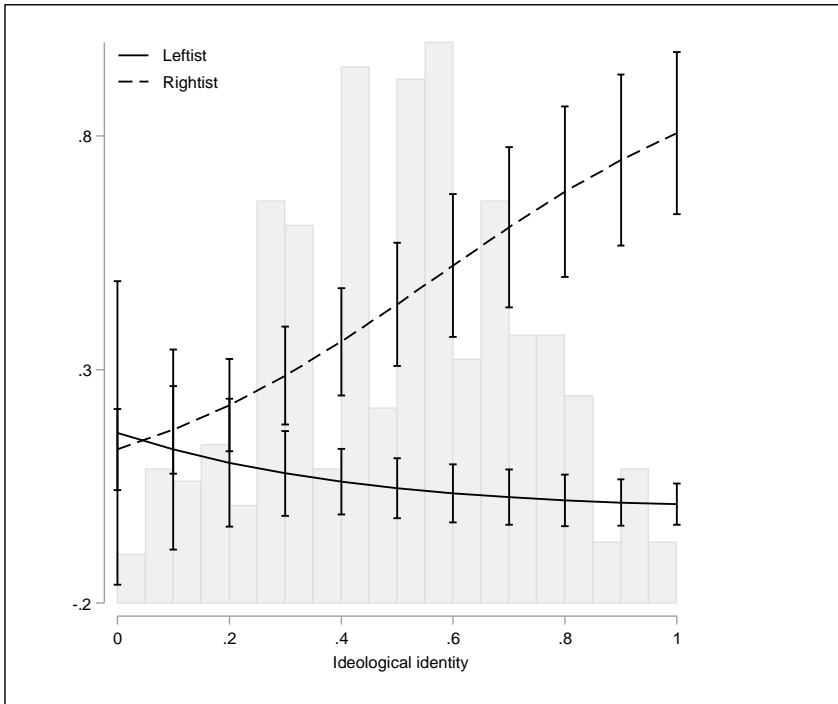


Figure 1B. Results of Model 4 in Table 1

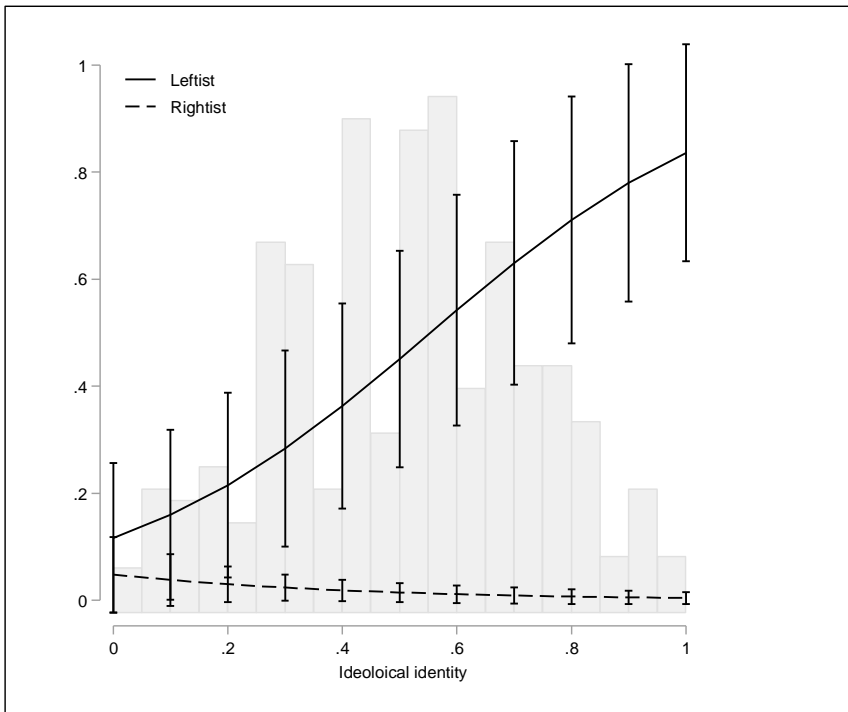
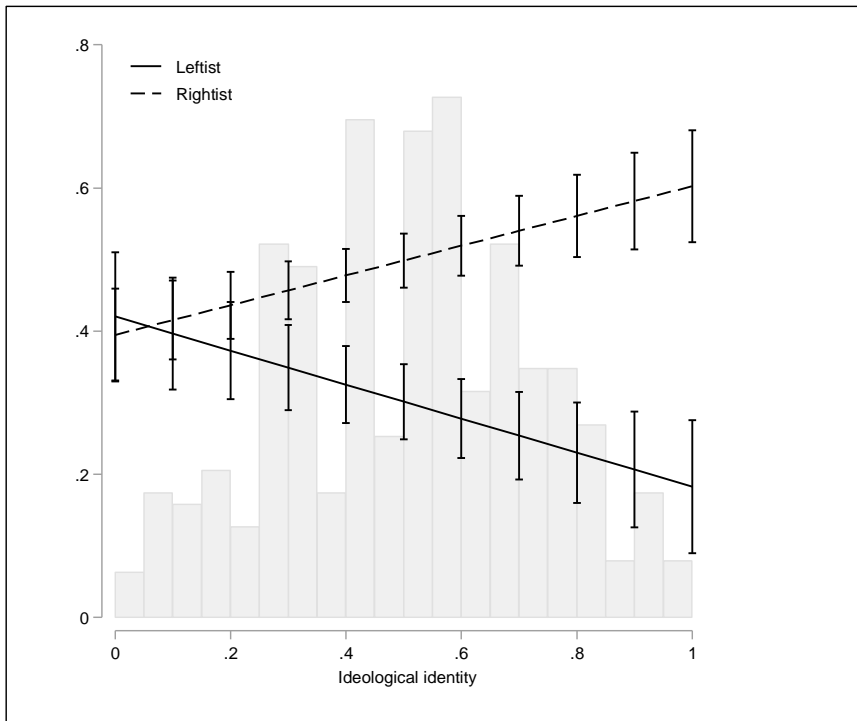




Figure 1C. Results of Model 6 in Table 1



**Figure 2. Graphical presentation of the results in Table 3**

Figure 2A. Results of Model 1 in Table 3 – predicting Anger

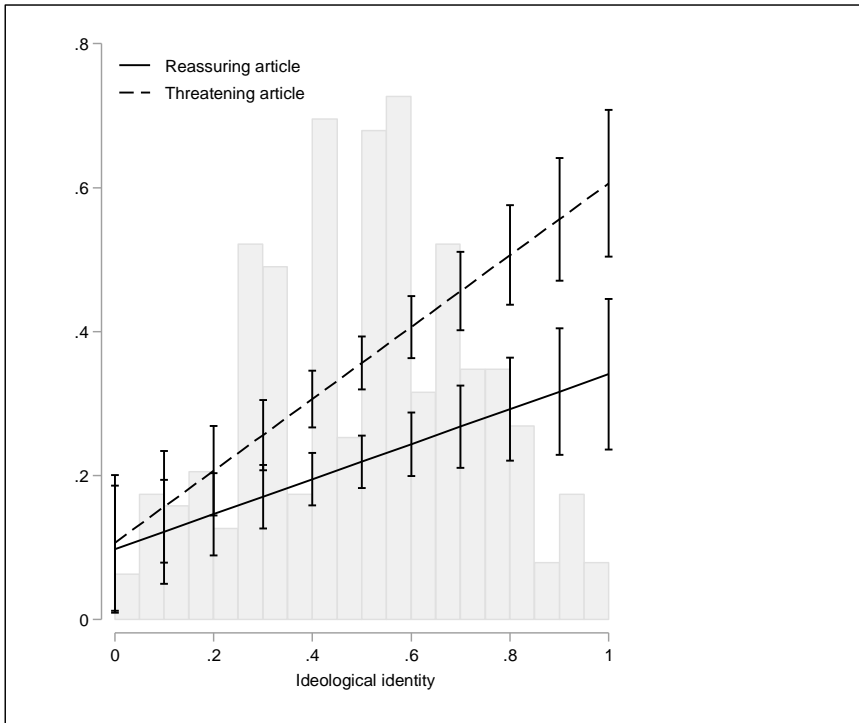


Figure 2B. Results of Model 3 in Table 3 – predicting Concern

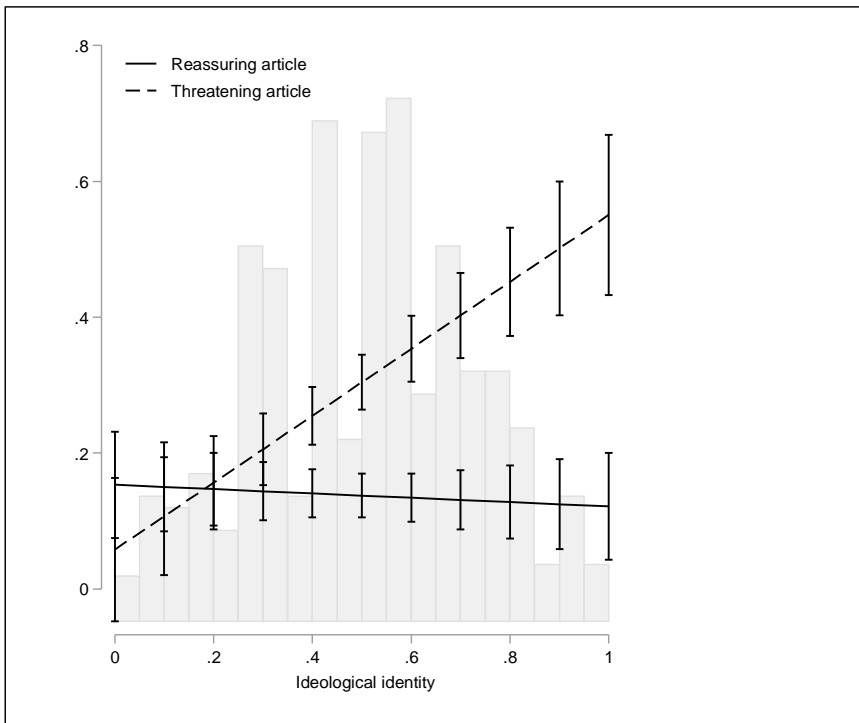
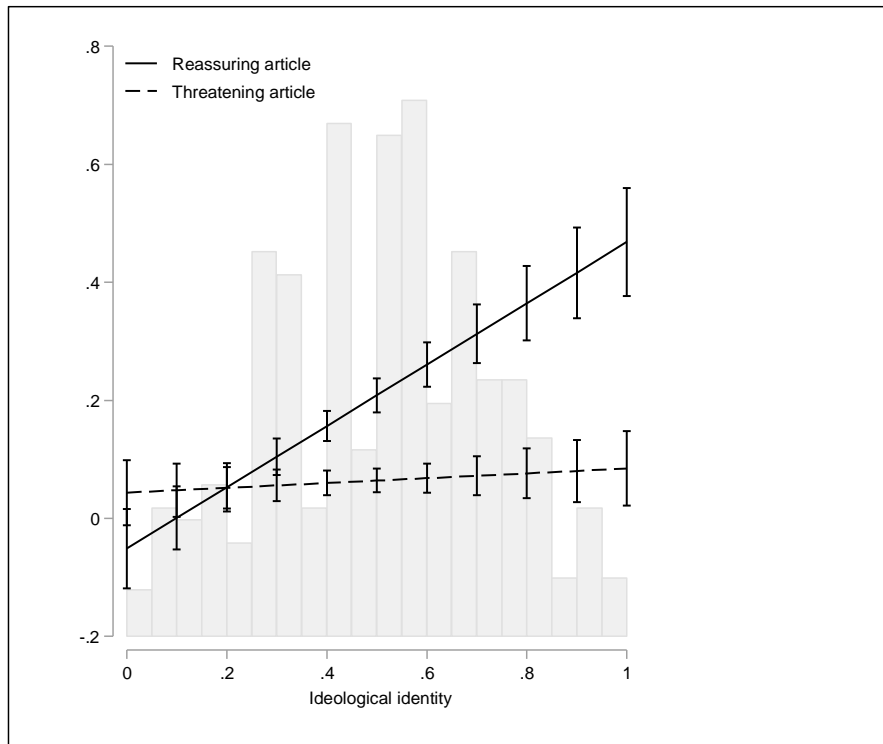


Figure 2C. Results of Model 5 in Table 3 – predicting Enthusiasm



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## **Online Appendix**

Section A: Sample comparison and descriptive statistics

Section B: The ideological identity scale - item wording and distributions

Section C: Additional empirical analyses

Section D: Examining the linearity of our interactions

Section E: Results among centrists

Section F: Analyses from previous INES datasets

Section G: The text of the experimental vignettes

**Section A: Sample comparison and descriptive statistics**

**Table #A1#. Comparing our sample with a nationally representative sample**

	Our Sample (July 2018)	INES 2015 National Sample (Jewish population)
Age (Mean; <i>SD</i> )	38.9 (12.8)	47.8 (19.1)
Women (% of sample)	50.1%	50.2%
Studied in college (% of sample)	42.5	46.3%
Observance of religious tradition		
Not at all	30.0%	21.1%
A little bit	41.2%	47.6%
A lot	19.0%	20.6%
Observe all of it	9.9%	10.6%
Ideological bloc		
Right	53.7%	51.4%
Center	18.0%	26.3%
Left	28.4%	22.3%
Voted in the 2015 elections for		
Right-wing parties	34.4%	43.3%
Center parties	12.0%	16.5%
Left-wing parties	37.4%	24.8%
Other / didn't vote	15.7%	15.4%

**Table #A2#. Descriptive statistics in the entire sample**

	N	Mean	SD	Min	Max
<b>Age</b> (0- 18 years old; 1- 64 years old)	617	0.454	0.279	0	1
<b>Female</b>	617	0.501	0.500	0	1
<b>Religiosity</b> (0- observe no religious tradition; 1- observe all religious tradition)	617	0.363	0.312	0	1
<b>Relative income</b> (0-well below average; 1- well above average)	583	0.369	0.286	0	1
<b>Education</b> (0- less than high-school graduate ; 1- academic education)	610	0.677	0.337	0	1
<b>7-pt Hawkish-Dovish Ideology</b> (0- right; 1- left)	617	0.400	0.294	0	1
<b>4-pt Ideological strength</b> (0- center; 1- extreme ideologue)	617	0.507	0.349	0	1
<b>Ideological issues scale</b> (1- most right-wing ideological agenda)	613	0.624	0.285	0	1
<b>4-pt Economic (Soc.-Cap.) ideology</b> (0- definitely socialist; 1- definitely capitalist)	527	0.379	0.271	0	1
<b>Ideological identity scale</b>	617	0.481	0.226	0	1
<b>Intention to vote for Right-wing parties</b>	617	0.357	0.479	0	1
<b>Intention to vote for Left-wing parties</b>	617	0.211	0.408	0	1
<b>Attitudes toward Netanyahu's investigations</b>	617	0.420	0.288	0	1
<b>Difference in attitude toward marrying an in- / out-group</b> (-1- pro Leftists; 1- pro Rightists)	616	0.112	0.383	-1	1
<b>Difference in warmth toward the in- / out-group</b> (-1- pro Leftists; 1- pro Rightists)	617	0.156	0.463	-1	1
<b>Difference in negative stereotypes toward the in- / out-group</b> (-1- pro Leftists; 1- pro Rightists)	617	0.0255	0.381	-1	1
<b>Anger</b>	617	0.290	0.292	0	1
<b>Concern</b>	617	0.216	0.283	0	1
<b>Enthusiasm</b>	617	0.135	0.213	0	1

**Section B: The ideological identity scale - item wording and distributions**

**Table #A3#. Item wording and distribution of the 8-item ideological identity scale**

Item	Ideological bloc	% agree to a very great extent	% agree to a great extent	% agree to a certain extent	% agree a limited extent	% disagree	Average for each item (varies 0-1) <sup>11</sup>
1) When I talk about rightists/leftists/supporters of the center, I usually say “us” as opposed to “them.”	Rightists:	17.4	25.5	25.2	14.8	17.1	.53
	Leftists:	11.3	28.0	37.5	14.3	8.9	.55
	Centrists:	4.8	25.0	25.0	20.2	25.0	.41
2) I am interested in what people think about rightists/leftists/supporters of the center.	Rightists:	11.0	20.0	31.9	23.8	13.3	.48
	Leftists:	8.9	24.4	31.6	27.4	7.7	.50
	Centrists:	3.9	21.2	39.4	22.1	13.5	.45
3) When people criticize rightists/leftists/supporters of the center, I take this as a personal insult	Rightists:	7.0	16.8	28.7	22.6	24.9	.40
	Leftists:	9.5	20.8	33.9	20.8	14.9	.47
	Centrists:	1.0	6.7	21.2	24.0	47.1	.23
4) I have a lot in common with other supporters of the right/left/center	Rightists:	11.0	32.5	36.2	16.2	4.1	.58
	Leftists:	13.7	44.1	32.7	7.7	1.8	.65
	Centrists:	3.9	26.9	40.4	17.3	11.5	.49
5) If the right/left/center bloc is weak in the surveys this has a negative impact on my mood	Rightists:	6.4	15.9	26.4	21.7	29.6	.37
	Leftists:	5.4	26.8	33.3	19.6	14.9	.47
	Centrists:	1.9	9.6	23.1	23.1	42.3	.26
6) When I meet another supporter of the right/left/center bloc I feel a connection with that person	Rightists:	6.1	22.3	27.0	22.6	22.0	.42
	Leftists:	4.2	20.8	38.7	22.0	14.3	.45
	Centrists:	1.0	15.4	38.5	16.4	28.9	.36
7) When I talk about the right/left/center bloc in Israel, I refer to this bloc as “my political camp”	Rightists:	13.6	29.9	26.4	18.6	11.6	.54
	Leftists:	16.7	39.3	20.2	18.5	5.4	.61
	Centrists:	3.9	26.9	30.8	19.2	19.2	.44
8) When people say good things about rightists/leftists/supporters of the center, it makes me feel good	Rightists:	14.5	32.8	25.2	18.3	9.3	.56
	Leftists:	12.5	31.0	33.9	16.1	6.6	.57
	Centrists:	4.8	27.8	31.7	19.2	16.4	.46

Note.  $N_{Rightists} = 345$ ;  $N_{Leftists} = 168$ ;  $N_{Centrists} = 104$ .

Higher scores denote stronger group attachment.<sup>11</sup>

### Section C: Additional empirical analyses

In Tables #A4-A6# below, we ran our main analyses separately for Rightists and Leftists. In particular, Models 2, 4, and 6 in Table #1#, the entire Table #2#, and Models 2, 4, and 6 in Table #3# were estimated separately for Rightists and Leftists. The only difference between these analyses and those reported in the main text is that in Tables #A4-A6# we controlled for the 4-point *Ideological Strength* item (instead of the 7-point ideological *Hawkish-Dovish* self-placement item) since almost no Rightists and Leftists placed themselves on the opposite ideological side (see also footnote ## on the main text). Overall, these analyses show that the effects of the ideological identity scale are comparable – and fairly strong – among both Rightists and Leftists. One result is inconsistent with the results presented in the main text: in Table #A6#, Model 2, we can see that among leftists, the *Threat X Ideological identity* is insignificant and in the wrong direction, signifying that in the threatening condition, leftists actually were slightly *less* angry compared to the reassuring condition, although this difference is insignificant.

In addition, we analyzed the effect of the *Ideological-Identity scale* on respondents' evaluations of the ingroup' and outgroup' affective polarization measures (cf. Table 2 in the main text). Note that in these analyses, the dependent variables vary between 0 and 1 and not between -1 and 1. This is since in these analyses the dependent variables are not "directional", as the lowest score (0) represents the most negative attitude or greatest level of social distance from the ideological ingroup or outgroup while the highest score (1) represents the most positive attitude or lowest level of social distance from the ideological ingroup or outgroup. As a corollary, we do not expect the interaction between the *Ideological-Identity scale* variable and the dummy variable for

right-wing respondents to be statistically significant, as we do not expect any differences in the effect of the former variable on the difference dependent variables between right-wing and left-wing supporters. Similar to the scaling of the three "difference" items in the main text, we (i) scaled the three ingroup affective polarization measures (marriage, warm, positive traits) into an *ingroup scale* (Alpha = .54); and (ii) scaled the respective three outgroup measures (Alpha = .69).

In our analyses we control for the same covariate used in the Tables #A4-A6# above (i.e., with the 4-point *Ideological Strength* item instead of the *Hawkish-Dovish Ideology* item). The results are presented in Tables #A7# and #A8#. Overall, we see that the effects of the *Ideological-Identity scale* among both leftists and rightists are similar, as among both the *Ideological-Identity scale* predicts most of the ingroup and outgroup items in a significant manner. One exception is that the *Ideological-Identity scale* does not reliably predict positive traits of the ingroup, among both leftists and rightists. These results provide further support for the effect of one's ideological identity in predicting evaluations of the ideological ingroup as well as the ideological outgroup.

As an additional robustness test, we employed a matching analysis (Ho et al. 2007). Those who scored high on the ideological-identity scale might be different than those who scored low on that scale with regard to various covariates, which might affect the results of our observational analyses (Tables 1-2 in the main text), as well as our experimental results (Table 3), which involve an interaction between a randomly assigned treatment and observed moderator – the ideological identity scale (see Kam and Trussler 2017). Accordingly, we conducted matching analyses intend to make respondents who score high and low on the ideological identity scale as equal as possible on the other

control variables, in order to reduce model dependence (Ho et al. 2007). To that aim we employed Hainmueller's (2012) Entropy Balancing reweighting technique and rendered, among Rightists and Leftists separately, the high and low ideological identifiers balanced on all control variables (we used the 4-point ideological strength item as our "issue-based" ideology variable). This is a rather stringent test since it substantially reduces variance in our main independent variable, ideological identity.

The results of these analyses are presented in Table #A9# (for Rightists) and Table #A10# (for Leftists). As can be seen, even after we render high and low ideological identifiers equal on all covariates, high ideological identifiers, among both Rightists and Leftists, are more likely to vote for ingroup parties, to exhibit affective polarization, and to exert emotional reactions to a threat to the ingroup. The coefficients of the *High Ideological Identity* dummy variable are in the expected direction but are insignificant in the models predicting the *Netanyahu's investigations* scale (Model 2 in both tables) and in Models 7-8 in Table #A9#. <sup>12</sup> Overall, these results provide additional support for the suggestion that ideological identity affects political behavior and judgment.

We also conducted several additional analyses in which we conducted several model specifications (results not shown). First, we reran all models in Tables 1-3 in the main text using the 4-item issue positions scale instead of the 7-point ideological left-right self-placement. Second, since some of our dependent variables are related to Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu, who headed the Likud party at the time, we ran Model 6 in Table 1 and Models 2 and 4 in Table 3 without respondents who reported that they intend to vote for the Likud in the next election (and we repeated these models without

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In Model 7 in Table #A10# the coefficient of the *High Ideological Identity score* variable is also <sup>12</sup> insignificant, but this is similar to the results without matching (see Model 2 in Table #A6#)



respondents who reported that they feel close to the Likud party). Finally, we had missing data with some of our variables, in particular the economic (socialist-capitalist) ideology and relative income variables. Accordingly, we reran the main models of Tables 1-3 using multiple imputations. Overall, results of all additional analyses are very similar to the baseline results presented in the main text.

**Table #A4#. Table 1 (Models 2, 4, & 6) in the main text – separate analyses for Rightists and Leftists**

Dependent Variable	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
	Vote for Right-wing Parties	Vote for Left-wing Parties		Attitudes toward Netanyahu's investigations	
	Rightists	Rightists	Leftists	Rightists	Leftists
Ideological-Identity Scale	3.058*** (0.791)	-2.524 (1.981)	3.612** (1.223)	0.193** (0.064)	-0.223* (0.086)
Ideological Strength	1.586** (0.571)	-0.656 (0.786)	1.044 (0.797)	0.115** (0.044)	-0.137* (0.060)
Economic (Soc./Cap.) Ideology	0.898 (0.661)	-3.522* (1.682)	-1.345 (0.826)	0.247*** (0.053)	0.156* (0.060)
Age	0.399 (0.609)	-0.990 (1.538)	-1.108 (0.763)	0.012 (0.054)	-0.026 (0.055)
Female	0.039 (0.346)	-0.422 (0.743)	0.015 (0.388)	0.008 (0.031)	0.005 (0.026)
Religiosity	2.027*** (0.499)	-1.593 (1.675)	-1.819* (0.910)	0.156*** (0.041)	0.153* (0.069)
Education	-0.005 (0.459)	-2.062+ (1.082)	-0.354 (0.739)	-0.045 (0.040)	-0.017 (0.046)
Relative Income	-0.842 (0.562)	3.021 (2.855)	-0.664 (0.662)	-0.004 (0.049)	-0.009 (0.050)
Constant	-3.119*** (0.652)	-0.523 (1.445)	0.079 (0.985)	0.248*** (0.059)	0.318*** (0.076)
Observations	250	250	155	250	155
R-squared				0.249	0.245

Robust standard errors in parentheses; \*\*\* p<0.001, \*\* p<0.01, \* p<0.05, + p<0.1. Robust standard errors in parentheses; \*\*\* p<0.001, \*\* p<0.01, \* p<0.05, + p<0.1. In Models 1-3 we use a logistic regression. In Models 4-5 we use an OLS regression. We do not show a model similar to Model 1 with Leftists respondents since the model could not be estimated.

**Table #A5#. Table 2 in the main text – separate analyses for Rightists and Leftists**

Dependent Variable	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
	Difference in attitude toward marrying an in- / out-group	Difference in attitude toward marrying an in- / out-group	Difference in warmth toward the in- / out-group	Difference in warmth toward the in- / out-group	Difference in negative stereotypes toward the in- / out-group	Difference in negative stereotypes toward the in- / out-group	Differences scale	
	Rightists	Leftists	Rightists	Leftists	Rightists	Leftists	Rightists	Leftists
Ideological-Identity Scale	0.516*** (0.098)	-0.412** (0.128)	0.529*** (0.102)	-0.539*** (0.106)	0.311** (0.101)	0.516*** (0.098)	0.452*** (0.081)	-0.435*** (0.086)
Ideological Strength	0.229** (0.070)	-0.205+ (0.107)	0.343*** (0.074)	-0.236* (0.099)	0.283*** (0.075)	0.229** (0.070)	0.285*** (0.059)	-0.203* (0.079)
Economic (Soc./Cap.) Ideology	-0.312*** (0.074)	0.011 (0.093)	-0.216** (0.069)	0.140+ (0.083)	-0.165* (0.079)	-0.312*** (0.074)	-0.231*** (0.057)	0.037 (0.060)
Age	-0.171* (0.075)	-0.120 (0.104)	-0.026 (0.065)	-0.224* (0.087)	0.026 (0.068)	-0.171* (0.075)	-0.057 (0.053)	-0.113 (0.073)
Female	0.052 (0.042)	0.065 (0.045)	0.084* (0.034)	0.026 (0.039)	0.007 (0.041)	0.052 (0.042)	0.048 (0.029)	0.050+ (0.030)
Religiosity	0.057 (0.072)	0.175 (0.109)	0.026 (0.055)	0.141 (0.103)	0.171** (0.061)	0.057 (0.072)	0.085+ (0.045)	0.153+ (0.084)
Education	0.025 (0.061)	-0.090 (0.088)	-0.022 (0.051)	0.058 (0.073)	-0.130* (0.059)	0.025 (0.061)	-0.042 (0.042)	-0.029 (0.052)
Relative Income	-0.040 (0.082)	0.078 (0.088)	-0.083 (0.063)	-0.012 (0.080)	-0.102 (0.067)	-0.040 (0.082)	-0.075 (0.054)	0.059 (0.065)
Constant	0.034 (0.081)	0.205+ (0.116)	0.055 (0.067)	0.062 (0.092)	-0.072 (0.078)	0.034 (0.081)	0.006 (0.056)	0.094 (0.068)
Observations	250	155	250	155	250	155	250	155
R-squared	0.325	0.198	0.451	0.335	0.273	0.163	0.468	0.348

Robust standard errors in parentheses; \*\*\* p<0.001, \*\* p<0.01, \* p<0.05, + p<0.1. The dependent variables vary between -1 and 1, with higher values denoting a more positive attitude toward Rightists.

**Table #A6#. Table 3 (Models 2, 4, & 6) in the main text – separate analyses for Rightists and Leftists**

Dependent Variable	(1)		(2)		(3)		(4)		(5)		(6)	
	Anger		Concern		Enthusiasm							
	Rightists	Leftists	Rightists	Leftists	Rightists	Leftists	Rightists	Leftists	Rightists	Leftists	Rightists	Leftists
Ideological Identity Scale	0.237*	0.333+	0.033	-0.017	0.465***	0.563***	(0.105)	(0.186)	(0.079)	(0.176)	(0.088)	(0.139)
Threatening condition	-0.100	0.093	-0.102	-0.187	0.149*	0.080	(0.085)	(0.153)	(0.086)	(0.146)	(0.061)	(0.078)
Threat X Ideological identity	0.339*	-0.089	0.401**	0.601*	-0.409***	-0.555***	(0.145)	(0.287)	(0.146)	(0.270)	(0.116)	(0.165)
Ideological strength	-0.081	-0.172	-0.056	0.029	0.099	-0.183+	(0.083)	(0.137)	(0.078)	(0.096)	(0.061)	(0.101)
Threat X Ideological Strength	0.044	0.301	-0.037	0.308+	-0.101	0.054	(0.109)	(0.211)	(0.112)	(0.182)	(0.074)	(0.135)
Economic (Soc./Cap.) Ideology	-0.074	-0.147	-0.108+	0.144	-0.019	-0.086	(0.060)	(0.113)	(0.063)	(0.102)	(0.044)	(0.069)
Age	-0.035	-0.128	0.053	-0.067	0.028	-0.006	(0.060)	(0.093)	(0.060)	(0.085)	(0.048)	(0.070)
Female	0.044	0.030	0.002	0.021	0.007	-0.005	(0.033)	(0.046)	(0.035)	(0.044)	(0.026)	(0.030)
Religiosity	-0.002	-0.139	-0.095+	0.028	-0.055	-0.131	(0.052)	(0.099)	(0.049)	(0.107)	(0.043)	(0.081)
Education	-0.036	0.001	-0.067	0.034	-0.060+	-0.152*	(0.046)	(0.081)	(0.047)	(0.089)	(0.035)	(0.065)
Relative Income	0.049	0.058	0.029	-0.069	0.013	0.154**	(0.059)	(0.090)	(0.060)	(0.076)	(0.044)	(0.055)
Constant	0.159+	0.266+	0.263***	0.104	-0.042	0.142	(0.086)	(0.145)	(0.073)	(0.146)	(0.057)	(0.107)
Calculated coefficient for the <i>ideological-identity scale</i> in the threatening condition	0.576***	0.244	0.434*	0.583**	0.057	0.008	(0.101)	(0.219)	(0.122)	(0.210)	(0.073)	(0.090)
Observations	250	155	250	155	250	155						
R-squared	0.181	0.187	0.119	0.349	0.258	0.419						

Robust standard errors in parentheses; \*\*\* p<0.001, \*\* p<0.01, \* p<0.05, + p<0.1. The dependent variables vary 0-1.

**Table #A7#. Affective polarization – attitudes toward the *ingroup***

Dependent variable	(1) Attitude toward marrying an ingroup	(2) Warmth toward the ingroup	(3) Positive traits of ingroup	(4) Ingroup scale
Ideological-identity scale	0.319*** (0.088)	0.349*** (0.070)	0.050 (0.085)	0.239*** (0.057)
Right-wing supporter	0.105* (0.050)	0.053 (0.047)	-0.106+ (0.054)	0.017 (0.038)
Ideological identity X Right-wing	-0.061 (0.102)	-0.061 (0.077)	0.050 (0.096)	-0.024 (0.064)
Ideological strength	0.135** (0.043)	0.206*** (0.032)	0.139*** (0.035)	0.160*** (0.028)
Economic (Soc./Cap.) ideology	-0.115*** (0.034)	-0.085** (0.032)	0.003 (0.037)	-0.066** (0.022)
Age	-0.023 (0.040)	0.032 (0.029)	-0.010 (0.037)	-0.000 (0.025)
Female	0.023 (0.020)	0.032* (0.015)	-0.019 (0.018)	0.012 (0.012)
Religiosity	0.013 (0.040)	0.061* (0.030)	0.086* (0.036)	0.053* (0.026)
Education	0.028 (0.032)	-0.002 (0.023)	0.017 (0.029)	0.014 (0.019)
Relative income	-0.004 (0.039)	-0.005 (0.031)	-0.042 (0.035)	-0.017 (0.025)
Constant	0.360*** (0.056)	0.430*** (0.049)	0.502*** (0.055)	0.431*** (0.038)
Calculated coefficient for the <i>ideological-identity scale</i> among right-wing supporters	0.258*** (0.067)	0.288*** (0.046)	0.100+ (0.055)	0.215*** (0.042)
Observations	405	405	405	405
R-squared	0.209	0.396	0.129	0.365

Robust standard errors in parentheses; \*\*\* p<0.001, \*\* p<0.01, \* p<0.05, + p<0.1. The dependent variables vary between 0 and 1, with higher values denoting a more positive attitude toward the ingroup.

**Table #A8#. Affective polarization – attitudes toward the *outgroup***

Dependent variable	(1) Attitude toward marrying an outgroup	(2) Warmth toward the outgroup	(3) Positive traits of outgroup	(4) Outgroup scale
Ideological-identity scale	-0.089 (0.077)	-0.180* (0.075)	-0.261*** (0.070)	-0.177** (0.058)
Right-wing supporter	0.013 (0.049)	-0.050 (0.049)	0.007 (0.047)	-0.010 (0.037)
Ideological identity X Right-wing	-0.182* (0.091)	-0.084 (0.092)	0.021 (0.087)	-0.082 (0.070)
Ideological strength	-0.096** (0.036)	-0.119** (0.040)	-0.123** (0.040)	-0.113*** (0.029)
Economic (Soc./Cap.) ideology	0.114*** (0.032)	0.119** (0.037)	0.092* (0.043)	0.109*** (0.029)
Age	0.057+ (0.034)	-0.015 (0.036)	-0.020 (0.038)	0.007 (0.027)
Female	0.006 (0.017)	-0.010 (0.019)	-0.021 (0.020)	-0.008 (0.014)
Religiosity	-0.001 (0.036)	0.052 (0.035)	-0.021 (0.040)	0.010 (0.028)
Education	-0.034 (0.026)	0.023 (0.028)	0.074* (0.034)	0.021 (0.021)
Relative income	0.074* (0.033)	0.062+ (0.034)	0.068+ (0.035)	0.068** (0.026)
Constant	0.471*** (0.052)	0.489*** (0.052)	0.496*** (0.053)	0.485*** (0.038)
Calculated coefficient for the <i>ideological-identity scale</i> among right-wing supporters	-0.270*** (0.058)	-0.264*** (0.067)	-0.240*** (0.064)	-0.258*** (0.047)
Observations	405	405	405	405
R-squared	0.228	0.213	0.191	0.297

Robust standard errors in parentheses; \*\*\* p<0.001, \*\* p<0.01, \* p<0.05, + p<0.1. The dependent variables vary between 0 and 1, with higher values denoting a more positive attitude toward the outgroup.

**Table #A9#. Tables 1-3 in the main text - Matching analysis among Rightists**

Dependent Variable	(1) Vote for Right-wing Parties	(2) Attitudes toward Netanyahu's investigations	(3) Difference in attitude toward marrying an in- / out- group	(4) Difference in warmth toward the in- / out-group	(5) Difference in negative stereotypes toward the in- / out-group	(6) Differences scale	(7) Anger	(8) Concern	(9) Enthusiasm
High Ideological Identity	1.111** (0.350)	0.032 (0.034)	0.146* (0.064)	0.176*** (0.053)	0.121+ (0.066)	0.148** (0.050)	0.104 (0.069)	0.070 (0.044)	0.223*** (0.053)
Threatening condition							0.043 (0.068)	0.074+ (0.044)	-0.027 (0.045)
Threat X High Ideological Identity							0.135 (0.084)	0.080 (0.066)	-0.184** (0.061)
Constant	0.254 (0.264)	0.603*** (0.028)	0.265*** (0.052)	0.418*** (0.045)	0.161** (0.057)	0.281*** (0.043)	0.139* (0.059)	0.069* (0.031)	0.082* (0.041)
Calculated coefficient for <i>High Ideological Identity</i> in the threatening condition							0.238*** (0.049)	0.150** (0.050)	0.039 (0.030)
Observations	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250
R-squared		0.005	0.035	0.074	0.026	0.061	0.149	0.111	0.221

Standard errors in parentheses; \*\*\* p<0.001, \*\* p<0.01, \* p<0.05, + p<0.1.

**Table #A10#. Tables 1-3 in the main text - Matching analysis among Leftists**

Dependent Variable	(1) Vote for Left-wing Parties	(2) Attitudes toward Netanyahu's investigations	(3) Difference in attitude toward marrying an in- / out-group	(4) Difference in warmth toward the in- / out-group	(5) Difference in negative stereotypes toward the in- / out-group	(6) Differences scale	(7) Anger	(8) Concern	(9) Enthusiasm
High Ideological Identity	1.003* (0.387)	-0.038 (0.029)	-0.170*** (0.047)	-0.145** (0.050)	-0.083+ (0.047)	-0.133*** (0.034)	0.114+ (0.063)	0.006 (0.057)	0.131* (0.053)
Threatening condition							0.223** (0.076)	0.197** (0.074)	-0.160*** (0.035)
Threat X High Ideological Identity							-0.028 (0.099)	0.213* (0.097)	-0.121* (0.059)
Constant	0.274 (0.272)	0.182*** (0.021)	-0.064** (0.023)	-0.277*** (0.037)	-0.189*** (0.034)	-0.177*** (0.019)	0.198*** (0.042)	0.136** (0.045)	0.187*** (0.033)
Calculated coefficient for <i>High Ideological Identity</i> in the threatening condition							0.086 (0.077)	0.219** (0.078)	0.010 (0.027)
Observations	155	155	155	155	155	155	155	155	155
R-squared		0.012	0.083	0.064	0.023	0.093	0.144	0.279	0.276

Standard errors in parentheses; \*\*\* p<0.001, \*\* p<0.01, \* p<0.05, + p<0.1.

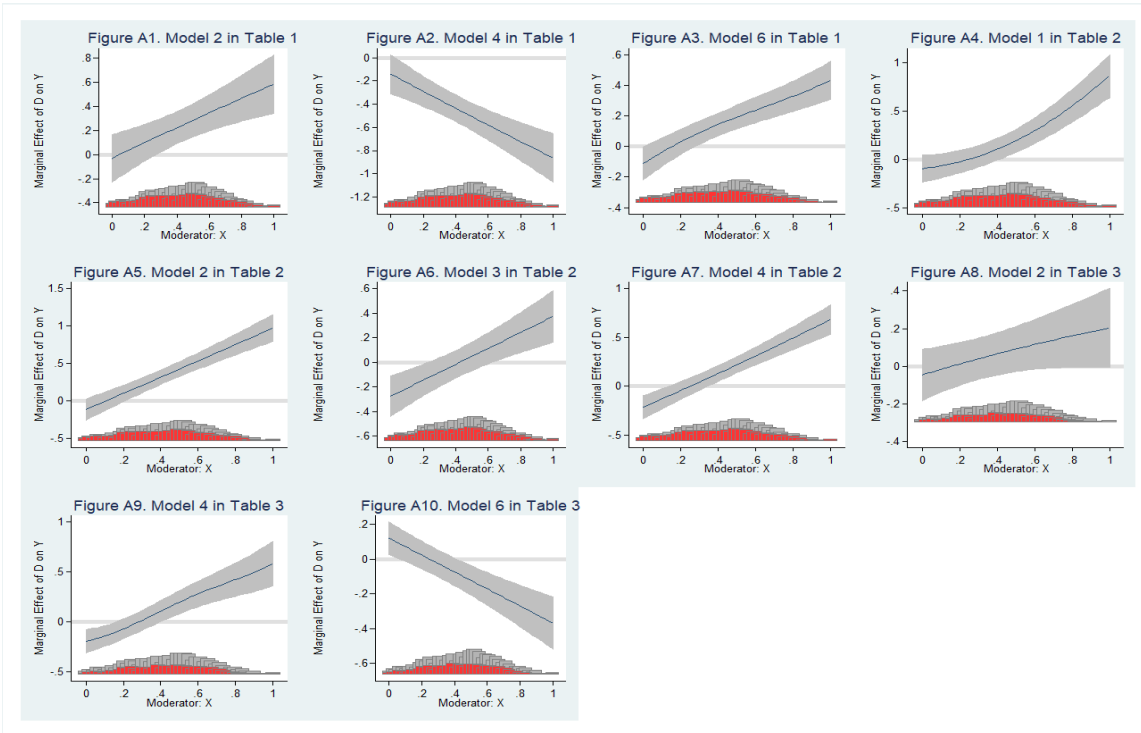


## **Section D: Examining the linearity of our interaction**

Following the advice of Hainmueller et al (2019), we examined the assumption that the interactions we used in Tables 1-3 in the main text are indeed linear. In particular, we employed Hainmueller et al.'s (2019) '*interflex*' package, using the *kernel* function. The results are graphically shown in panels 1-10 in Figure A. These panels present a graphical depiction of the marginal effect of the independent variables (*Right-wing Supporter* in panels 1-7; *Threatening condition* in panels 8-10) on the respective dependent variables, conditional on the level of *ideological-identity scale*. For example, in Figure A1, which depicts the interaction between the *Right-wing Supporter* and *Ideological-identity scale* variables in Model 2 in Table 1, we see that as one's score on the ideological identity scale increases, the effect of being a rightist on vote intention for right-wing parties (the dependent variable) increases *in a linear fashion*.

Overall, the figure clearly provide support for the linearity assumption; in all panels of the figure we see a linear increase or decrease across the difference levels of the moderator, even if in some panels (mostly Figure A4, the social distance/marriage item) the effect is not perfectly linear.

**Figure A. The linearity of our main text interactions**



## Section E: Results among Centrists

Since we focused in our study on the effects of identity-based ideology among leftists and rightists in Israel, we undersampled respondents who identified as "center": In total we have only 104 centrists in our dataset. Still, in this section we provide tentative evidence that centrists' social identification with their ideological bloc might also affect their political judgments.

Most importantly, when restricting the analysis to centrists, we ran a logistic regression in which the dummy variable was intention to vote for a center parties (the Yes Atid or Kulanu parties; see Manekin, Grossman, and Mitts 2018)). The *Ideological-Identity scale* was a strong predictor of intention to vote for a center party ( $b = 2.42$ ;  $SE = .888$ ;  $p = .006$ ). Adding to this model the 4-point *ideological strength* variable hardly affected the coefficient of the *Ideological-Identity scale* ( $b = 2.39$ ;  $SE = .893$ ;  $p = .007$ ), with the *ideological strength* variable being insignificant ( $b = -1.634$ ;  $SE = 1.557$ ;  $p = .294$ ).<sup>13</sup> Finally, adding the list of covariates used in the main text (age, gender, religiosity, education, relative income, and economic (Soc.-Cap.) ideology does not change the effect of the *Ideological-Identity scale* on the vote ( $b = 3.298$ ;  $SE = 1.148$ ;  $p = .004$ ).<sup>14</sup>

We did not examined the effects of the centrists' *Ideological-Identity scale* on the other dependent variables reported in the main text, the aggregate results show that pertaining to the *Netanyahu's investigations* scale and the affective polarization items, our centrists respondents were slightly closer to leftists than rightists. Pertaining to the *Netanyahu's investigations* scale, centrists ( $M = .28$ ;  $SD = .21$ ) were more likely to than leftists ( $M = .18$ ;  $SD = .18$ ) believe that the investigations against PM Netanyahu were politically motivated, but much less so than rightists

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The number of observations in both models is 104<sup>13</sup>  
The number of observations in this model is 92.<sup>14</sup>

( $M = .58$ ;  $SD = .24$ ) ( $F(2, 614) = 213.2$ ;  $p < .001$ ; all post-hoc comparisons, conducted using *scheffe's method*, are also significant at  $p < .001$ ).

As to their attitudes toward leftists and rightists, then centrists did not exhibit a clear warmer attitude toward leftists or rightists. Centrists did not exhibit a clear preference for family member marrying either a leftist or a rightist, as manifested in the difference in marriage item reported in the main text ( $M = -.01$ ;  $SD = .22$ ). Pertaining to the difference in warmth toward leftists and rightists item, centrists also reported only slightly warmer feelings toward leftists compared to rightists ( $M = -.05$ ;  $SD = .26$ ). Finally, pertaining to negative stereotypes, centrists reported slightly more positive stereotypes to leftists than to rightists ( $M = -.11$ ;  $SD = .27$ ). Overall, these results suggest that centrists in our sample feel slightly more close to leftists than to rightists. Future research are necessary to corroborate this initial finding.

## Section F: Analyses from previous INES datasets

In this section we report the correlations in four recent Israel National Election studies (INES) between the 7-point *Hawkish-Dovish ideology* item and a 4-item *Ideological-Issues scale*. We used the INES website<sup>15</sup> and obtained the datasets of the 2006, 2009, 2013, and 2015 Israeli national elections.

For our analyses, we chose four items: (i) *In your opinion, is it possible to reach a peace agreement with the Palestinians?* [Certain Yes; Think yes; Think no; Certain no]; (ii) *In your opinion, what are the final aspirations of the Arabs?*<sup>16</sup> [To get back some of the territories that were conquered in the Six Day War; To get back all of the territories that were conquered in the Six Day War; To conquer the state of Israel; To conquer the country and destroy a significant part of its Jewish population]; (iii) *In your opinion, should Israel agree or disagree to the establishment of a Palestinian state in Judea, Samaria, and the Gaza strip under the framework of a permanent agreement?* [Definitely should agree; Think that should agree; Think that should disagree; Definitely should disagree]; (iv) *Should Israel be prepared to return or should it continue to keep the Arab neighborhoods of Jerusalem, even at the cost of prevention of a permanent agreement?* [Definitely should agree to hand over; Should hand over; Should continue to keep; Definitely should continue to keep]

These items were chosen since they arguably capture the essence of the left-right, Hawkish-Dovish ideological dimension in Israel, and since they were asked in an identical fashion in each of the surveys between 2006 and 2015. Importantly, in our analyses, as in the main text, we present results from only Jewish Israeli respondents.

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See <https://www.tau.ac.il/~ines/elections.html>.<sup>15</sup>

In our survey, we asked about the aspiration of the Palestinians since all three previous policy items asked about <sup>16</sup> the Palestinians, and not Arabs.

The four items exhibited high reliability in each election (Alpha = .73 in 2006, .70 in 2009, .79 in 2013, and .78 in 2015) and as in the main text of our paper, we created in each election an *Ideological-Issues scale* by averaging the four items.

#### Correlations:

In 2006, the correlations between the 7-point *Hawkish-Dovish ideology* item and a 4-item *Ideological-Issues scale* was .44 ( $p < .001$ ;  $N = 493$ ). In 2009, this correlation was .52 ( $p < .001$ ;  $N = 314$ ). In 2013, said correlation was .58 ( $p < .001$ ;  $N = 669$ ). And in 2015, the correlation was highest, at .60 ( $p < .001$ ;  $N = 596$ ). Overall, the average correlation in the four elections was .54.

#### Correlations, conditional on college education:

Previous studies in the United States suggest that ideological consistency is mostly present among highly-educated Americans (Kinder and Kalmoe 2017; Freeder, Lenz, and Turney 2019). Is this also the case in Israel? Or perhaps Israelis are ideologically consistent regardless of their education? One way of examining this is to compare the correlation between the 7-point *Hawkish-Dovish ideology* item and a 4-item *Ideological-Issues scale* among highly-educated Israelis and among Israelis who are not highly-educated. Accordingly, we tested said correlation in the INES datasets among Israelis without college and among Israelis with a college education.

Our analyses show that there are higher correlations among Israelis with a college education, but in most elections these differences are not substantial. In 2006, the correlation between *Hawkish-Dovish ideology* and the *Ideological-Issues scale* was almost identical: .43 ( $p$

< .001;  $N = 217$ ) among those without college education, compared with .44 ( $p < .001$ ;  $N = 233$ ) among those with college education. In 2009, there was a large difference: a correlation of .38 ( $p < .001$ ;  $N = 165$ ) among those without college education, compared with .66 ( $p < .001$ ;  $N = 147$ ) among those with college education. Yet we note that this is the dataset with the smallest sample among our four INES datasets. In 2013 the difference in said correlations was again rather small: .54 ( $p < .001$ ;  $N = 400$ ) among those without college education, compared with .60 ( $p < .001$ ;  $N = 266$ ) among those with college education. Finally, in 2015 the difference was only slightly larger than in 2013: .54 ( $p < .001$ ;  $N = 329$ ) among those without college education, compared with .60 ( $p < .001$ ;  $N = 263$ ) among those with college education.

Overall, we can see rather substantial correlation between *Hawkish-Dovish ideology* and the *Ideological-Issues scale* among both those with and without college education. This further corroborates the suggestion that many Israelis – and not only highly-educated Israelis – are ideologically consistent.

## Section G: The text of the experimental vignettes

All respondents read:

Now we will ask you to read the contents of a short news article that was recently published on one of Israel's leading news websites. Immediately after reading the article we ask that you answer a number of questions regarding the article:

Version 1: Severe charges against Netanyahu (Threat to the right/reassurance for the left):

*Assessments: The likelihood that charges will be brought against Netanyahu has significantly increased.*

Is Benjamin Netanyahu's period as Prime Minister about to come to a dramatic end? Major news broadcasts are reporting this evening a growing likelihood that charges of bribery will be pressed against Netanyahu in Files 1000 and 4000, and it seems highly probable that charges will also be brought against him in File 2000. According to reports, senior figures in the Attorney General's office are convinced that, considering the testimonies and investigative materials obtained recently through the cooperation of a number of state's witnesses who in the past worked under the Prime Minister, severe charges will be brought against Netanyahu. One report noted that according to a senior figure in the Attorney General's office, the new testimonies and investigative materials are strong and reliable. Furthermore, considering the recent discussions among the executive staff of the Attorney General's office, this figure expects an announcement from Attorney General Avichai Mandelblit in the coming months stating that charges will be pressed against Netanyahu.

It remains unclear how Netanyahu will behave in the likely scenario that charges will be pressed against him. However, a number of political correspondents reported this evening that pressing a series of severe charges against Netanyahu will almost certainly lead various parties in the coalition to demand Netanyahu's resignation. Senior figures in the Likud are also expected to call for Netanyahu to resign, fearing that if he retains his position this will significantly damage the Likud party in the next elections. One reporter even discussed the political ramifications of prosecuting Netanyahu and argued that in any event, whether or not Netanyahu resigns, the serious charges which are likely to be brought will probably significantly weaken the right-wing bloc in the next elections and change the balance of power in Israeli politics.

Version 2: Charges against Netanyahu will be dropped (Reassurance for the right/Threat to the left):



*Assessments: The likelihood that charges will be brought against Netanyahu has significantly decreased.*

Are the investigations against Benjamin Netanyahu going to come to nothing? Central news broadcasts are reporting this evening that the chances that charges of bribery will be brought against Netanyahu in Files 1000, 2000, and 4000 have significantly decreased, and it seems most likely that the files against him will be closed without any indictment. According to reports, senior figures in the Attorney General's office are convinced that, despite the testimonies and investigative materials obtained recently through the cooperation of a number of state's witnesses who in the past worked under the Prime Minister, severe charges will not be pressed against Netanyahu. According to one report, a senior figure in the Attorney General's office noted that the new testimonies and investigative materials are weak and unreliable. Furthermore, considering the recent discussions among the executive staff of the Attorney General's office, this figure expects an announcement from Attorney General Avichai Mandelblit in the coming months stating that charges will not be pressed against Netanyahu.

It remains unclear how Netanyahu will behave in the unlikely scenario that charges will be brought against him. However, Netanyahu hinted in the past that he has no intention of resigning, even if he will be indicted. In parallel, a number of political commentators reported this evening that should less severe charges be brought against Netanyahu, without accusations of bribery, the various coalition parties will not demand Netanyahu's resignation. In this case senior figures in the Likud are also not expected to call for Netanyahu to resign, and Netanyahu will continue to lead the Likud Party also in the next elections. One of the reporters even discussed the political ramifications of not prosecuting Netanyahu, arguing that closing the serious files against Netanyahu is likely to maintain the power of the right-wing bloc in the next elections, with the right-wing expected to head the next coalition.

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