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אני שולחת לכם עותק של המאמר שלי שהתפרסם לאחרונה בכתב העת Sociology of Religion.

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ברצוני להודות לכם שוב מעומק ליבי שראיתם לנכון להעניק לי מלגה זאת. המלגה סייעה לי רבות ואני מקווה שהמחקר הזה אכן יתרום לקידום החינוך בנושא מוסר וחברה וימשיך את דרכה החשובה ומעוררת ההשראה של ד"ר נאוה מסלובטי ז"ל.

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Religious Practices and Beliefs among Religious Stayers and Religious Switchers in Israeli Judaism

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Religious fluidity is a feature of modern life. While much scholarly attention has been drawn to conversion and denominational switching, little has been written about the effect of religious switching on religious behavior patterns. Using data on Israeli Jews from the 2009 Social Survey, I examine the thesis that switchers are more committed to their religious practices and beliefs than religious stayers are. The results of multivariate analyses show that the opposite is the case: switchers' religious behaviors and attitudes conform most closely to the norms of the religious group to which they currently belong but are influenced by their prior affiliation. This finding is more pronounced among those who switch from tradition than among those who reach out to it. I postulate that socialization, social networks, and the current tendency toward concurrent holding of multiple identities may provide an explanatory framework for these findings.

Key words: Israel; Judaism; religious change; switching.

Religious change is a well-studied phenomenon, be it the total transformation of secularization (Berger 1967; Durkheim [1893] 1964), conversion (Lofland and Stark 1965; Roof 1993), or the more subtle shifts of denominational switching (Babchuk and Whitt 1990; Loveland 2003; Stark and Glock 1968). In the United States, 42 percent of adults belong to a denomination other than the one in which they were raised (Pew Research Center 2014), demonstrating the significance of religious switching as a force in shaping the religious landscape. The sociodemographic (Hadaway and Marler 1993; Sandomirsky and Wilson 1990) and rational choice (Finke and Stark 1998; Iannaccone 1994) determinants of religious switching have been thoroughly explored, as have some of its consequences (Sherkat 2014). The effects of religious affiliation change on religious practices

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and beliefs, however, have been less comprehensively researched (Carrothers 2010).

Judaism affords a unique opportunity to monitor religious transitions that encounter methodological obstacles in the context of other religions (Olson 2008). Judaism is both a religious and an ethnic category of identification, making second and third generation "religious nones" identifiable as Jews on the basis of their ethnicity, especially in Israel. In Israeli Judaism, unlike Western Christianity and American Judaism, denominations are not the primary religious subgroups; rather, Israeli Jews self-identify along a continuum of ultra-Orthodox, religious, traditional, and secular. Traditionalists combine elements of religion and secularity, without mounting an overt theological challenge or creating a new denomination. They tend to score highly on measures of religious belief, less so for religious practices, and are the most socially connected to other groups, (Pew Research Center 2016; Yadgar 2006). Each group has its distinctive religious as well as social and cultural norms (Rebhun and Levy 2006). I would suggest, as others have (Sands and Roer-Strier 2000), that these subgroups are analogous to denominations in their sociological, rather than their theological, sense. Therefore, below I borrow the language and theories of denominational switching to analyze religious changes in Israel.

Using data from the Israel Central Bureau of Statistics 2009 Social Survey, I explore the religious practices and attitudes of both switchers and stayers among religious and secular Jews. This makes it possible to determine whether switchers or stayers adhere more closely to the principles of their chosen religious identity, namely: are switchers to religion more committed than those who have always been religious? And are switchers to secular more thoroughly secularized, i.e., do they exhibit lower levels of religious practice and are their attitudes more likely to be incompatible with religious orthodoxy than those of secular stayers?

Patterns of observance and belief among religious switchers—a large and growing proportion of the population in Western societies—must be better understood in order to grasp the nature of religious observance in general. The results of this analysis may shed light not only on the nature of religious switching but also on the effects of switching and staying on the religious norms of the broader community.

DENOMINATIONAL SWITCHING AND IDENTIFICATION: THEORIES AND HYPOTHESES

The literature on denominational switching reports almost unanimously that switchers to a denomination are more committed than stayers (Brinkerhoff and Mackie 1993; Hadaway and Marler 1993; Hoge, Johnson, and Luidens 1995; Hoge and O'Connor 2004), at least to some extent (Petts 2009), for some denominations (Hadaway 1980), and for some measures of religiosity (Suh and Russell

2015). Notable voices of dissent are raised by Ammerman (quoted in Hoge and O'Connor 2004), who finds that switchers attend church less than stayers, and by Barker and Currie (1985), who report that converts to Evangelicalism are no more committed than born-again Evangelicals who were raised in that tradition.

From a theoretical perspective, the notion that switchers are more religious than stayers can be explained by taking a "demand side" approach. Switchers have chosen the denomination that best suits them and therefore show greater commitment (Petts 2009). A "motivation"-based approach characterizes stayers as lacking in motivation and even lazy, both in their decision to stay within their religious denomination and in terms of their religious observance (Barker and Currie 1985). For stayers, religious affiliation is more an inherited characteristic than an indication of any kind of religious commitment or even interest (Hadaway 1980). Switchers, in contrast, are perceived as having made an effort, taken a conscious decision, and demonstrated a certain regard for religion (Hadaway 1980; Hoge, Johnson, and Luidens 1995). Switching may be indicative of a personal rededication to religion (Hartman and Hartman 1999), especially when the reason for switching is religious as opposed to temporal (Hoge, Johnson, and Luidens 1995), although Carrothers (2010) does not find this to be the case.

Olson (2008) accepts the assumption that switchers are more religiously committed than stayers but takes a "selection"-based approach, arguing that switchers into a religious denomination represent the most committed individuals in a pool of potential recruits and are therefore likely to be more religious on average than stayers. "Cognitive dissonance" theory suggests that newcomers to a group may experience discomfort if their behavior does not conform to the established norms of the group which they have joined. One method of reducing dissonance between identity and behavior is behavioral change, which, in some cases, is accompanied by a degree of overcompensation as the newcomer feels a burden of expectation even where it does not exist (Maerz, Hassan, and Magnusson 2009). Alternatively, the overcompensation may be a function of an attempt to establish high social identification via self-stereotyping, in which the stereotypes of group behavior are more religious than the reality (van Veelen, Hansen, and Otten 2014).

"Social network" theory provides a further explanation for the overcompensation of switchers, particularly for public practices. Social embeddedness within a religious community influences individuals' observance patterns because religious participation is encouraged by solidarity rewards, while social sanctions promote conformity and deter secession from the group (Sherkat and Wilson 1995; Stroope 2012). This is especially true for newcomers, who may feel that they stand out as outsiders and therefore feel the need to prove themselves, demonstrating greater public commitment than denominational stayers (Barker and Currie 1985; Hartman and Hartman 1999).

Hypothesis 1: People whose parents were not religious but who become religious themselves (switchers to religion) exhibit stronger religious commitment than religious stayers

On the other hand, pressure to conform may not manifest itself consistently (Stroope 2012). The data on denominational switching in American Judaism suggest that switchers from conservative to more liberal denominations occupy a halfway-house position: while less committed than the norm in the denomination in which they were raised, they practice their religion more than the norm in the denomination that they have joined (Lazerwitz et al. 1998). This is in marked contrast to switchers toward traditional denominations such as Conservative and Orthodox, who largely conform to expectations by demonstrating greater religious commitment than do stayers (Lazerwitz 1995). Taking this a step farther, research on apostasy demonstrates that while most apostates cease to practice religion, as one would expect, a significant number continue to believe and pray (Brinkerhoff and Mackie 1993; Petts 2009). A few apostates report being more religious than they had been as members of a particular religious group (Dillon 2004), and others trace their disaffiliation to the feeling that their denomination had changed and ceased to be sufficiently religious for them (Dandelion 2002). It may therefore be the case that switchers to secular are more religious than secular stayers, as being secular does not demand the type of commitment to refrain from religious practice that religion demands from its adherents to adopt such behavior.

This effect may not be limited to switchers away from religion. Social-network effects on all switchers may be attenuated as switchers are more likely to have weaker and fewer ties with group members (McPherson, Popielarz, and Drobnic 1992). Switchers are not only more likely to occupy a position at the edge rather than in the middle of a given religious niche but may also differ from the norm to the extent that they fail to be successfully integrated into the group (Popielarz and McPherson 1995). Not all switching is followed by successful assimilation and adoption of group norms.

Hypothesis 2: People whose parents were not religious but became religious themselves (switchers to religion) will exhibit weaker religious commitment than religious stayers

METHODOLOGY

Data

The data for this study were culled from the 2009 Social Survey, conducted by the Israel Central Bureau of Statistics. In addition to the core of 200 permanent questions in the annual Social Survey, the 2009 survey focused on family life and religiosity. A sample of 9,340 Israelis over the age of 20 was weighted to approximate the characteristics of the population at large. Of the sample, 7,462 were interviewed at length. For all but the smallest localities, a systematic random sample of people with uniform probability was drawn from each of 70 design groups based on gender, age, and population groups, patterned after the Population Register. The remaining 16 percent of the sample was either drawn from smaller localities

via a two-stage process in which localities were arranged by size and region and then respondents randomly selected based on design groups, or from a supplementary sample of immigrants who had arrived in the previous six months and had therefore been excluded. The response rate was 79.5 percent. The sample artificially inflated the number of religious respondents due to a slight overrepresentation of religious Jews in rural localities.[1]

Here I focus solely on the 6,056 Jewish respondents. The exclusion of those who currently or previously identified as "traditional but not religious" reduces the sample size by 2,025. A further 459 respondents are excluded from the sample as they have remained within the broad new category "religious," but have actually switched between two of the original subgroups of which this category is composed, and therefore cannot truly be classed as stayers. A small number of respondents whose religious identity is unknown are also excluded. The overall sample size is therefore 3,543.

Dependent Variables

To compare the religious commitment of switchers and stayers, a number of variables relating to both practice and attitudes were selected. As only 1.5 percent of those surveyed identified with the Reform or Conservative denominations of Judaism, there seems to be a high degree of consensus as to what Judaism is, at least in a broad sense. The various religious subgroups are differentiated more in terms of religiosity than theology and therefore the measures of religious observance and attitudes should be valid for all respondents. I chose four measures of religious observance and five measures of attitudes. Two of the observance variables are practices that are considered mainstream religious activities: frequency of synagogue attendance and extent to which religious tradition is preserved. The other two variables reflect intensive commitment: participation in a setting of religious study and consultation with a rabbi on personal matters.

Questions of a theological nature were not included in the survey. Thus, the attitude variables selected include positions on issues of religion and state, namely opposition to public transport on the Jewish Sabbath (Shabbat), the belief that work on the Shabbat should be avoided (excluding emergency services), and opposition to civil, as opposed to religious, marriage. In the Israeli context, these issues are heatedly debated and are assumed to correlate with one's position on the religious spectrum. The final two opinions tested touch on issues of pluralism and particularism: the wish that one's children will preserve the religious tradition and the attribution of importance to living among people of similar religiosity.

These nine measures of religiosity fall into three conceptual categories. The first is a set of indicators that attest to general religious commitment, such as synagogue attendance, preservation of religious tradition, and wanting one's children to preserve religious tradition. The second relates to attitudes concerning the role

[1]Further details are available at http://www.cbs.gov.il/reader/?MIval=cw_usr_view_SHTML&ID=576.

of religion in the public sphere, such as whether public transport should operate on Shabbat, work on Shabbat should be avoided, and civil marriage should be introduced in Israel. The final group contains measures of intensive religious commitment and includes participation in a framework for religious study, consulting with a rabbi on personal matters and attaching importance to living with people of a similar religiosity.

The dependent variables are coded in binary form 0 being indicative of weaker religious identification and 1 being indicative of stronger religious identification. With regard to general religious commitment, the survey question asks; "In the past year, did you go to synagogue" with "Yes" coded 1 and "No" coded 0. In answer to the questions; "To what extent do you preserve Jewish tradition?" and "To what extent would you want your children to preserve Jewish tradition?" responses "To a very great extent" or "To a great extent" are coded 1, whereas those who responded "To a small extent," "Not at all" and for the latter, "You wish to leave the decision up to them" are coded 0.

Regarding issues of religion and state, the survey question; "Do you support having public transportation on the Sabbath?" is coded 1 for "No" and 0 for "Yes," while; "Do you think that it is important to avoid working for pay on the Sabbath? Excluding emergency services, such as hospitals, first aid, firefighters?" is coded 1 for "Yes" and 0 for "No". In response to the statement; "It should be made possible to conduct civil marriages in Israel, for those interested in it" the answers "Don't agree very much" and "Don't agree at all" are coded 1, "Agree strongly" and "Agree" are coded 0.

High intensity religious commitment is measured by the questions; "Do you participate in any framework of religious studies? E.g., lectures, seminars, religious lessons" and "Do you consult with a rabbi/religious leader on personal matters?" for both "Yes" is coded 1, while "No" is coded 0. Finally, for "Is it important to you that people in your residential area have a level of religiosity similar to yours?" answers "Very important" and "Important" are coded 1, while "Not so important" and "Not important at all" are coded 0.

Independent Variables

Instead of computing shifts to and from each subgroup within Israeli Judaism, I focus on switching from religious to secular and vice versa. This creates a total of four religious identity categories, much reduced from the 25 possible groups of switchers and stayers which could be constructed from the data. In order to do so, I classify all the subgroups that define themselves as religious (ultra-Orthodox, religious, and traditional but religious) as religious, construct a second subgroup of those who define themselves as "not religious" or "secular," and omit those who consider themselves "traditional but not religious" as well as a number of respondents whose religious identity is unknown. Although the "traditional but not religious" group accounts for much of the Israeli Jewish population (24.9 percent of the sample), it occupies the center ground, combining both elements of religion in its "traditional" aspect and secularity in its avowed status as "not religious."

Therefore, a transition of its members to either the religious or the not-religious camp would not necessarily signal a major shift.

The two subgroups of religious and not religious are further divided into switchers and stayers on the basis of the respondent's religious affiliation today and that of their family when they were aged 15, yielding four categories (Table 1). The current religious affiliation of both switchers to religion and religious stayers by subgroup is fairly similar, with 26.2 percent of religious stayers and 29.0 percent of switchers to religion identifying as ultra-Orthodox; 39.5 percent of stayers and 30.5 percent of switchers affiliating Religious; and Traditional but religious the chosen identity of the remaining 34.2 percent and 40.5 percent stayers and switchers, respectively. The largest of the four religious identity groups is secular stayers, comprising 54.4 percent of the sample, followed by 35.2 percent religious stayers (the reference category), 6.8 percent switchers to secular, and 3.7 percent switchers to religion, the smallest group.

The control variables included in my analysis are age, gender, marital status, education, ethnicity, and number of children. Age is decomposed into four cohorts: 20–29 (reference category), 30–44, 45–59, and 60 and over. Gender is a dichotomous variable with men as the reference group. Marital status differentiates among currently married (reference category), previously married, and single. Education distinguishes between respondents who have fewer than 12 years of schooling, approximating schooling until age 18 (reference category), 13–15 years, representing graduate education, and more than 16 years (postgraduate studies). Third-generation Israelis are the reference group for ethnicity; first- or second-generation immigrants are divided between those of Asian/African and European/American origin, a categorization commonly invoked in studies on Israel's population, due to high rates of immigration from diverse countries that have been a feature of Israeli history. Immigrants and their children are grouped together; the third generation and above are considered Israel-born. Number of children is a continuous variable.

Summary statistics of the variables are presented in the Appendix.

RESULTS

Levels of Religious Observance

The nine measures of religious practice and attitudes yielded widely varying levels of observance (Figure 1). The first group is composed of variables measuring general religiosity and has the highest rates of observance, ranging from around two-thirds who attended synagogue in the previous year to around 55 percent for preserving religious tradition and around three-fifths wanting their children to do so. The second group, comprising attitudes towards questions of religion and state demonstrates that around half believe work on Shabbat should be avoided and oppose the operation of public transport on Shabbat, while only a third opposes the introduction of civil marriage. The third group is composed of intensive religious practices, which are the least well observed; with less than a quarter of respondents

FIGURE 1 Intensity of Religious Commitment among Sample Population (Percentages).

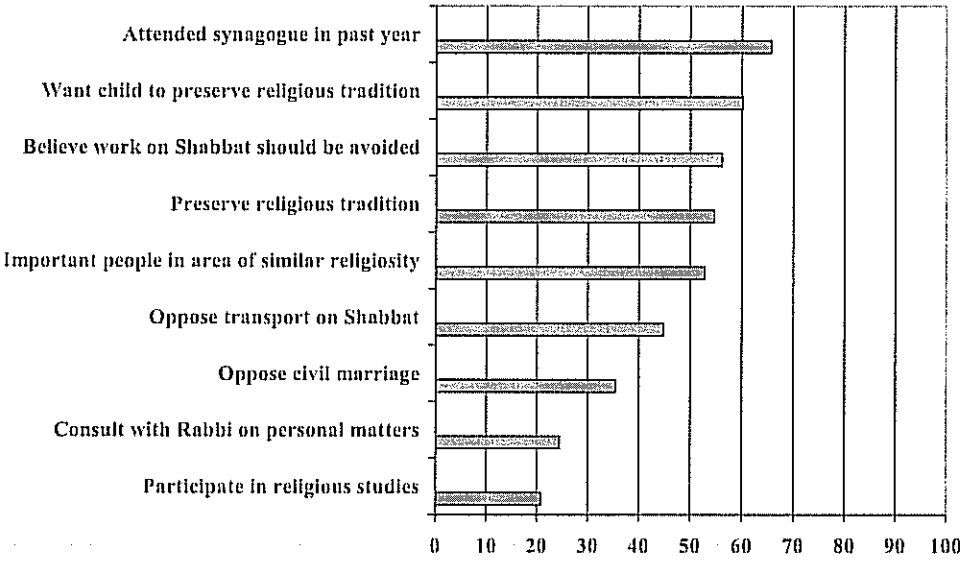

TABLE 1 Definitions of Religious Identity Categories

Current religious identity	Secular	Religious
Religious identity of home at age 15		
Secular	Secular stayer	Switcher to religion
Religious	Switcher to secular	Religious stayer

participating in a framework for religious study or consulting a rabbi on personal matters. The single attitude included in this group is more widely held, with just over half of those surveyed attaching importance to living with people of similar religiosity.

Multivariate Analyses

General religious commitment

General religious commitment is measured by attendance at synagogue in the previous year, preservation of religious tradition, and the wish that one's children will preserve the religious tradition. Given the binary nature of the dependent variables, I applied logistic regressions to the data. Switchers to religion are a fifth as likely as religious stayers to preserve Jewish tradition and less than half as likely to want their children to preserve religious tradition (Table 2). Separate regressions (not shown) with different religious identity variables as the reference category demonstrate that switchers to secular are between 1.5–2 times as likely as secular

TABLE 2 Logistic Regression (Odds Ratios) of General Religious Commitment on Socio-Demographic Characteristics, Ethnic Origin, and Religious Identity: Israeli Jews, 2009

Independent variables[a]	Attended synagogue in past year	Preserves Jewish tradition	Wants children to preserve Jewish tradition
Religious identity			
Secular stayer	0.036***	0.007***	0.034***
	(0.177)	(0.255)	(0.161)
Switcher to secular	0.067***	0.011***	0.051***
	(0.214)	(0.283)	(0.202)
Switcher to religion	0.487	0.211***	0.399**
	(0.386)	(0.427)	(0.321)
Socio-demographic characteristics			
Age 30–44	0.545***	0.604**	0.589**
	(0.149)	(0.167)	(0.154)
Age 45–59	0.403***	0.466***	0.351***
	(0.175)	(0.198)	(0.191)
Age 60+	0.242***	0.389***	0.276***
	(0.180)	(0.203)	(0.193)
Female	0.773**	1.390**	1.067
	(0.087)	(0.098)	(0.088)
Single	0.743	0.878	0.765
	(0.153)	(0.172)	(0.160)
Formerly married	0.864	0.855	0.928
	(0.126)	(0.146)	(0.132)
Education 13–15 years	1.009	0.880	0.975
	(0.119)	(0.132)	(0.121)
Education 16+ years	1.191	0.840	0.883
	(0.115)	(0.129)	(0.118)
Europe/America ethnicity	0.787*	0.700**	0.940
	(0.114)	(0.126)	(0.115)
Asian/African ethnicity	1.182	1.280	1.358*
	(0.144)	(0.154)	(0.139)
Number of children	1.205***	1.206**	1.131*
	(0.046)	(0.053)	(0.049)
Total number in sample (N)	3,542	3,534	3,420
Pseudo R^2 (Nagelkerke) (%)	42.4	61.8	46.1

Note: Numbers in parentheses are standard errors.
*$p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$.
[a]Reference categories are as follows: for religious identity—religious stayer; for age—20–29 years; for gender—male; for marital status—married; for education—12 years or less; for ethnicity—native Israeli.

stayers to observe each of the three measures. Switchers to secular and secular stayers are more similar in their commitment than switchers to religion and religious stayers are. Religious stayers exhibit the greatest commitment, secular stayers the least, while switchers take more moderate positions, although the greatest division is by current affiliation, rather than between switchers and stayers with the same current affiliation. The differences between each of the religious identity groups demonstrate that religious observance spans a continuum on which stayers are at the poles. Overall, the independent variables explain between two to three-fifths of the variance in general religious commitment.

Among the socio-demographic characteristics, age is consistently and strongly associated with diminished religiosity, as is European/American ethnicity, to a lesser extent. Women are less likely to attend synagogue but more likely to preserve religious tradition, probably reflecting the male-centered nature of the synagogue experience. Those of Asian/African ethnicity are more likely to want their children to preserve Jewish tradition, while those with more children have higher levels of general religious commitment.

Attitudes toward religion and state

The findings for attitudes toward issues of religion and state (Table 3) are similar to those for general religious commitment. Switchers to religion are around 40 percent less likely than religious stayers to oppose public transport on Shabbat and the introduction of civil marriage. Switchers to religion are less likely than religious stayers to believe that work on Shabbat should be avoided, although this is not statistically significant. Further regressions (not shown here) demonstrate that switchers to secular are consistently around twice as likely as secular stayers to hold religious attitudes. Thus for questions regarding religion and state, the gap between switchers to religion and religious stayers is smaller than that separating switchers to secular from secular stayers. Again, stayers occupy the extreme positions while switchers are more moderate, but current identity is critical. The explanatory powers for all three attitudes regarding religion and state are relatively high, although for the opinion that working on Shabbat should be avoided it is a little lower, as this is somewhat theoretical or abstract.

The effects of age, number of children, and religious identity follow the pattern for general religiosity as shown in Table 2. Women tend to oppose public transportation on the Sabbath more than men do. More educated respondents tend to oppose the encroachment of religion into the public sphere, especially regarding civil marriage, which they support.

Intensive religious commitment

The results shown in Table 4 are indicative of a different pattern of observance, suggesting that a different pattern of religious practice is evidenced in high commitment religion relative to mainstream, broadly observed religion. Although this pattern is significant in understanding religious behavior in general, it must be understood within its own context. Furthermore, the high commitment nature of

TABLE 3 Logistic Regression (Odds Ratios) of Attitudes Regarding Religion and State on Socio-Demographic Characteristics, Ethnic Origin, and Religious Identity: Israeli Jews, 2009

Independent variables[a]	Opposes transport on Shabbat	Believes work on Shabbat should be avoided	Opposes civil marriage in Israel
Religious identity			
Secular stayer	0.036***	0.041***	0.033***
	(0.119)	(0.131)	(0.122)
Switcher to secular	0.071***	0.076***	0.086***
	(0.178)	(0.176)	(0.184)
Switcher to religion	0.584*	0.763	0.637*
	(0.238)	(0.312)	(0.210)
Socio-demographic characteristics			
Age 30–44	0.715*	1.033	0.446***
	(0.158)	(0.144)	(0.168)
Age 45–59	0.458***	1.030	0.376***
	(0.187)	(0.169)	(0.196)
Age 60+	0.384***	0.777*	0.461***
	(0.194)	(0.173)	(0.202)
Female	1.369**	0.921	1.030
	(0.097)	(0.085)	(0.101)
Single	1.152	1.032	0.926
	(0.163)	(0.146)	(0.173)
Formerly married	1.107	1.013	0.848
	(0.151)	(0.127)	(0.165)
Education 13–15 years	1.034	0.909	0.690**
	(0.128)	(0.115)	(0.132)
Education 16+ years	0.827	0.764*	0.604***
	(0.126)	(0.112)	(0.130)
European/American ethnicity	0.802	1.205	0.842
	(0.128)	(0.115)	(0.140)
Asian/African ethnicity	0.915	1.030	0.843
	(0.145)	(0.137)	(0.148)
Number of children	1.261***	1.017	1.243***
	(0.045)	(0.0423)	(0.044)
Total number in sample (N)	3,484	3,471	3,487
Pseudo R^2 (Nagelkerke) (%)	55.0	42.3	56.4

Note: Numbers in parentheses are standard errors.
*$p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$.
[a]See Note a in Table 2.

TABLE 4 Logistic Regression (Odds Ratios) of Intensive Religious Commitment on Socio-Demographic Characteristics, Ethnic Origin, and Religious Identity: Israeli Jews, 2009

Independent variables[a]	Participates in setting of religious study	Consults with a rabbi on personal matters	Important to live among people of similar religiosity
Religious identity			
Secular stayer	0.033***	0.036***	0.363***
	(0.161)	(0.146)	(0.092)
Switcher to secular	0.086***	0.090**	0.294***
	(0.281)	(0.265)	(0.154)
Switcher to religion	1.745**	1.642*	0.737
	(0.198)	(0.208)	(0.197)
Socio-demographic characteristics			
Age 30–44	0.422***	0.379***	0.961
	(0.174)	(0.175)	(0.120)
Age 45–59	0.407***	0.188***	0.855
	(0.202)	(0.205)	(0.141)
Age 60+	0.383***	0.094***	0.859
	(0.215)	(0.223)	(0.145)
Female	0.472***	0.897	1.267**
	(0.107)	(0.104)	(0.072)
Single	1.279	0.540**	1.036
	(0.180)	(0.180)	(0.122)
Formerly married	1.057	0.911	0.624***
	(0.187)	(0.181)	(0.112)
Education 13–15 years	1.305	1.161	1.254*
	(0.143)	(0.137)	(0.098)
Education 16+ years	2.420***	1.231	1.640***
	(0.139)	(0.136)	(0.095)
European/American ethnicity	1.105	1.518**	0.908
	(0.148)	(0.148)	(0.098)
Asian/African ethnicity	0.770	1.010	0.990
	(0.148)	(0.146)	(0.111)
Number of children	1.217***	1.242***	1.143***
	(0.044)	(0.044)	(0.034)
Total number in sample (N)	3,542	3,543	3,527
Pseudo R^2 (Nagelkerke) (%)	46.8	50.9	12.8

Note: Numbers in parentheses are standard errors.
*$p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$.
[a]See Note a in Table 2.

the first two practices in the table; participating in religious study and consulting a rabbi on personal matters, reduces their observance to a core or elite group comprised of somewhere between one-fifth and one-fourth of the sample.

For the first two measures of religious commitment, switchers to religion are indeed, significantly more committed than religious stayers. Additional regressions (not shown here) indicate that switchers to secular are around two-and-a-half times as likely as secular stayers to engage in a framework of religious study or consult a rabbi, demonstrating greater variance between switchers to secular and secular stayers than between switchers to religion and religious stayers. The divisions along the lines of current identity are the greatest yet encountered, suggesting very different norms for secular and religious Israeli Jews regarding intensive religious practices. As for the previous results, explanatory powers are high.

A new, different pattern is encountered for the more social indicator; placing importance on living with people of similar religiosity, which may be intensive in terms of scope, but is a view held by a small majority of respondents. It is not strictly speaking a measure of religiosity, which may explain the much narrower differences between religious identity groups than previously found, as well as the low explanatory power.

As in the patterns for more mainstream religiosity, age is strongly associated with religious laxity for the first two indicators, while those with more children tend to be a little more observant. Women are less likely to participate in a setting of religious study, whereas education is associated with a stronger likelihood of so doing. Singles tend not to consult with rabbis on personal matters, while those of European or American heritage tend to do so. Women and the more educated attach greater importance to living with people of similar religiosity. Those who are separated, divorced or widowed are less interested in religious homogeneity in their immediate environment.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

This study is aimed at contributing to the existing body of knowledge on the nature of religious switching. Despite the weight of research behind it, I found very limited support—only in respect of intensive religious practices—for Hypothesis 1 that switchers to religion would be more committed than religious stayers. In fact, I found greater support for Hypothesis 2 that switchers to religion will exhibit weaker religious commitment that religious stayers, than for Hypothesis 1.

I suggest that some of the variance in the findings of current research traces to the existence of different patterns among different measures of religious observance. Whether switchers are more religious than stayers may depend somewhat on which religious practice is being measured. It is also the case that I considered a switch to be a change in denomination from the one in which one was raised, as measured by the religious affiliation of the respondent's home at age 15. Although some scholars take a similar approach (Brinkerhoff and Mackie 1993; Hadaway

and Marler 1993; Hartman and Hartman 1999), others define switching as having changed one's own religious affiliation (Hadaway 1980; Hoge and O'Connor 2004; Olson 2008; Petts 2009).

The patterns of religious observance that emerge from this study fall into two distinct categories. The first embraces widely observed general religious behaviors and attitudes as well as attitudes toward issues of religion and state. It is characterized by support for Hypothesis 2 as switchers to religion demonstrate weaker commitment than religious stayers. Denominational identity is a primary determinant of religiosity, so that those who are religious are much more likely to behave and think along religious lines than those who are secular. All four groups are arrayed across a continuum of religiosity, with switchers in both directions taking more moderate positions than stayers, although the biggest gap is always between switchers to secular and switchers to religion. For general religious commitment, switchers to secular and secular stayers occupy positions closer to each other than switchers to religion and religious stayers, while for attitudes to religion and state the opposite is true. This suggests that adherence to religious norms is more easily achieved for religious attitudes as opposed to practices.

The second category of religious practice captures patterns of observance related to high-commitment practices. In this case, Hypotheses 1 is supported, as switchers to religion are more observant than religious stayers although, as before, switchers to secular are more religious than secular stayers. Social conformity pressure may have had an effect as participation in a framework of study is a public practice, while consultation with a rabbi provides the newcomer with an opportunity to display their commitment, at least to the rabbi. Alternatively, higher levels of commitment may simply be a function of the newcomer status of switchers, namely, due to their lack of knowledge they attend classes more and consult with rabbis more. This effect may be exacerbated by their lack of family and friends who empathize with a religious perspective or it may be analogous to patterns found in high-tension religions. The one high commitment attitude tested did not conform to this pattern, probably because it was more a social than religious indicator and, as a consequence, religious identity had little effect on it.

The nexus of age and diminished religiosity is both consistent and strong. Why this is so, however—is it due to cohort or to life cycle effects?—is unclear. In Israel's early years, there was significant pressure to conform to the secular norms of the elite; today, in contrast, multiculturalism prevails, a change that may explain cohort variation. Young people may have more time, energy, and opportunities for religious practice than others, whereas the elderly experience a decline in religious commitment. Longitudinal research is needed to determine which it is.

The relationship between age and religiosity is the inverse of the pattern encountered in the western world. Israeli particularity in this respect may be a result, at least in part, of its inhabitants' sense of insecurity (Norris and Inglehart 2004). There is also some evidence suggesting that norms of religious behavior in Israeli Judaism have gradually become more stringent in the religious community over the last half-century, possibly in response to the prevailing sense of cultural liberalism

in the Western world. Therefore, even those who remain within the religious group in which they were raised may exhibit higher rates of observance than those of their parents (Peres and Ben-Rafael 2006; Peri et al. 2012). Additionally, there are some signs of a recent religious revival among the secular community in Israel, which may explain the age differential for this group (Sheleg 2010).

Among those who have more children, there is a consistent increase in the likelihood of religious commitment, suggesting either a traditional orientation or the effects of the life cycle, during which child raising years are marked by increased religious salience. The longer and more central this period is in a person's life, the more impact one would expect it to have on them. In all cases, the effect of large sample size in making differences between groups appears significant must, however, be taken into account.

It is possible to dismiss the moderation of Israeli switchers to religion as the consequence of a fundamental difference between Israelis or Jews and American Christians, on whom most existing research is based. Indeed, there is evidence that patterns of switching among American Jews have much in common with those among Israeli Jews (Hartman and Hartman 1999; Lazerwitz 1995; Lazerwitz et al. 1998). The similarity in patterns may also be a function of the unique opportunity to trace secular stayers and switchers to secular in Judaism. Alternatively, it may simply be the case that switching within a single religious denomination, Orthodox Judaism, however broad this denomination may be, is different from interdenominational switching. However, I chose to test religious practice within one denomination in order to enable direct, meaningful comparisons to be made between religious and secular.

Nevertheless, I would postulate that although Israeli Judaism is in many ways unique, the basic social forces that act on it are universal. Socialization is a potent force and prior practices and attitudes shape future preferences. Even when a decision to switch religious identity is made, previous identities do not wholly disappear; they leave their mark, albeit in attenuated form. In fact, switchers may simultaneously hold two or more identities; their current identity is merely the most salient. This would explain their willingness to label themselves and the fact that switchers and stayers within a denomination most closely resemble each other in terms of behaviors and beliefs as well as their prior identity or identities. Switchers may also feel at liberty to pick and choose the aspects of religion that appeal to them, creating new, complex, hybrid forms of religious identity and practice (Olson 2011; Sands 2009). Concepts such as "liminality" attest to the unstable nature of religious identity and seek to explain how switchers to religion do not immediately adopt all the practices and attitudes of the new group (Lim, MacGregor, and Putnam 2010). Furthermore, one may assume that switchers maintain social networks that include members of the religious group in which they were raised and that this, too, is influential. Further research is needed to determine which factor—socialization in youth or current social networks—has the greater impact and whether this liminal position is a permanent feature among switchers or simply part of their trajectory toward full assimilation into the new group.

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APPENDIX DEFINITIONS AND SUMMARY STATISTICS FOR ANALYSIS VARIABLES

Variable	Definition	Percentage
Dependent Variables		
Synagogue attendance	Range 0–1	100.0
	=0 if no	34.3
	=1 if yes	65.7
Preservation of Jewish tradition	Range 0–1	100.0
	=0 if no	45.3
	=1 if yes	54.7
Desire that children preserve Jewish tradition	Range 0–1	100.0
	=0 if no	39.8
	=1 if yes	60.2
Opposition to transport on Shabbat	Range 0–1	100.0
	=0 if no	55.2
	=1 if yes	44.8
Belief that work on Shabbat should be avoided	Range 0–1	100.0
	=0 if no	43.8
	=1 if yes	56.2
Opposition to civil marriage	Range 0–1	100.0
	=0 if no	64.6
	=1 if yes	35.4
Participation in religious study	Range 0–1	100.0
	=0 if no	79.2
	=1 if yes	20.8
Consultation with a rabbi	Range 0–1	100.0
	=0 if no	75.5
	=1 if yes	24.5
Desire to live with people of similar religiosity	Range 0–1	100.0
	=0 if no	47.1
	=1 if yes	52.9

continued

APPENDIX Continued

Variable	Definition	Percentage
Independent Variables		
Identification		
Religious		100.0
affiliation	=1 if secular stayer	54.4
	=2 if switcher to secular	6.8
	=3 if switcher to religion	3.7
	=4 if religious stayer (reference)	35.2
Socio-demographic characteristics		
Age		100.0
	=1 if aged 20–29 (reference)	24.1
	=2 if aged 30–44	30.8
	=3 if aged 45–59	21.7
	=4 if aged 60+	23.5
Gender		100.0
	=1 if female	51.7
	=2 if male (reference)	48.3
Marital status		100.0
	=1 if married (reference)	61.8
	=2 if formerly married	14.3
	=3 if single	23.8
Education		100.0
	=1 if 1–12 years (reference)	26.1
	=2 if 13–15 years	30.9
	=3 if 16+ years	43.0
Ethnicity		100.0
	=1 if Israeli (reference)	24.7
	=2 if Europe/America	48.0
	=3 if Asia/Africa	27.3
Number of Children	Range 0–5	100.0
	=0 if 0 children	28.4
	=1 if 1 child	10.9
	=2 if 2 children	23.4
	=3 if 3 children	18.6
	=4 if 4 children	8.6
	=5 if 5+ children	10.2