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Nikola Mirilovic an Assistant Professor of Political Science at the University of Central Florida. His research interests include immigration and diaspora politics and the role of ideology and religion in international relations. His research has been published in *Comparative Politics* and in the *International Political Science Review*.

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David S. Siroky is an Assistant Professor of Political Science in the School of Politics and Global Studies at Arizona State University. He studies ethnic conflict, separatism, religion, nationalism and methodology, and his research has been published or is forthcoming in *Comparative Political Studies*, *Comparative Sociology*, *Defence and Peace Economics*, *Democratization*, *Ethnopolitics*, *International Organization*, *Nationalities Papers*, *Polity*, *Post-Soviet Affairs*, *Security Studies*, *Social Science Quarterly*, *Statistics Surveys* and the *Yale Journal of International Affairs*.

Two States in the Holy Land?

International Recognition and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

How do states decide to extend or withhold international recognition in cases of contested sovereignty? We focus on how religion shapes the incentives of states in making this decision, both at the domestic level through religious institutions and at the international level through religious affinities. States with transnational religious ties to the contested territory are more likely to extend recognition. At the domestic level, states that heavily regulate religion are less likely to extend international recognition. We test these conjectures, and examine others in the literature, with two new data sets on the international recognition of both Palestine and Israel and voting on the UN resolution to admit Palestine as a non-member state observer, combined with global data on religious regulation and religious affinities. In cases of contested sovereignty, our results provide support for these two mechanisms through which religion shapes foreign policy decisions about international recognition.

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