STATES, RELIGIONS, AND POWER: HIGHLIGHTING THE ROLE OF SACRED CAPITAL IN WORLD POLITICS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report suggests that certain states are endowed with significant religious resources by virtue of hosting the historical, cultural, and institutional centers of major faith traditions and communities with global reach. It identifies these religious resources as sacred capital, further divided into three types—symbolic, cultural, and network—which can indirectly produce or be explicitly mobilized by states to generate multiple forms of influence that include but also go beyond soft power dynamics. This framework is illustrated with empirical examples from a range of states which, arguably, have considerable sacred capital at their disposal, including India, Iran, Israel, Italy, Russia, Saudi Arabia, and the United States.

INTRODUCTION

We inhabit an international system populated simultaneously by states and religions. A useful way to picture this is by imagining two maps. On one familiar map we would see over 190 countries: all with different colors and, for the most part, clear-cut boundaries. The other map would represent humanity's multiple faith traditions: wide, transnational, heterogenous and internally plural entities, among which would be especially visible a handful of major world religions, intersecting across state boundaries and continents with few clear-cut demarcating lines.

A geopolitical perspective provides a lens for analyzing the spatial overlaps and interactions between these two maps—between the world of states and that of religions—and how these in turn shape global political dynamics. This kind of perspective alerts us to the fact that a number of states in the international system host and act as important centers of one or multiple globe-spanning faith traditions and communities. States such as these are therefore especially endowed with a complex set of religious resources that can generate particular forms of international power and influence.

Such resources constitute what this report conceptualizes as sacred capital.[1] Three types of sacred capital are particularly important: sacred symbolic capital, sacred cultural capital, and sacred network capital. Sacred capital, especially symbolic and cultural, provides states with certain forms of soft power. At the same time, the paper points to a range of alternative possibilities, especially when it comes to sacred network capital, for understanding religion as a form of power that is not only "soft" through which states exercise influence globally. As the Geopolitics of Religious Soft Power project already explores, the concept of sacred capital—like that of soft power—can be applied to religions and states beyond Islam and Muslim-majority countries.[2] The framework put forward here will be illustrated with empirical examples from a diverse range of states which, arguably, have considerable sacred capital at their disposal, including: India, Iran, Israel, Italy, Russia, Saudi Arabia, and the United States.

SACRED CAPITAL

The international system is populated by a great variety of states. Some happen to overlap and include within their boundaries major historical, cultural, and institutional centers of one or more religious traditions with global reach and appeal. Because of their particular position, such states are endowed with considerable religious resources. These may include holy sites, sacred artifacts, spiritual leaders, places of religious learning and knowledge production, official institutions, and significant lay organizations. As a result, these states will likely come to hold especially vibrant and active faith communities; exhibit a religiously inflected national identity; acquire a particular standing among other states and societies as well as migrant and diaspora communities abroad; occupy a central place in a faith's spiritual and geopolitical imaginary; infuse the religious tradition with the norms, knowledge, and politics of their locality; provide the language in which holy texts are written or official discourses articulated; produce missionaries treading the globe; and host religious pilgrims, students, and tourists from around the world.

These multiple religious characteristics and dynamics generate particular power resources for such states, which are hereby conceptualized in terms of sacred capital. Although difficult to quantify, some states—especially those that host important holy sites and major religious institutions—may have greater sacred capital resources than others. Like economic capital, sacred capital is accumulated and expended both independently from and dependently upon what states do. Religions are for the most part, again similarly to market forces, relatively autonomous social, institutional, and cultural forces that operate beneath and

beyond—and often have longer histories compared to—modern states. States, however, can and do play a key role, both directly and indirectly, in either suppressing or cultivating, constraining or mobilizing religious actors, communities, and ideas at home and across the globe.

These dynamics are contingent on the type of state-religion relations (religious establishment, preferential treatment, neutrality, or hostility) and state regime in place (democratic or authoritarian and anything in between), along with the historical circumstances, ideological configurations, and political alliances which underpin these arrangements to begin with. Such arrangements are not set in stone and may change over time. States that are domestically hostile to religion can also undermine and erode any source of sacred capital they may have to begin with. This was the case of Russia during the Soviet communist era when the Orthodox Church and other religious communities were for the most part being persecuted and driven underground, their property confiscated or destroyed.[3]

Three types of sacred capital are especially important: sacred symbolic capital, sacred cultural capital, and sacred network capital. These three types of sacred capital are here presented as conceptually distinct. In practice, however, they are often deeply intertwined and mutually constitutive of each other.

SACRED SYMBOLIC CAPITAL

Sacred symbolic capital provides states with the opportunity of acquiring a particular religious status, identity, or role in the international system. In other words, this type of capital translates in states and their leaders' capacity to make certain claims about their religious character that carry considerable symbolic meaning and prestige in world politics. In order for a particular sacred status, identity, or role—and claims thereof—to be authoritative, these need to be perceived as legitimate by others and especially by religious leaders and followers.

In countries where state, society, and religious connections are profound due to historical, cultural, and political reasons, religion can become a constitutive element of national identity.

Historical Entanglements

Status, identity, and roles, although closely related, are not the same thing and do function somewhat differently. When it comes to acquiring a particular sacred status in the collective imaginary of the faithful as well as among the wider international community, states will tend to explicitly invoke their centrality and historical entanglement with one or more religious traditions (or to religion more broadly). For example, the Saudi Arabian monarchy has adopted the title of "Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques," in reference to the fact that Islam's two most sacred sites are situated within the country's borders. The state of Israel explicitly presents itself as the state of the Jewish people and prophecy by evoking its status as the "promised land," alongside cultivating its image as the Abrahamic faiths' "holy land."

The Roman Catholic Church has its own state, Vatican City, while Italy is a secular state without an established church. These two entities are inevitably, however, symbolically entangled. Rome, Italy's capital, in particular has the status of a holy city in the collective imaginary of the world's 1.2 billion Catholics, as well as that of non-Catholics alike. With a resurging Russian Orthodox Church, ideas of Moscow as the "Third Rome" and Russia's status as the cultural and political epicenter of Orthodox Christianity are likewise being resurrected. In the United States, claims of American exceptionalism and leader of the—also religiously—free world are intertwined with the country's history and the establishment of the first colonies by fleeing pilgrims.

In countries where state, society, and religious connections are profound due to historical, cultural, and political reasons, religion can become a constitutive element of national identity. This is the case with Saudi Arabia, India, Iran, or Israel, for instance, where the entanglement between the state and a particular faith is visibly represented by religious references on their flags. In other instances, for example in the United States, national identity may take a more abstract, religiously pluralist, civil religious form.[4]

Status and identity are tied to the opportunity by states to acquire a particular religious role in the international system. Role theorists have long noted that one of the major roles available to a political actor in world politics is precisely that of "defender of the faith."[5] We can expect that states with significant sacred symbolic capital will be able to mobilize more authoritatively such a role, as well as other similar ones including that of "leader/speaker of the faithful," for example. The United States, especially during the Cold War, would often take upon itself the mantle of "defender of religion" against "godless" communism. President Donald Trump's first trip abroad, a highly symbolic pilgrimage to the centers of the world's three monotheistic faiths in Saudi Arabia, Jerusalem, and Rome, very much built on this tradition. In recent years, Russian political, intellectual, and religious elites have articulated a role for their country as either the "defender of Christianity" in the context of the Islamic State's (ISIS) attacks on Christians in the Middle East or "defender of traditional values" in the face of the global advance of secular, liberal, progressive norms. In the Middle East we see Saudi Arabia, Iran, and Turkey regularly competing for the highly symbolic role of "leader of the Islamic world."

Forms of Influence

The summoning, thanks to the possession of sacred symbolic capital, of a particular religious status, identity, or role by states generates different forms of influence. First, if such status, identity, or role is perceived to be authoritative it certainly can produce and enhance a country's prestige and "soft power." Positive attitudes, shared interests, and collective identification with a particular state—which is the currency of soft power—are most likely to exist among peoples and audiences that already share the same religious background or set of beliefs. Thus, Saudi Arabia and its royal family's ties to Islam are going to be valued mostly by (certain) Muslim audiences. Likewise, America's claim to be a beacon of religious liberty will appeal to those who cherish such norms. Such efforts may nonetheless be aimed at wider audiences as well. Narendra Modi, India's Hindu nationalist prime minister, has been especially active in presenting his country and himself as a champion of interreligious dialogue, ostensibly hoping to increase India's soft power as well as improve his own reputation tarnished by the accusation of enabling sectarian violence while Gujarat chief minister.[6]

While potentially producing goodwill towards a particular state and contributing to legitimizing specific foreign policies, the possession of sacred symbolic capital can generate forces which can inhibit or constrain aggressive or unwanted actions towards it as well.

Second, a state that can claim a religious status, identity, and role can use these also as "legitimating strategies."[7] Legitimating strategies are rhetorical moves through which actors seek to generate support and consent while undermining resistance across a range of domestic and international audiences for a particular course of action. Such policies may involve the justification of foreign military interventions by claiming for instance to act according to the will of God/s, or to protect holy sites and faith communities abroad. Likewise, religious symbolisms can be deployed to justify diplomatic initiatives and gain international recognition, including leading multilateral arrangements, advancing particular norms, cementing international alliances, or proposing particular conflict-resolution measures. The legitimacy of Saudi Arabia's

leadership of the Organization for Islamic Cooperation, Russia's attempts to promote traditional values in international forums, Israel's cultivation of its special relationship with the United States, or Iranian (under President Mohammad Khatami) efforts to re-engage the West under the aegis of civilizational dialogues, have all relied on these countries' symbolic entanglement with religion.

While potentially producing goodwill towards a particular state and contributing to legitimizing specific foreign policies, the possession of sacred symbolic capital can generate forces which can inhibit or constrain aggressive or unwanted actions towards it as well. States can delegitimize foreign enemies and build national cohesiveness by mobilizing powerful narratives of resistance and resilience rooted in the religious history of their country and people, as is evident in the cases of Iran[8] or Israel.[9] Likewise, states that hold a specific religious status or identity may be harder to attack and occupy militarily without engendering some kind of backlash, based in wider perceptions that highly symbolic religious sites or even a whole religion—especially if the foreign intervener does not share the same beliefs—are under attack too.[10]

SACRED CULTURAL CAPITAL

Sacred cultural capital is rooted in the ideational and normative strength, authority, and activism of a state's domestic religious population, institutions, and organizations and their ability to connect with and shape how individuals and communities around the world identify, think, and act. The capacity to influence identities, ideas, and practices of people and societies globally may derive from the cultural ties that already bind co-religionists around the world with those located within a state. In other cases, this relies on processes of socialization into novel beliefs and belongings including, most radically, through processes of conversion into a different religious tradition.

Faith Entrepreneurs

Central to these dynamics are the activities of a multiplicity of "faith entrepreneurs"[11] such as religious figures, faith-based organizations, and centers of learning that are connected to a particular country but reach a wider global audience through a variety of channels. These channels may include: missionary and humanitarian work; building novel or funding existing sacred buildings, educational institutions, and places of worship across multiple countries; starting businesses in distant lands; welcoming pilgrims and religious tourists at home; educating domestic and foreign students as well as religious scholars and leaders who populate places of worship and faith-based institutions abroad; and modern means of mass communication that travel far and wide across borders such as print, cassettes, DVDs, radio, satellite TV, and the internet.[12] Faith entrepreneurs may be wholly independent from, indirectly supported by, or directly tied to the state they originate from.

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The capacity of faith entrepreneurs to socialize individuals and collectivities into particular ways of believing, belonging, and behaving constitutes in and of itself a form of power, what Michael Barnett and Raymond Duvall label "productive power."[13] What mostly interests us, however, is how these processes may generate influence for a particular state. This may occur along three lines.

Believing, Belonging, and Behaving

One way is by generating, once again, forms of soft power for those states that are identified by foreign audiences with the religious traditions being promoted by faith entrepreneurs. American Protestant evangelical pastors, churches, and missionaries have gone global in the past half-century,[14] profoundly shaping religious landscapes around the world.[15] Adherents and converts to Pentecostalism in the Global South, for example, have been found to hold a more favorable opinion of the United States than other religious groups.[16] Carefully planned Birthright trips and Christian "holy land" tours are connecting Jews and Christians worldwide in growing numbers to Israeli religious history, culture, and society. Such practices have potentially positive effects in producing political support for Israel among Jewish and Christian communities in North America and Europe.[17] Saudi and Iranian soft power in Muslim communities abroad relies heavily on the diffusion and promotion—through a wide range of channels—of their culturally and historically specific Islamic traditions and narratives.[18]

Moreover, on the back of religious activities, faith entrepreneurs can contribute to the global circulation of a range of other political, economic, social, and cultural ideas and practices. These are likely to reproduce ideas and practices which are present or prevalent in the original domestic context that the faith entrepreneurs come from. These changes provide a further avenue for increasing a state's soft power thanks to its sacred cultural capital resources. For example, the Russian Orthodox Church's role in championing "traditional values" norms around gender, sexuality, and reproductive health at home and internationally is contributing to increasing Russia's standing among religious and non-religious conservative audiences in the West.[19]

The promotion through the activities of faith entrepreneurs of parallel political, economic, and social ideas and practices may generate further forms of indirect power for a state. This may occur if people and societies around the world come to think and act in ways that are favorable to and in line with the national security or economic interests of that particular state (or sections of its population). The support of "moderate" Islam is seen by the United States as key to fighting terrorism.[20] In some cases, the spread of Saudi-influenced Salafism has gone hand in hand with the expansion of business networks and opportunities.[21]

The kind of influence that states derive from different types of sacred capital may overlap and be mutually reinforcing. When it comes to generating soft power, for example, the global shaping and diffusion of religious ideas, identities, and practices by faith entrepreneurs originating from a particular state can contribute also to increasing this state's ability to authoritatively and persuasively claim a particular religious status or role. Likewise, the practices involved in promoting particular religious traditions around the world take place on the back of existing and produce novel global religious connections. In other words, sacred cultural capital can be intimately tied to sacred network capital, which this paper now turns to.

SACRED NETWORK CAPITAL

Sacred network capital points to the networked character of religions and how these can become sources of power and influence for states.[22] This paper understands networks both as "social networks," that is connections and relationships between peoples and organizations, as well as "infrastructural networks," especially in relation to the role played by sacred sites, places of worship, and other faith-based infrastructures (schools, hospitals, etc.).

Sacred network capital endows the state with forms of influence derived from hosting within their boundaries the central or key nodes of complex, transnational, faith-based social and infrastructural

networks. Depending on a range of factors, including the degree of state-religion separation, these networks may be operating with a certain amount of independence from state institutions. In other cases, states may play an active role in cultivating, shaping, expanding, and tapping into these networks as they pursue their international interests.

Mobilizing Networks and Resources

Religious social and infrastructural networks function like conveyor belts for the movement and circulation of a wide range of tangible and intangible resources—ideas, knowledge, practices, people, money, food, weapons—to and from their main nodes in ways that are beneficial to a particular state. Much of the religious diplomacy agenda emerging in Western states in recent decades is premised on the idea of tapping into such networks. For instance, calls that Italy augment its diplomatic capabilities by strengthening its engagement with religions around the world explicitly propose that the country take advantage of its "geo-religious position as a hub of a transnational network of religions connections" rooted in the presence of the Catholic pope and the Vatican in Rome.[23] Since the launch of President George W. Bush's faith-based initiative in the early 2000s, the United States has increasingly relied on the extensive global social and infrastructural networks of faith-based organizations in general and Protestant evangelical ones in particular to deliver aid abroad and extend America's influence in far-flung places.[24]

Likewise, actors in different sites across these global networks can mobilize abroad, either on their own or in partnership with the state, to support a country's and their leaders' priorities and interests. Narendra Modi has sought to increase international backing for his Hindu nationalist party, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), by scaling up efforts to engage with India's diaspora communities through their religious traditions and by visiting their places of worship.[25] Organizations like the American Israeli Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) or Christians United for Israel (CUFI), who operate with differing degrees of autonomy from Israeli state structures, lobby to great effect for the defense of Israeli interests—as they are defined prevalently by more conservative forces—in American foreign policy.[26]

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In other cases, such networks are sites through which more coercive practices or international rivalries are played out. Although it is debated whether the construction of settlements whose ideological roots and demographics have a significant religious dimension is in Israel's long-term interest,[27] these nonetheless constitute important social and infrastructural networks through which the Israeli state is expanding its presence beyond its internationally recognized boundaries. Saudi and Iranian political and strategic competition is also being carried out through opposing networks of Sunni and Shia proxies and allies in the Middle East—a phenomenon which is contributing to heightening sectarian differences across the region.[28]

Access to Sacred Sites

Combining sacred symbolic and network capital, states may regulate access to domestic holy sites in ways that signal amity or enmity, cooperation or conflict, legitimacy or stigma towards particular states or groups in world politics. For example, the Islamic practice of the hajj connects Saudi Arabia to the worldwide Muslim community (ummah). Quotas on the granting of visas to pilgrims seeking to perform

this sacred duty have been used as a tool of Saudi foreign policy, especially against Iran in recent years.[29] In a slightly different manner, Modi has sought to exploit India's Buddhist sites and history to boost tourism and build linkages with East Asian countries. Visa regulations have been loosened for citizens from this region with the intention of attracting more visitors and creating what some have defined as novel Buddhist tourist "circuits."[30]

CONCLUSION

This report advanced a particular way of thinking about geopolitics as it relates to religion and about religion as it relates to power. It proposed a framework centered on the concept of sacred capital—symbolic, cultural, and network—for understanding how states gain and exercise global influence in complex ways through religion. This framework builds on, but also expands, the notion of faith as a soft power tool that can be strategically deployed by states.

It is fundamental to note, however, that these power resources should not be approached over-deterministically. The possession and cultivation of sacred capital does not automatically translate into desired outcomes, whether a state actively or not seeks to mobilize it for particular purposes. Moreover, religious assets and dynamics which are productive of different types of sacred capital can also generate unintended or negative consequences.

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For example, a country endowed with substantial sacred symbolic capital, which gives it a highly regarded status or valuable role opportunities, may find itself the recipient of considerable unwanted international scrutiny or become the prime target of terrorist activity. Similarly, expectations may be raised that such states should act in accordance to a specific religious identity or role, which may go against their more immediate foreign policy objectives or, if unmet, may expose them to charges of hypocrisy. Powerful global religious actors and organizations whose central node lies within a particular state are likely to have their own agendas, even in cases where these are closely connected to state structures. Such agendas may not always align with, or may even actively go against, the interests of the hosting state and its political leadership.

Yet, it is increasingly clear that at the dawn of the twenty-first century, against the predictions of much secularization theory, religion matters more than ever in world politics. Coming to grips with how the sacred can constitute a particular form of power, beyond the usual attention given to economic and military capabilities, is therefore particularly important—especially if we are to have a better understanding of how states are able to exercise influence globally through channels that are all-too-often and problematically overlooked by analysts of contemporary international relations.

Endnotes

1   The notion that religion can constitute a particular form of "capital" is not entirely original. This report builds on literature on "religious" (Bourdieu 1991, Iannaccone 1990, McKinnon 2017, Stark and Finke 2000) and "spiritual" (Berger and Redding 2010, Farquhar 2015, Verter 2003) capital, to develop in novel ways the concept of sacred capital as an attribute of states rather than individuals or faith-based institutions.

2   Peter Henne, "The Geopolitics of Faith: Religious Soft Power in Russian and U.S. Foreign Policy," *The Geopolitics of Religious Soft Power* (Washington, DC: Berkley Center for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs and the Brookings Institution, 2019): https://berkleycenter. georgetown.edu/posts/the-geopolitics-of-faith-religious-soft-power-in-russian-and-u-s-foreign-policy.

3   Victoria Smolkin, *A Sacred Space Is Never Empty: A History of Soviet Atheism*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2018).

4   This is, of course, not to say that such entanglements are welcomed by everyone in these states. In Iran, Israel, India, or the United States, for example, struggles continuously take place between those seeking to define these countries along religious—whether inclusivist or exclusivist—lines or in secular terms. See for example Philip Gorski, *American Covenant: A History of Civil Religion from the Puritans to the Present* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2019) and Mark Juergensmeyer, *The New Cold War? Religious Nationalism Confronts the Secular State* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993).

5   Kalevi J. Holsti, "National Role Conceptions in the Study of Foreign Policy," *International Studies Quarterly* 14, no. 3 (1970): 233-309. For a more recent overview of role theory, see Cameron Thies, "Role Theory and Foreign Policy" *The International Studies Encyclopedia*, edited by Robert A. Denemark and Renée Marlin-Bennett, 1-44, (Online: Wiley-Blackwell, 2017).

6   Ian Hall, "Narendra Modi's New Religious Diplomacy," *International Studies Perspectives* 20 (1), 2019: 11-14.

7   Stacie E. Goddard, "When Right Makes Might: How Prussia Overturned the European Balance of Power," *International Security* 33, no. 3 (2009): 110-142.

8   Peter Mandaville and Shadi Hamid, "Islam as Statecraft: How Governments Use Religion in Foreign Policy," *The Geopolitics of Religious Soft Power* (Washington, DC: Berkley Center for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs and the Brookings Institution, 2018): https://www. brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/FP_20181116_islam_as_statecraft.pdf.

9   Michael Barnett, "Culture, Strategy and Foreign Policy Change: Israel's Road to Oslo," *European Journal of International Relations* 5, no. 1 (1999): 5-36.

10 Ron E. Hassner, *Religion on the Battlefield* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2016). See especially Ch.3.

11 On faith entrepreneurs, see also Fiona Adamson, "Global Liberalism Versus Political Islam: Competing Ideological Frameworks in International Politics" *International Studies Review* 7, no. 4 (2005): 547-569, and Gregorio Bettiza and Filippo Dionigi, "How do Religious Norms Diffuse? Institutional Translation and International Change in a Postsecular World Society," *European Journal of International Relations* 21, no. 3 (2015): 621-646.

12 Historically, processes of religious diffusion may have occurred also through other, especially coercive, means including by decree of rulers, domestic violence, and foreign conquest. In some instances, such practices still take place today.

13 Michael Barnett and Raymond Duvall, "Power in International Politics" *International Organization* 59, no. 1 (2005): 39-75.

14 Robert Wuthnow, *Boundless Faith: The Global Outreach of American Churches* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009).

15 Philip Jenkins, *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

16 Walter Russell Mead, "Pentecost Power," *The American Interest* (2010): https://www.the-american-interest.com/2010/05/28/pentecost-power/.

17 On Birthright trips, see for example Shaul Kelner, *Tours That Bind: Diaspora, Pilgrimage, and Israeli Birthright Tourism* (New York: New York University Press, 2010). On "holy land" tours, see Melani McAlister, "Evangelicals and Jerusalem," *Contending Modernities* (2017): http://contendingmodernities.nd.edu/global-currents/evangelicals-and-jerusalem/.

18 Mandaville and Hamid (2018, 8-19).

19 Kristina Stoeckl, "The Russian Orthodox Church as Moral Norm Entrepreneur," *Religion, State, and Society* 44, no. 2 (2016): 132-151. See also Vincent Charles Keating, and Katarzyna Kaczmarska, "Conservative Soft Power: Liberal Soft Power Bias and the 'Hidden' Attraction of Russia," *Journal of International Relations and Development* 22, no. 1 (2019): 1-27.

20 Gregorio Bettiza, *Finding Faith in Foreign Policy: Religion and American Diplomacy in a Postsecular World* (New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019). Especially Ch. 5.

21 Aurélie Biard, "'We Pray for Our President': Saudi-Inspired Loyalist Salafism and the Business Sector in Kazakhstan," *The Geopolitics of Religious Soft Power* (Washington, DC: Berkley Center for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs and the Brookings Institution, 2019): https://berkleycenter.georgetown.edu/publications/we-pray-for-our-president-saudi-inspired-loyalist-salafism-and-the-business-sector-in-kazakhstan.

22 Sean F. Everton, *Networks and Religion: Ties that Bind, Loose, Build-up, and Tear Down* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018).

23 Pasquale Ferrara and Fabio Petito, "An Italian Foreign Policy of Religious Engagement: Challenges and Prospects," *The International Spectator* 51, no. 1 (2016): 28-43.

24 Bettiza (2019, in particular Ch.4).

25 Hall (2019).

26 John J. Mearsheimer and Stephen M. Walt, *The Israel Lobby and US Foreign Policy* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007).

27 For example Barak Mendelsohn, "State Authority in the Balance: The Israeli State and the Messianic Settler Movement." *International Studies Review* 16, no. 4 (2014): 499-521.

28 Mandaville and Hamid (2018, 8-19); Vali Nasr, *The Shia Revival: How Conflicts within Islam Will Shape the Future* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2006).

29 John Hannah, "Saudi Arabia Strikes Back," *Foreign Policy* (2016): http://foreignpolicy.com/2016/08/16/saudi-arabia-strikes-back-3 (accessed December 19, 2016).

30 Ghose cited in Hall (2019, 13).

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ABOUT THE PROJECT

The Geopolitics of Religious Soft Power (GRSP) project represents a multi-year, cross-disciplinary effort to systematically study state use of religion in foreign affairs. Through a global comparison of varying motivations, strategies, and practices associated with the deployment of religious soft power, project research aims to reveal patterns, trends, and outcomes that will enhance our understanding of religion's role in contemporary geopolitics.

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