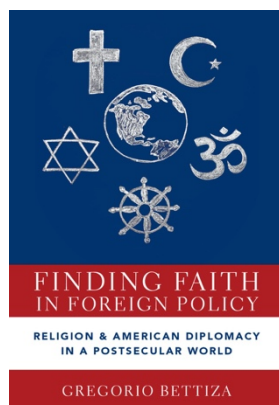


God Bless America: US Foreign Policy and the Global Management of Religion

**Wednesday 25th September
16:00-17:30**

**Reed Upper Lounge, Reed Hall
University of Exeter**

The event will be followed by a reception



Since the end of the Cold War, religion has become an ever more explicit and institutionalised focus of US foreign policy across multiple domains. From the 1990s onwards, new offices, appointees, strategies and initiatives have been put in place to monitor religious freedom and promote it globally, draw on faith-based organisations to deliver humanitarian and development aid abroad, fight global terrorism by seeking to reform Muslim societies and Islamic theologies, and engage with religious actors to solve conflicts and crises around the world. Simply put, religion has become a systematic subject and object of American foreign policy in ways that were unimaginable just a few decades ago.

These changes raise a number of puzzling questions. What explains this growing attention, sustained across multiple different administrations (Clinton, Bush Jr, Obama, and now Trump), given to religion in US foreign policy? In what ways are the boundaries between religion and state, faith and politics, being redefined by these foreign policy changes? What are the global effects of the growing entanglements between the sacred and the foreign policy of, arguably, still the most powerful state in the international system today?

The event is based on Gregorio Bettiza's new book, *Finding Faith in Foreign Policy: Religion and American Diplomacy in a Postsecular World* (Oxford University Press: 2019).

Speaker: Gregorio Bettiza

Discussants: Anne Jenichen and Jeffrey Haynes

Chair: Michael Dumper

Gregorio Bettiza is Senior Lecturer and Director of the MA in International Relations at the University of Exeter. His research focuses on the role of ideas and identities in world politics, with a particular emphasis on religion and civilizational identities.

Anne Jenichen is Lecturer in Politics and International Relations at Aston University. Her research focuses on the impact and change of international institutions, European human rights policy, the rights of disadvantaged groups, such as women and religious minorities, and intersectionalities in domestic and international politics. Her recent publications include, 'A Transatlantic Secular Divide? The Representation of Religion in EU and US Foreign Policy', *Foreign Policy Analysis* (2019).

Jeffrey Haynes is Emeritus Professor of Politics at London Metropolitan University. His areas of expertise are religion and international relations, religion and politics, democracy and democratization, development studies, and comparative politics and globalization. His publications include more than 40 books, including the Routledge *Handbook of Religion and Politics* (2016, second ed.).

Michael Dumper is Professor in Middle East Politics at the University of Exeter. His research interests include the Middle East peace process, the Arab-Israeli conflict, religious institutions in the Middle East, and the urban politics of the Middle East. His new book is titled *Contested Holy Cities: The Urban Dimension of Religious Conflicts* (Routledge: 2019).