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Religion as a Source of Soft Power: An Example of Serbian Orthodox Church

The role of religion has always been influential in the field of politics, both national and international. This influence is increasingly, perhaps more than ever before, felt in the contemporary world. Religious actors and subjects have been significant forces in political and social matters in and between various states and nations. Although hard power is becoming more relevant than it has ever been in the 21st century, the concept of soft power cannot be ignored in the research of modern international politics. The authors claim that the use of soft power as a foreign policy instrument is more efficient for states and nations that are depicted as small and medium powers in international relations, due to its low cost. The use of religion as a source of soft power will be examined on the activity of Serbian Orthodox Church in the promotion of interest which are perceived as vital to Serbian national interest in general. The authors find that Serbian Orthodox Church as a community, enjoys high level of trust among Serbian people across different states, especially in the Balkans, and is therefore capable of non-coercive influence in social and political area among nations.

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