

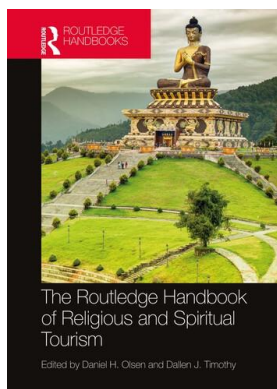
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## **The Routledge Handbook of Religious and Spiritual Tourism**

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### **The political economy of religious and spiritual tourism**

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# 3

## THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF RELIGIOUS AND SPIRITUAL TOURISM

*Dino Bozonelos*

### Introduction

The search for religious and spiritual experiences has been an inspiration for travel from the earliest parts of human history (Butler & Suntutikul 2018). Indeed, there is a vast literature on pilgrimage and its associated institutions, with much of the earliest writings rooted in the late Middle Ages (Di Giovine & Choe 2019). Yet the academic study of religion and tourism as separate from the field of pilgrimage studies has a very short history, beginning in the late 1990s (Vukonić 1996; Badone & Roseman 2004; Timothy & Olsen 2006; Raj & Morpeth 2007; Stausberg 2011; Raj & Griffin 2015). Often dichotomized into the disciplines of religious studies or management, scholars have brought different disciplinary perspectives to understanding this complicated field, in which sacred places often double as tourist destinations (Bremer 2006; Norman 2011).

One area of productive research has been on the management of the sacred sites, which includes the study of the organizations that control and manage these sites (Olsen 2009, 2019), the contrasting motivations of the tourists and pilgrims that visit these sites (Blackwell 2007; Drule et al. 2012; Abbate & Di Nuovo 2013; Bond, Packer & Ballantyne 2015; Nyaupane, Timothy & Poudel 2015), and the management practices that are used to provide services and experiences to visitors (Shackley 2001a, 2001b; Olsen 2006; Wong, McIntosh & Ryan 2016; Dowson, Yaqub & Raj 2019). The social sciences have also contributed to the study of religion and tourism. For example, geographers, anthropologists, and sociologists have developed theories and case studies related to religion, spirituality, pilgrimage, and tourism through employing interdisciplinary research and ethnographic approaches (Badone & Roseman 2004; Coleman & Eade 2004, 2018; Collins-Kreiner 2016; Lopez, Lois González & Fernández 2017; Farias et al. 2019; Sanagustín-Fons, Gregory & Martínez-Quintana 2019).

One of the academic fields that is now beginning to examine the relationships between religion and tourism is political science. While there exists small literature on terrorism, political crises, and political instability as it relates to religious tourism (Shackley 2001a; Collins-Kreiner et al. 2006; Suleiman & Mohamed 2011; Chowdhury et al. 2017), there are many more avenues of research that political scientists can explore. These include theories on political attitudes, preferences, and public opinion formation that could help refine research on religious destination choice; institutionalist theories regarding how religious

tourist destinations are governed; and the management decision-making process at sacred sites. Newer research on comparative political economy can also help researchers better understand how religious organizations and their efforts to promote religious tourism and pilgrimage are affected by differences in national political economies that help shape the development of macro and micro religious institutions within a country. As Hall and Soskice (2001) notes, the arrangements between the state and the market strongly impact how firms (like religious organizations) solve coordination problems in the market regarding the development of existing employment relations. For example, in liberal market economies, a free market approach allows for tourist destinations to develop without much state interference, whereas, social democratic economies seek to ensure equal access to a country's resources. Thus, the state will often intervene at times and regulate tourist destinations for the benefit of society overall. As such, political economy can affect the path development of many types of institutions, including tourism and religious institutions.

Yet, an additional layer of institutional complexity exists for religious tourist destinations that do not exist for their secular counterparts. Religious arrangements in a society, such as concordats, established state religions, or tax and regulatory arrangements, can additionally affect how religious tourist destinations are developed and managed. Thus, the intersection of political economy types and religious arrangements could help explain how religious tourist institutions have developed. As 'carriers of history', religious tourist institutions thus carry two types of histories—political-religious and political-economic (David 1994).

Added to this complexity are the newer wrinkles of neoliberalization reforms, where market competition is often proposed as the model to solve coordination problems. From an international political economy perspective, the global push for free trade and liberalization has transformed the global tourism industry (Giampiccoli 2007). More importantly, it has impacted the management of religious tourist destinations regarding the development of transnational tourism corporations (Bianchi 2002). The opening of domestic economies to foreign direct investment and the deregulation of foreign ownership of land and access to resources, such as seaports, has allowed multinational hotel chains, mass transit carriers, and specialist tour operators to capture larger shares of the tourist market within a given country. However, their presence is less pronounced in the religious tourism segment. Clearly then, political economy as a discipline has much to offer to the study of religious tourism.

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a better understanding of the political economy of religious tourism. First, political economy is defined and the historical trajectory of the field is presented. Then, the small but growing literature on the political economy of religious tourism is discussed, after which the author brings in research from comparative political economy to help map the intersection of political, economic, and religious institutions, and provides a framework from which to better understand how these institutions are linked before concluding.

### **Defining political economy**

Political economy as a disciplinary field of study focuses on the relationship between the marketplace and the powerful actors that work within it, with an emphasis on the political, economic, and societal institutions that shape the distributional outcomes between and within countries as well as the results that arise from these interactions (Gilpin 2001). Political economy is often considered as a subfield of political science that provides a deeper understanding of individual institutional arrangements. Even though the field often finds itself touching upon the areas where economics and political science intersect, the study of

institutions and their effect on society is often a study of politics and the compromises made through political decisions (Menz 2017). Often, the development of said institutions is key in understanding why certain arrangements exist. Political economy, however, is not just an exercise in historical analysis but also attempts to explain contemporary phenomena through acknowledging that the rationality behind current behavioral decisions is often bounded or constrained by the institutions that condition decision-making. As such, political economists continually focus on the ‘ever-evolving nexus of relationships between state governance and economic transactions’ (Coleman & Eade 2018: 2).

Historically, Adam Smith’s (1977) book, *The Wealth of Nations*, is considered the foundation for the study of political economy. Smith was followed by seminal nineteenth-century scholars such as Smith, Ricardo, List, Marx, and Engels. These philosophers saw no distinction between politics and economics. They contended that the endogenous relationships between institutions made it difficult to disentangle cause and effect mechanisms from each other. Classical scholars understood the field holistically. In the early twentieth century, economics began to separate itself formally from politics by focusing on theories of economic behavior as they related to human behavior. Employing rational discourse to individual decision-making, institutions took on less of a role in both understanding and ultimately predicting behavior.

However, advanced mathematical modeling of economic behavior has struggled at times to account for what could be deemed ‘less rational’ decisions made by individual actors. Scholars will often assign the dearth of rationality to the lack of proper information or a misinterpretation of signals or actions taken by a more informed actor to convey information to less informed actors. The basic assumption in rational-choice modeling is the maximization of utility, however, defined (Green & Shapiro 1994). Organizations and institutions are seen simply as an aggregation of interests—where structures are created to reduce transaction costs, thereby allowing for wealth maximization for economic actors.

This singular focus on rationalization, and the locus of the individual as the unit of analysis was not accepted by all. Referring to themselves as neoinstitutionalists, these scholars argued that collective action should be at the center of analysis. The norms and values of institutions could be more relevant than achieving one’s desires as explanations for decision-making. March and Olsen (2011) explain this logic as decision-making driven by rules. Rules are followed by actors because ‘they are seen as natural, rightful, expected, and legitimate’ (p. 1). The obligations of upholding the norms and values of an institution is what justifies an actor’s place within the institution. This then reinforces rules of appropriate behavior and can justify the norms that undergird the institutions themselves (Peters 2019).

These neoinstitutionalist approaches gave space for political economy to reemerge as a discipline. Beginning in the 1970s, political scientists reintroduced the study of political and economic institutions to explain behavioral differences between countries and within countries. These scholars highlighted that the differences in political institutions, both global and national, were the essential variable in comparative studies. The neoinstitutionalist approach is explained best by North (1991), who reminded behavioralists that the market itself is an institution guided by certain norms and expectations, and that markets undergo evolutionary change as well. This approach has led to a dramatic upsurge in neoinstitutionalist publications focusing on how institutions shape economic decision-making at different levels of analysis and in different segments of society (March & Olsen 1984; Pierson & Skocpol 2002; Orren & Skowronek 2004).

An important division in the study of political economy revolves around the level of institutional analysis. The first level of analysis is the global or international level, which

involves the study of *international* institutions that govern global political-economic behavior (Frieden 2017). The second level is the domestic level of analysis, which analyzes the *internal* institutions that govern domestic political-economic behavior within a country. A focus on these two levels of analysis has led to the development of two major subfields in political economy: International Political Economy (IPE) and Comparative Political Economy (CPE). Menz (2017) frames this distinction as being about understanding the outcomes of institutional arrangements as either top-down (IPE) or bottom-up (CPE). However, Menz notes that there is a consistent blurring of the lines exists between the two subfields, and that this ‘interchange and interaction in the domestic-international nexus’ (p. 47) has become more pronounced as state governments have forcibly liberalized their economic systems to participate in global trade. This liberalization has led Oatley (2019) to describe IPE as the ‘political battle between the winners and the losers of global economic exchange...[that] shapes the economic policies government adopt’ (pp. 25–26).

Similarly, the study of political institutions has also led academics to develop several approaches to understand how institutions are created, rationalized, and maintained. For example, rational-choice institutionalism involves the study of rules and incentives as a system, which system is forever negotiated by political actors. From this viewpoint, institutions are products of agreements that under pareto-optimal conditions could distribute goods in an equitable manner, where one party is made better but no parties are made worse-off (Rhodes 2008). However, rarely are such conditions optimal, and actors in an unequal relationship often struggle to roll back the hegemony of rules and incentives that have been institutionalized (Zey 1998).

Historical institutionalism, on the other hand, focuses on the concept of path dependency—a methodological inquiry that investigates ‘historical sequences in which contingent events set in motion institutional patterns or event chains that have deterministic properties’ (Mahoney 2000: 57). Institutions do not just spontaneously appear (David 1994); rather, they are often the codification of preexisting socially established ‘conventions’ or social norms for negotiating within a society. Because there are high costs associated with the formalization of social norms and the transaction costs required for reforming institutions can be expensive, changes in institutions are uncommon. Rhodes (2008) referred to institutions as ‘dried cement’ where ‘cement can be uprooted when it has dried, but the effort to do so is substantial’ (xv). As such, the actions and decisions made by institutional leaders can be fairly predictable, helping to explain why institutions are long-lasting. It is only when actions and decisions by institutional leaders or negotiations between institutions go against the norm that radical change takes place.

Path dependency and its accompanying methodology of process-tracing—‘an analytic tool for drawing descriptive and causal inferences from diagnostic pieces of evidence—often understood as part of a temporal sequence of events or phenomena’ (Collier 2011: 823)—have become part of the methodological foundation for political economy, especially in the smaller field of comparative political economy. While often used in case study work, path dependency as a method is also quite useful in conjunction with explanatory typologies. For example, Hall and Soskice (2001) employ path dependency as a part of their Varieties of Capitalism (VoC) theory, which attempts to understand the similarities and differences of institutions within two types of capitalism found in developed economies: liberal market economies (LMEs) and coordinated market economies (CMEs; also referred to as corporatist economies). LMEs are found in countries where firms depend more heavily on market mechanisms to solve coordination problems,<sup>1</sup> whereas CMEs are found in countries where firms rely more on strategic cooperation between important industry-specific constituencies.<sup>2</sup>

## The political economy of religious tourism

There is significant literature on the political economy of tourism development (Bianchi 2002; Kütting 2010; Bramwell 2011; Mosedale 2011, 2016; Nunkoo & Smith 2013; Müller 2019; Bianchi & de Man 2021). In his seminal work *Tourism and Politics*, Hall (1994) noted that there was already over 30 years of work on the political economy of tourism development from which he could draw upon. Focusing on the role of the state or the domestic level of analysis, Hall provided context regarding how tourism became both an economic sector and a driver of industrialization policies for many countries, stating that ‘there is almost universal acceptance by governments around the world, regardless of ideology, that tourism is a good thing’ (p. 28). Hall also notes that it is through national tourism organizations that developing countries have adopted policies that aggressively promoted tourism as a development tool.

In their edited volume *Tourism and Politics: Global Frameworks and Local Realities*, Burns and Novelli (2007) also discuss tourism development, but more so from a policy evaluation perspective. Suggesting that ‘tourism is a powerful mix of cultural, economic and political phenomena’ (p. 1), the book’s contributors examine how tourism development has impacted other institutions. For example, in one of the chapters, Richter (2007) notes how little democratic debate there has been regarding national tourism policies, noting that while national governments set visa requirements and formulate policies on transportation and health, there is very little participation by the public in tourism development. Mosedale’s (2011) edited volume, *Political Economy of Tourism: A Critical Perspective*, critiqued tourism development through the use of neomarxist critiques and IPE and CPE frameworks to discuss issues such as equitable distribution of power, decision-making, labor rights, class inequality of access to tourism, the gentrification of tourist destinations, and the effect on neoliberalism on industrial relations.

An analysis of the chapters in the books by Burns and Novelli (2007) and Mosedale (2011) shows that there are almost an even number of chapters dedicated to the two levels of institutional analysis noted above, where a total of 15 chapters focused on international and/or supranational actors, while another 15 of the chapters centered on the actions taken by domestic actors, usually within the context of responding to changes at a global level. Interestingly, the international chapters were more theoretical in nature, while domestic chapters were almost exclusively case studies that documented the development or traced the process of the particular case in question. Only one chapter did not fit the two levels of institutional analysis. In this chapter, the authors used a comparative political economy framework from which to understand tourism development (Webster, Ivanov & Illum 2010).

As a subfield within tourism studies, religious tourism is ripe for analysis using political-economic frameworks and methodologies, given the importance of existing religious institutions as ‘carriers of history’—representing the codification of preexisting socially established ‘conventions’ or the use of social norms for understanding the presence and practice of religion within a society. The high costs on formalizing religion in different societies, often the result of centuries-long negotiations involving frank discussions regarding secularism, religious minorities, religious education, and the management of religious destinations, helps to explain why religious institutions are long-lasting. Indeed, the transaction costs required for reforming or removing religious institutions from both the public and private sphere would be prohibitively expensive socially, economically, culturally, and morally, and any trade-offs that may be involved often make reform not worth the societal costs. As such, religious institutions persevere in a way that might be best understood through the path development approach often used in political economy.

However, even though there is a small but growing literature on the political economy of *religious* tourism, with a heavy focus, as will be shown below, on the interactions between institutions that support pilgrimage activities and on how governments use tourism policies to impact the management of pilgrimage sites and routes, these authors do not couch their work in the political economy literature or approach religious tourism from a distinctly political economy perspective. For example, so far nothing has been published on applying IPE or CPE approaches or using political economy types to understand the relations between the state and the market and their effect on religious tourism destination sites. Given this, it may be better to understand this body of work as *religious tourism policy studies*.

A good example is the discussion by Trono (2015), who discusses how state and private enterprises, in conjunction with religious bodies functioning as corporate entities, can lead to better management of religious tourism through an analysis of tourism development around the new Church of Padre Pio in San Giovanni Rotondo in Italy. Her work is indicative of newer research that seeks to examine and better understand the relationships between state institutions, market actors, and religious authorities. Another good example is Shinde's (2018, 2020) examination of examples in India of institutional vacuums that exist regarding the impacts of religious tourism. Shinde notes that during the transition of a destination from a pilgrimage site to a religious tourism site, there is a lack of both foresight and cooperation between religious and governmental institutions in terms of who is to take care of the social and environmental impacts of pilgrimage and religious tourism. This is particularly acute in places where there is already a lack of sufficient sanitation and waste management systems and accommodations. In these cases, government officials are ill-equipped to handle the demands of religious tourists on top of the demands of pilgrims, with religious organizations are not interested in doing the job of government.

These two case studies illustrate the difference between religious tourism management and religious tourism policy studies. In religious tourism management, the variable of analysis is the pilgrim or religious tourist. The focus in religious tourism management is often on the motivations of the traveler, whether the traveler should be defined as a pilgrim or a secular tourist, and what this designation means for the religious destination and/or sacred site. Nolan and Nolan (1993) were one of the first to discuss the types of visitors who visit Christian shrines in Europe, explaining how these shrines have evolved in their management practices to meet the needs of these visitors. Other scholars have continued this tradition (Winter & Gasson 1996; Shackley 2001a, 2001b, 2003; Rössler 2003; Woodward 2004; Olsen 2006; Raj & Griffin 2015; Griffiths & Wiltshier 2019). This research, however, tends to take both the presence and the actions of institutions as a priori or self-evident and also focus on understanding the relationship between visitors and religious institutions from a phenomenological perspective.

More recently, there has been a focus on religious tourism policy studies where the variable of analysis is the institutional actions that support pilgrimage activities. For example, Reader (2014) refers to a 'pilgrimage market' where efforts are made by different religious, state, and economic actors to publicize pilgrimages and religious tourism destinations in order to increase the number of visitors. As Reader notes, 'pilgrimages cannot rely on a continual flow of pilgrims and that those who oversee them need to engage in publicity activities in order to ensure that their sites continue to attract pilgrims and flourish' (p. 6). This highlights the fact that it is difficult to separate out the profane or secular from the sacred; that attempts to study pilgrimage and religious journeys set apart from 'normative everyday routines and the mundane world' (p. 14) are fraught with limitations. The dynamics of the economic marketplace are essential to pilgrimage activities, as are the roles of the

state (e.g., responding to local, national, and/or international tourism industry pressures), marketplace actors (e.g., local merchants, tourism agencies, or transportation companies), and religious authorities (e.g., priests seeking to promote their religious agendas or managers opening their sacred sites for visitors). Reader argues that these forces of consumption and commodification of religious destination sites should not be considered as caustic to religion, but instead as important for the maintenance and possibly survival of pilgrimage sites.

A more comprehensive approach to religious tourism policy studies is the edited volume by Coleman and Eade (2018) entitled *Pilgrimage and Political Economy: Translation of the Sacred*. This edited volume focused on examining political economy approaches in the context of ‘pilgrimage studies’. Albera (2018: 174) suggested that there are two different approaches in pilgrimage studies: the study of culture or society *through* the lens of pilgrimage and the study *of* pilgrimage to construct theories of pilgrimage. The chapters in Coleman and Eade’s (2018) book are mostly orientated on the study *of* pilgrimage, with several case studies focusing on different aspects of pilgrimage in different faith traditions, such as Hindu pilgrimages in Mauritius, the promotion of Buddhist pilgrimages to Japanese tourists, a description of pilgrimages to shrines of popular Islam in Uzbekistan, and New Age Energy pilgrims visiting Catholic shrines. Each chapter incorporates a discussion of the existing relations between institutions regarding how resources are allocated to pilgrimage sites and how these same pilgrimage sites are resources themselves for state and other political entities.

Two of the chapters in Coleman and Eade’s volume in particular are excellent examples of the dynamic relationships that exist between political, economic, and religious actors. Delage (2018), for example, analyzes the role that South Asian Sufi saints have in the development of economic activities. Delage describes in detail how local institutions organize and promote the religious fairs associated with the tombs of Sufi saints, facilitate trade between tribes, and determine how resources are distributed in the local context. Katić (2018) uses the term ‘pilgrimage capital’ to explain how different civil society associations, through interactions with political and economic actors, use social, economic, and political resources for their own particular benefits. Using post-war Bosnia i Hercegovina as the case study, Katić contends that it took strong institutional energies to promote pilgrimage sites in Bosnia to the displaced Bosnian Croat communities living in Croatia proper, noting how these efforts have paid off for Croatian politicians who have benefited tremendously from the political capital generated from the reconstruction of Catholic Churches and the construction of new shrines in the Croat parts of Hercegovina.

### **Applying comparative political economy to religious tourism**

To date, there has been no attempt to apply CPE frameworks to religious tourism. Similarly, little has been written regarding CPE frameworks in the political economy of tourism, with Webster et al.’s (2010) as the only work that hypothesizes that political economy types (referred to as paradigms by the authors) are correlated with the relative weakness and/or strength of national tourism organizations (NTOs). In doing so, Webster et al. appropriate O’Neil’s (2018) framework of comparative political economy paradigms, using his typology of liberalism, social democracy, communism, and mercantilism and show that the liberalist political economies are associated with weak NTOs, whereas social democracy political economies are associated with stronger NTOs. As well, the literature review above highlights some of the deficiencies that still exist in the application of political economy theories and frameworks to religious tourism. The focus on pilgrimages at the expense of religious tourism, case study work on sacred sites and destinations, and the lack of frameworks to



understand cross-national patterns, leave opportunities for scholars to incorporate political economy concepts into religious tourism studies. Coleman and Eade (2018: 16) are correct in their claim that pilgrimage perspectives should be broadened and that the complex economic and political relations between actors should be better understood. Indeed, the relationships between economic, political, and religious actors are best understood through institutional analyses, such as the frameworks developed by comparative political economists.

Here I create a model to demonstrate how political-economic and political-religious institutions are related to each other. To understand political-economic institutions, I follow the VoC approach noted above, which has become quite popular in Comparative Political Economy (CPE) circles, with no fewer than a dozen books have been published since Hall and Soskice's (2001) work on the VoC approach (Amable 2003; Schmidt 2009; Becker 2014). However, rather than using Hall and Soskice's (2001) work where the firm is at the center of analysis, I use Amable's (2003) broader work on five models of capitalism that roughly group into particular world regions: Market (LME); Social Democratic (CME), which encompasses the Nordic countries; Asia (Meso-Communitarian); Mediterranean; and Continental European (see Table 3.1). This is because in Amable's work firm behavior is less rational and conditioned by the institutions that surround them. Also, Amable's analysis of political economy ideal-types examines five fundamental institutional areas which are also important to consider: product-market competition; wage-labor nexus and labor-market institutions; the financial intermediation sector and corporate governance; social protection and the welfare state; and the education sector. In particular, Amable's descriptions of product-market competition are important, as religious tourism is often described as a process of consumption (Aulet & Vidal 2018). I also only use the 21 OECD countries that Amable included in his initial analysis. This is because, as Menz (2017) argues, there are enormous cultural differences and divergent historical trajectories between these countries and other OECD member countries, and as such any comparison between all the countries would become unwieldy and analytically flawed. As such, it is easier to provide in-depth coverage of a smaller selection of countries that in many ways are representative cases of larger clusters of countries in this model.<sup>3</sup>

*Table 3.1* Models of capitalism: product market regulation indicators

Market (LME)	Deregulated product markets. Low barriers to entrepreneurship; low administrative regulation; low state control and public ownership. (USA, UK, Canada, and Australia)
Social Democratic (CME)	Regulated product markets. Coordination between the state, firms, and unions. (Denmark, Finland, Sweden)
Asia (Meso-Communitarian)	'Governed' rather than regulated product-market competition. State-firm coordination is the norm for product-markets. (Japan and South Korea)
Mediterranean	Regulated product markets. Administrative burdens for corporations; barriers to entrepreneurship; strong public sector. (Greece, Italy, Portugal, and Spain)
Continental European	Competitive to mildly regulated markets. Some markets are more heavily regulated. (Switzerland, Netherlands, Ireland, Belgium, Norway, Germany, France, and Austria)

After Amable 2003.

In terms of including political-religious institutions into this model, I focus on the political-religious arrangements that exist within countries. A simple way to identify these arrangements is through models of Church-State relations. For example, Riedel (2008) identifies four possible models of church-state relations. The first model is the established state church, in which she includes countries such as Greece, whose Constitution references a ‘predominant church’. The second is the cooperationist model, where the state works with traditional religious institutions and may provide support, such as in collecting a ‘church tax’. Reidel’s third and fourth models are variants of laicism or secularism. The first variant is authoritarian laïcité, where a strict interpretation on the separation of the state and the church is understood. The government is prohibited from recognizing or subsidizing any religion. Often laic (secular) governments are accused of promoting secularism at the expense of religion, with the bulk of criticism coming from religious minorities feeling pressure to not practice their faith (Riedel 2008). The second variant is modern secular or neutral laïcité. This variant centers on state neutrality in religious affairs and is characterized by the absence of state influence within religious institutions, neither promoting nor demoting religious practice.

In addition to these four models of church-state relations, I add one additional model which, while listed under Riedel’s cooperationalist variant, needs its own category: the Concordat model of church-state relations. The Concordat is a contract between the Vatican (Holy See) and other countries regarding the governance of religious affairs, institutions, and in some cases religious destinations within those countries. In essence, the Concordat replaces the Catholic Church as the legal established church in the constitution, ostensibly separating church from state. In practice, countries or provinces/states that have a Concordat are often majority Catholic, and the Concordats carry much weight legally and can act as if they are the established church. As such, the Concordat category needs to be separated from the cooperational category, as the actions of the Catholic Church within these countries are less cooperational and more obligations under international law (Table 3.2).

Table 3.2 Models of church-state relations

Concordat	Agreement between the Holy See of the Catholic Church and a sovereign state on religious matters. Legally, it is an international treaty. (Italy, Portugal, Spain, Bavaria <sup>4</sup> )
Established State Church	Gives the church an official status & is part of the state structures. (Denmark, Finland, Norway, Iceland and England <sup>5</sup> )
State-Provided Support (Cooperationist)	Official separation of church and state, however, state support for the church exists. Also includes countries with a ‘church tax’. (Greece, Germany (excluding Bavaria), Austria, Sweden, <sup>6</sup> Japan)
Liberal Neutrality (Secular Laïcité)	Government is absent from religion and vice versa. None to little relations exist at all between the state and religion. Free exercise of religion and no establishment of religion. (the USA, rest of the UK, Canada, <sup>7</sup> Ireland, <sup>8</sup> Australia, the Netherlands, South Korea, and Switzerland <sup>9</sup> )
Laïcité (Authoritarian)	No religion is to receive any legal establishment, state must be neutral in religious matters, and churches are part of the private sector and may not receive any state funding. Principle of secularism in public spheres is to be respected as well, though the degree varies by country and era. (France, Belgium, Quebec)

The mapping of Amable’s political economy types onto models of church–state relations reveals several clusters (see Table 3.3). First, there appears to be a tighter link between market-based political economies and countries that have adopted a policy of liberal neutrality. In liberal market political economies, firms experience deregulated product markets with low barriers to entrepreneurship, low administrative regulation, low state control, and low levels of public ownership. In this system, religious institutions are also often non-hierarchical and are often characterized as firms in a market. Using neoclassical economic theory, Iannaccone (1998) highlights how religious leaders are quite entrepreneurial in a deregulated market, especially in the creation of new religious dominations and sects, or in some cases new religions altogether. His research helps explain why the liberal market political economies, such as the United States, are more religiously diverse and why rates of religiosity might be higher. The exception appears to England, where Anglicanism is the state church operating in a liberal market political economy. However, in the case of the Church of England, one can make an argument that the religious climate is more similar to that of the United States.

A second cluster appears in those countries with Mediterranean political-economic systems that have a Concordat with the Vatican. As mentioned in Table 3.1, these countries experience regulated product markets with administrative burdens for corporations, barriers to entrepreneurship, and a strong public sector. As Concordats are legally binding documents regarding management of religious institutions, this makes sense for countries with strong Catholic traditions. A third cluster involves Continental European political economies with countries that use a liberal neutral model of church–state relations. As Amable (2003) notes, these countries experience competitive to mildly regulated markets. Interestingly, these countries exhibit features of a liberal market and have instituted a wide range of neoliberalization reforms. An argument could be made that liberal market reforms have possibly influenced church–state relations, especially in Ireland where voters have sought to decrease the influence of the Catholic Church in societal affairs.

A final cluster involves the strongly secular countries of France and Belgium and the Canadian province of Quebec. Amable’s description of a competitive to mildly regulated market is evident in the management of religious institutions in France. The 1905 law of *Laïcité*, which led to a strong separation of church and state institutions in French society, led to several developments. On the one hand, the state privatized the ownership of local churches

Table 3.3 Mapping models of political economies and models of church–state relations

	<i>Market</i>	<i>Social Democratic</i>	<i>Asia</i>	<i>Mediterranean</i>	<i>Continental European</i>
Established State Church	England	Denmark, Finland			Norway
Concordat				Italy, Portugal, Spain	Bavaria
State-Provided Support		Sweden	Japan	Greece	Germany, Austria
Liberal Neutrality	USA, Canada, Australia, rest of UK		South Korea		Switzerland, Netherlands, Ireland, Belgium, France, Quebec
<i>Laïcité</i>					

to local parishes. Unfortunately, over time the lack of state support of local churches has led to the deterioration of some church buildings, forcing some Catholic dioceses to close entire parishes. On the other hand, cathedrals are still state-owned, with these cathedrals, which are often grandiose, being major tourist destination sites in France. This leads to a peculiar situation where the state regulates the use of these cathedrals as cultural heritage sites. This often leads the resident priest to ask local authorities for permission to conduct liturgical practices (Bernard 2019).

What does the above discussion mean for pilgrimage and religious tourism? The clustering of countries in Table 3.3 highlights how closely tied institutions are within particular OCED countries. Those countries with liberal market political economies tend to adopt liberal neutral models of church-state relations and allow the market to serve as the mechanism for solving problems between political, economic, and religious institutions. This is true for religious tourist destinations as well. In liberal market economies, the government permits religious organizations to manage their own sacred sites with little to no government regulation unless it is related to the medicalization of religious sites and mass gatherings (Olsen 2020). If anything, religious tourist destination sites often reach out to local authorities for help and guidance (Tilson 2001, 2005).

This can be contrasted with countries that have continental political economies as well as liberal neutral models of church-state relations. In these countries, such as Switzerland, The Netherlands, and Ireland, there exists competitive to mildly regulated markets where the government intervenes at times in the religious market but only in support of local efforts. This is illustrated well in the case of *Faillte (Welcome) Ireland*, where the national tourism development authority commissioned a report to establish an integrated strategy to position the West and Northwest regions of Ireland for increased religious and spiritual tourism (McGettigan, Griffin & Candon 2011). In the United States, local religious organizations generally have to reach out to the governing authorities and major economic actors to engage in joint stakeholder projects. As such, even with the same model of church-state relations, the differences in the political-economy structures can help us better understand how institutions can guide behavior.

This is not the case with the Mediterranean political economies that have a Concordat with the Vatican. Religious tourist destinations are an important part of the cultural heritage of any country, but particularly so with Roman Catholic heritage that is millennia old. As Beltramo (2015: 89) notes in a study of hospitality among pilgrimage routes,

The reflection on the meaning and ways of receiving the faithful in sacred places, such as sanctuaries, convents, monasteries and churches, is part of the pastoral care in religious tourism, in regard to which the importance of the relationship between the [Catholic] Church and contemporary society has recently been reaffirmed.

Indeed, the Catholic Church plays a critical role in the management of sacred sites, and private groups that desire to profit from these destinations need to partner or accede to the demands made by the local religious elites. Thus, religious tourist destinations are a regulated product market, where the concordat, not state laws, govern religious tourism development (see Trono 2015).

A final cluster to consider is the Continental European political economies of Belgium, France, and the Canadian province of Quebec. Again, these countries have also adopted policies of *laïcité*, where a separation of church and state is the legal norm and the state does not interfere with religious affairs. In Belgium, the *laïcité* policy is referred to as the

Neutrality of the State, defined by Velaers and Foblets (2015) as ‘The neutrality of the State and of the public authorities implies that the State itself has no particular religion or belief, and does not pass judgment on the religions or beliefs held by its citizens’ (p. 101). However, non-interference can mean a number of things, and does not necessarily mean a sense of a-religiousness, or a strict rigid sense of secularism, nor does it mean hostility. Rather, this non-intervention can range from the relegation of religious observance to the private sphere in France to actual state assistance to recognized religions in Belgium (Chelini-Pont & Ferchiche 2015; Velaers and Foblets 2015).

Even with their official policies of *laïcité*, Belgium, France, and Quebec recognize the value of religious institutions, particularly regarding their cultural and historical significance. Often, local governments will work with important religious tourist destination sites, such as the Lourdes in France, to help manage tourist flows and build up tourist infrastructure (Kaufmann 2005). This is also the case in Quebec, where Catholicism is closely tied to French heritage and what sets them apart from the rest of Canada (Tourisme Montreal 2010). Clearly, there is a recognition of the economic impact that religious tourism can have, even in *laïcité* countries. Still, any help from the state is often seen strictly as a cultural or economic contribution and *not* privileging one religion over another.

### **Future research regarding the political economy of religious tourism**

Table 3.3 shows the promise of using institutional frameworks to better understand the institutional arrangements and relationships within countries. These clusters provide evidence that correlations exist between political economy types and models of church-state relations—that there is a nexus not only between political governance and economic relations but also with religious institutions. While some scholars might contend that these arrangements have always been studied in disciplines such as religious studies, sociology, and economics, the trend in the literature of religious tourism and pilgrimage has been to ignore the role of the institution. To paraphrase Shinde (2018), an ‘institutional vacuum’ has developed in this scholarship, something that this chapter has attempted to rectify.

As noted in the introduction to this chapter, every country, regardless of its political-economic system, has had to accommodate the pressures of globalization, particularly regarding neoliberal policies adopted at the state level. Pressures by the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, and the World Trade Organization (often referred to as the Washington Consensus) have forced countries to open domestic markets and allow foreign entities to do business within a country. This move toward neoliberalization has also clearly impacted the tourism marketplace and by extension the religious marketplace as well. The effect of privatization regarding capital and production on sacred sites has been profound. In addition, the retreat of the state in the hotel and transportation industries and the weakening of labor and employment rights has led to a new understanding of how to best manage them (Bähre 2007). This is especially more acute during periods of political instability, where the state may have to step in and coordinate efforts in the nest interests of society. This could have an effect in religious tourism, where the state has a vested role in maintaining access to the site.

Understanding these changes to the religious marketplace from an institutional perspective is important, considering how strongly correlated political, economic, and religious institutions are within a country. For example, Dreher (2020) writes how the neoliberalization reforms promoted by right-wing parties went hand-in-hand with a concomitant rise in religiosity. Both movements fought against secular elites who often employed statist policies to promote religious equality in society. This global intertwining of religious conservatives

and economic elites can be seen with evangelical Christians in the Republican Party in the United States, in the Hindutva movement in the Bharatiya Janata Party in India, and with Islamists within the Justice and Development Party in Turkey. How neoliberalization can be used to advance the cause of religious movements, and how that shapes religious institutions within a country, will have important consequences for religious tourist destinations.

In the future, the application of political-economic theories and frameworks to religious and spiritual tourism will lead to more research in religious tourism. Neoinstitutionalism is rich in theory. Varieties of institutionalisms have the potential to help scholars. So long as churches, individuals, and businesses find value in institutions, better theory is needed to explain stakeholder actions. The obligations of upholding the norms and values of an institution is what justifies an actor's place within the institution. This then reinforces rules of appropriate behavior and can justify the norms that undergird the institutions themselves. The key mechanism in institutionalism theory will be in understanding how institutions connect micro-level behavior of actors within the institution, with the macro-level constraints that are determined by the institution. Doing so will provide more theoretical context to a growing and quite relevant industry.

### Notes

- 1 Hall and Soskice (2001) list the United States, the UK, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and Ireland as LME countries.
- 2 Hall and Soskice (2001) list Germany, Japan, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Belgium, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Finland, and Austria as CME countries.
- 3 Becker's (2014) work on the BRICs would disagree with Menz's work. He argues that change in institutions can be measured and should eventually be expanded to include non-OECD countries.
- 4 The majority Catholic German state of Bavaria has a Concordat with the Vatican, separate from the rest of the Republic of Germany.
- 5 Church of England is the established church in England, but not in the rest of the UK (Riedel, 2008).
- 6 The Church of Sweden was the established state church until 2000. Since then, the Swedish government provides support, mostly through the collection of fees, previously referred to as the "church tax" (Riedel, 2008).
- 7 Excludes the province of Quebec, where the policy of *Laïcité* is predominant.
- 8 Until recently, one could make the argument that the Republic of Ireland provided state support the Catholic church and pro-Catholic policies. The recent push for secularization in Irish society pushes it closer to the Liberal Neutrality model.
- 9 In theory, Switzerland maintains a policy of Liberal Neutrality. However, there is variance among the cantons and occasionally religious institutions can develop a special relationship within a canton.

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