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Religions in International Political Economy

Sabine Dreher

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Sabine Dreher

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Sabine Dreher
International Studies
York University Glendon Campus
Toronto, ON, Canada

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Preface

This book is the result of my bewilderment when a student came up to me during an exam in Nicosia at Near Eastern University in 2003 in the not widely recognized Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus to tell me that he could not answer my exam question. I had asked if Cola Turka is an expression of national opposition against globalization. A heavily broadcast advertisement for Cola Turka that year showed a character being transformed from a white urban Turk into a "real Turk" by drinking Cola Turka who now likes arabesque music. The student explained that Cola Turka was produced by Islamic capitalists and is equally an expression of globalization, so my question did not make sense. I had just defended my dissertation and was open for a new topic. One of the interesting insights coming out of this inquiry concerned the politics of food production and consumption in Turkey where there were then separate products and shops for the pious (or black) Turks that bought Cola Turka (or Ülker products), and the secular (or white) Turks that bought Coca Cola (or Eti products). Religious affiliation also influenced career trajectories: Erdogan worked for Cola Turka at some point whereas a prominent secular politician was employed by Coca Cola. The most consequential insight was the realization that the attack on the "secular Republic" by the Islamists was a sort of "trope" that hid a power struggle among elites over access to state resources and was only indirectly concerned with secularism or Islamism. The reverse is true as well, the defense of secularism was a defense of specific patronage networks.

This question set me onto a path of trying to understand "Islamic capitalism" and "secularism." It then morphed into an investigation on how to make sense of the religious resurgence that scholars had observed worldwide and of which the Turkish case was only one example. The key problem was how to deal with the politics of the religious resurgence where adherents often dismissed criticism as assertive secularism or as anti-religious and thus made themselves immune to critical political analysis. Likewise, there was and still is a tendency to pretend religious traditions are all about peace and cooperation. The discovery of the critical theory of religion by Timothy Fitzgerald and his criticism of world religion and the cultural studies approach in religious studies such as exemplified by Diana Moore opened my eyes that there is a way beyond the simple dichotomy of good versus bad religion, and that it is possible to be critical of both the religious adherents and their secular counterparts if the criticism is framed in a specific context. For example, with regard to democracy, both fundamentalism and repressive secularism create problems for the freedom of expression and need to be carefully evaluated. A religious activist may be either promoting neoliberal globalization or actively working toward a heaven on earth where there are no homeless people and no hunger. Cultural studies, the critical theory of religion, the neo-Gramscian perspective, or interpretivism were eye-opening in terms of how they can be a useful tool for the study of religion and this book is "empirical research" to the extent that I have shown the usefulness of such an approach to the study of religions in International Political Economy.

The conclusion I have reached is that each religious tradition contains within itself the same divisions that can be found in secular politics when they enter the public sphere and that there is, as Gramsci put it, a religion for the poor, the rich, the intellectuals, and for women. Religious thought is a reflection of class positions (in a wider sense). The more depressing insight was that the reason for the prominence of reactionary or right-wing fundamentalist religious expressions within the religious resurgence lies in the fact that they are part and parcel of the neoliberal revolution itself that dismantled the biggest victory of progressive politics—states geared at least somewhat toward moderating the inherent tendencies toward extreme inequality and instability within capitalism even while demonstrating many short-comings.

Toronto, Canada Sabine Dreher
December 2019

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My Religious Activism and Global Economy discussion group—especially Jay Smith, Elizabeth Smythe, Aikande Kwayu, and Ed Webb—was very helpful in clarifying many of the issues raised here when we organized our ISA panels. Specifically, Jay was crucial for organizing the edited volume (Religious Activism in the Global Economy) on which this book is built. My Islam and Neoliberal Capitalism group, especially Lena Rethel, Ed Webb, and Travis Selmier but also Özlem Madi-Sisman and Omer Awass, likewise have dispelled many myths and misunderstandings about how to conceptualize Islam, capitalism, and their relationship. Feyzi Baban and Kim Rygiel: thanks for many conversations about Turkey, the crisis of the university, and cosmopolitanism. I am deeply grateful to Cecelia Lynch for her support over the past years but especially for insightful discussions regarding constructivism and interpretivism. Radhika Desai and Alan Freeman have developed their own fantastic Geopolitical Economy group in Manitoba and are excellent conference organizers. Side discussions about religion with Jayant Lele during the revolutions conference were extremely important. Beate Jahn has consistently kept me up to date with IR theory discussions. Maryam Khan was vital in guiding me toward progressive Muslims and their interpretation of the LGBTQ+ community. To Rowan I owe many insights regarding the LGBTQ+ community more generally. Thomas Faist and his research team in Bielefeld were crucial in the summer of 2018 for the discussions around transnational social spaces. While in Bielefeld Levent Teczen explained his idea of "administered religion" to me and Mustafa Sen highlighted that the story of suppression as told by the various Islamic movements in Turkey overlooks the manifold ways how religious practice was made possible in the supposedly secular Republic. Thanks to Hakan Yavuz and Bayram Balci for the invitation to the workshop on the Gülen movement, and to Joshua Hendrick and Kristina Dohrn for insightful discussions during the workshop. Justin Rosenberg's and Milja Kurki's workshop on "Multiplicity in International Relations" re-ignited my interest in disciplinary questions. Elisabeth Abergel was crucial in

terms of intellectual development when she asked me to teach Religion and International Relations as a course in 2011 based on my research on religious civil society movements in Turkey. That was a summer full of revelations since until then I had not really considered the larger disciplinary context. I still think I have only scratched the surface with this book, and I am very appreciative for the invitation from Timothy Shaw, the editor of the IPE series, to write it. Most of the problems in the book are the result of my precarious situation that limits thinking and research time while much of the positive aspects are due to help and support. I am deeply grateful to all those who helped, directly or indirectly.

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

AGAPE	Alternative Globalization Addressing People and Earth
AKP	Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi (Justice and Development Party, Turkey)
AWID	Association for Women's Rights in Development
BDS	Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions
BJP	Bharatiya Janata Party (India)
BRICS	Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa
CADTM	Committee for the Abolition of Debt
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency (United States)
EU	European Union
FARC	Armed Revolutionary Forces of Columbia
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GFC	Great Financial Crisis
GPE	Global Political Economy
HIPC	Highly Indebted Poor Countries Initiative
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IPE	International Political Economy
IR	International Relations
ISI	Import Substitution Industrialization
ISIS	Islamic State in Iraq and Syria
LGBTQ+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer +
NAFTA	North American Free Trade Agreement
NAM	National Association of Manufacturers (United States)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization

NIEO	New International Economic Order
OPEC	Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries
TNC	Transnational Corporation
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WCC	World Council of Churches
WLP	Women's Learning Partnership for Rights, Development, and Peace
WLUML	Women Living under Muslim Laws
WSF	World Social Forum
WTO	World Trade Organization

CHAPTER 1

The Religious Resurgence and International Political Economy

Since the 1980s, International Political Economy (IPE) as a discipline was preoccupied with how international economic organizations—such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, the World Trade Organization (WTO), and the OECD—facilitated and imposed an ambitious project of creating a global economy in which states would be mere locations for global commodity chains, and be at the mercy of institutional investors who are able to transfer money across borders instantaneously, destabilizing whole societies (Gélinas 2000). The organizations referred to the process as "globalization" and as a reflection of traditional free trade theories and promised that the proposed policies such as deregulation, liberalization, austerity, tax cuts, privatization, and capital mobility would solve the debt crisis and economic stagnation (Paquin 2008). Given that the main goal of these policies has been to shift power from the public to the private, the neo-Gramscian perspective used the term "project" to describe neoliberal globalization (Carrol 2007, p. 36; Gill 1994; Gélinas 2000; Overbeek 2004). That there was a coherent and interrelated set of policies has now been recognized even by IMF economists (Ostry et al. 2016). The key goal of this project was to reduce state intervention in markets and to encourage deep integration into the larger global economy based on existing economic specialization (Rodrik 2011). While earlier, states were encouraged to improve their standing in the global division of labor through more protectionist industrial and welfare

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policies, now these were denounced as inefficient and responsible for stagflation and debt. As neoliberal globalization was resisted by a whole array of counter-hegemonic movements but also took hold in countries at different times (Carroll 2007; Munck 2006), the project shifted in scope and ambition. All of which explains the unevenness of its application and the different national trajectories.

The main story of this ground-breaking book is that the neoliberal globalization project was not only facilitated or supported by economic but also by religious actors while other religious actors resisted or at least sought to mitigate some of the more egregious effects of neoliberal globalization. The crucial and important insight of the book is that it shows how religious activists are a constitutive part of neoliberal globalization but also of its contestation. While most religious studies researchers analyze how neoliberalism has changed religion (see for example Martikainen and Gauthier 2016) the novel proposition of this book is that religious activists were central to the very creation of neoliberal globalization, especially in the United States. A further major argument is that a large majority of religious activism is actually geared toward the direct or indirect support of a market economy. Following a cultural studies perspective from religious studies, an interpretivist and neo-Gramscian approach from IPE, "Religions in a global economy" proposes the disaggregation of religious traditions into reactionary fundamentalist vs reformist and progressive religious activism as a starting point for the study of religions in IPE. This perspective was crucial for the research in this book in that it allowed me to highlight how religious activists align with the political force field of their respective societies, and their global and national context when they enter politics and make claims based on specific interpretations of their own religious tradition.

After forty years of neoliberal globalization, we need to distinguish different periods (Davies 2016, p. 124ff). There was an initial preparatory stage between 1971 and 1989, when the project was pushed onto societies by the Thatcher and Reagan governments, and through structural adjustment policies in the Global South due to the debt crisis often after military coups. The second period was the globalization and full-scale application of neoliberalism after the end of the Cold War (1989). This period culminated with China's entry into the World Trade Organization in 2001. In this period, a more "progressive" neoliberalism under Clinton and Blair emerged which was more focused on creating global governance mechanisms to manage globalization (Fraser 2016) but the new

constitutionalism according to Gill (1995) still implemented a disciplinary form of neoliberalism even under this more "progressive" version. The International Monetary Fund, World Bank, and the World Trade Organization (created in 1995) were all focused on implementing different aspects of the neoliberal agenda—to create equal access for goods and services and to create common standards for firms and banks in order to fashion a global marketplace (Wade 2003; Rodrik 2011). These processes generated a planetary economic system, and a limited form of political integration governing it, based not only on great powers but also on international organizations and a host of civil society organizations (McGrew 2014). In the history of state-building, this is a tremendous achievement, given that the political and economic integration of the whole world in one economic system had never before been attempted. It created a global middle class, increased economic power in Asia, and to a lesser extent in Africa and Latin America, leading to speculation about a multipolar order. The third period of neoliberal globalization started in 2008 and saw austerity now also applied to countries of the center. There was something paradoxical after the Great Financial Crisis: while the general sense was that the economic model had failed, the political responsibility was put on the states that had to bail out the banks; bail-outs that were financed by austerity programs for the general population while the bonus payments for bankers were largely left untouched; a fact commented upon critically even by conservatives (Moore 2011).

Today, the problems and contradictions involved in creating a truly global economy threaten to undermine the project in its entirety, as happened already in the 1930s. Inequality, both globally and within nations, is at levels not seen since the 1930s, when the first market-based globalization came to an end and led to the Great Depression, the Second World War and genocide (Milanovic 2016; Ruggie 1982). Financial crises have increased in number, severity, and geographical scope, with the 2008 financial crisis nearly threatening the survival of the global economy itself (Tooze 2018). Despite progress in terms of poverty reduction and other measures through the United Nations' Millennium Goals, there is now evidence of backsliding, with extreme forms of poverty increasing again. The high or even increasing number of fragile and failing states has led to an increase in migration, especially refugee migration; and there are still about 800 million starving people worldwide. In the developed world, the increase in inequality has been accompanied by wage stagnation since the 1970s and a rise in household debt, leaving many people poor despite

working full-time. Suicides among older white men and mental health problems are on the rise while life expectancy in the United States is declining—symptoms of inequality and its consequences (Wilkinson and Picket 2011). In addition, the climate emergency, the extinction crisis, and the job crisis created by the fourth industrial revolution which will also increase inequality, add several additional layers of complications (OECD 2014, p. 18). Global governance mechanisms have not developed to deal with these complex issues and at the national level, the political processes have been captured by the power elites and democratic processes are under threat (Shipman et al. 2018; Engelen et al. 2012; Moore 2011).

Since the 1980s, these dysfunctions in the global economy have led to the creation of left- and right-wing populist movements. The left populists were first to protest against global economic restructuring; their protests culminated in the creation of the World Social Forum (WSF) in 2001 in a challenge to the Davos World Economic Forum (Ayres 2004). The latter is a meeting place of the global power elite (Carroll 2007). The creation of the WSF came after a decade of realization among activists that economic globalization creates problems for all new social movements and is an obstacle to women's rights, the peace movement, the environmental movement, and the civil rights movement (Lynch 1998). These movements consequently demanded that the rules governing the economy be reformed with regard to trade, debt, investment, and the environment. Their protests led to the creation of debt forgiveness programs by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, but otherwise were largely ineffective. The 2008 financial crisis led to a revival of the progressive movement in the Occupy Wall Street protests, which pushed the idea of a wealth tax onto the larger agenda. In addition, the Green New Deal may be sign of things to come. Today, even defenders of the globalization project question whether it might have gone too far (Rodrik 2011; Soros 1997). Economists from the IMF have admitted that neoliberal policies contributed to financial instability and increasing inequality, which lowered growth (Ostry et al. 2016). Fractions of the ruling elite are now openly criticizing capitalism (Chapter 9). According to the latest power elite research, this means that one precondition for system transformation—intra-elite struggle—is now in place (Shipman et al. 2018).

However, for the moment, the main momentum of the protest against globalization has now moved toward right-wing populists and the far

right often funded by wealthy speculators and investors—the funding of Cambridge Analytica by Mercer's hedge fund (who also financed Breitbart) is one of the more notorious examples (Harrington 2019; Hendrikse 2018). This has led to electoral successes in the center of the global economy itself, in the form of Brexit and Trump. Even though Trump and Brexit appear on the face of it to be anti-globalization, the reality is that they are an expression of a different form of neoliberal globalization. The advantage of a globalized free market as a part of a sovereign state system has been recognized by Friedrich von Hayek, one of the core neoliberal intellectuals. He argued that a global free market makes it impossible for states to uphold welfare rights and wage and working standards or taxation because they are unable to do so at the national level due to the mobility of capital and they are also unable to agree on a global standard as each nation benefits differently from global standards. For this reason, the ideal situation is to have a sovereign state within a global free market economy as this would increase the freedom of maneuver for business (Hayek 1980, p. 258ff). From this perspective, the right-wing populist leaders in the center and in states such as Hungary, Poland, Turkey, Brazil, Russia, and India are not necessarily a threat to key aspects of economic globalization given that they mostly go against migration or may be threaten some form of trade protectionism but leave the most important aspect—financial globalization and capital mobility—in place.

The question is how to account for this staying power of neoliberal policies such as deregulation, liberalization, austerity, tax cuts, privatization, and capital mobility—all geared toward a power shift away from the public to the private? The argument is that the resurgence of religion, specifically of a fundamentalist or right-wing form of religion, is a large piece of the puzzle, so far unaccounted for in the IPE discussion. The book here is therefore ground-breaking because it sheds new light on neoliberal globalization. In the process, it disaggregates religious activism and allows a more nuanced discussion of "religion" in IPE.

Religion and Neoliberal Globalization in International Political Economy

The rise and potential fall of the neoliberal globalization project is not the only ongoing global transformation. Religious scholars and sociologists have noted the demise of one of their most cherished assumptions—the ongoing secularization of the world, and the accompanying disappearance

of religion. One of the key proponents of the secularization thesis, Peter Berger, argued in 1968 that in “the 21st century, religious believers are likely to be found only in small sects, huddled together to resist a world-wide secular culture” (cited in Stark 2015, p. 9). Berger has since recanted and is now convinced that the “assumption that we live in a secularized society is false” (Berger 1999, p. 2).

As religious scholars point out, there has been a process of religious resurgence since the 1970s with consequences for the orientation and legitimization of political and cultural activism worldwide (Riesebrodt 2014; Eisenstadt 1999; Berger 1999). One very blunt indicator of this process is that the number of people indicating some type of religious practice increased from 73 to 79% between the late 1980s and the year 2000, according to Toft et al. (2011, p. 2). A large majority of the global population thus practices some type of religion and is increasingly outspoken about it. The Iranian Revolution in 1979, the fatwa against Salman Rushdie in the 1980s, the rise of the Mujahideen and later the Taliban in Afghanistan, evangelicalism within the Republican Party and Christian terrorism against abortion clinics in the United States, the role of Gush Emunim in Israel, the Buddhists monks against the Rohingya in Burma, Hindutva in India, the strengthening of traditionalist subcurrents within the Catholic Church and, of course, the attacks of 9/11, are some of the key examples.

Within International Relations, this has led to a new area of specialization, and a Religion and International Relations section was established within the International Studies Association in 2013 (Fitzgerald 2011; Petito and Hatzopoulos 2003; Robertson and Chirico 1985; Thomas 2005; Sandal and Fox 2013; Toft et al. 2011). This has now morphed into several different strands of research and argumentation (for an overview, see Badie and Smouts 1992; Thomas 2000; Haynes 2014). Researchers have pointed out a necessity to conceptualize a non-Western form of pluralism in International Relations. In their view, the religious resurgence represented a more authentic local practice than the secular state that had suppressed religious activists (Thomas 2005; Petito and Hatopoulos 2003). Many political conflicts and changes can be attributed to religious activists (Johnston and Sampson 1994; Juergensmeyer 2008). Philpott (2002) claimed that the terrorist attacks of 9/11 against the United States definitively ended the Westphalian state system, because they were committed by a non-state actor. Many now problematize secularization as an argument and postulate the need to conceptualize the current period

as a post-secular age (Habermas 2008; Mavelli and Petito 2012; Wilson and Steger 2013); even the founding myth of the discipline, the idea of the secular Westphalian state system (Valaskakis 2010), is now queried as a story of origin of the modern state (Kayaoglu 2010).

It is therefore surprising to discover mostly silence when trying to figure out how religious activism relates to the creation and contestation of the neoliberal globalization project from within the discipline of International Political Economy. This is all the more astonishing given that there is a long-established tradition within sociology, based on the work of Max Weber, of inquiring into the relationship between religion and capitalist development (see Chapter 4). However, within International Political Economy (IPE) there does not really exist a body of literature tying together neoliberal globalization and the question of religion, let alone a systematic reflection on how to study religion from within the discipline, with the exception of Tétreault and Denemark (2004) and Elsenhans et al. (2015). Reflecting on this is increasingly a must: 81% of evangelical Christians voted for Trump. Given the important role of the United States in the global political economy, IPE needs to understand the potential implications of this type of fundamentalism for the study of US hegemony. More and more leaders—like Modi in India, Putin in Russia, or Erdogan in Turkey—are instrumentalizing religion for their own nationalistic political projects. Furthermore, there are also religious activists involved in protests against neoliberal globalization. Meanwhile, households, who through migration and consumption determine many of the underlying structural changes of the global economy, are under pressure from fundamentalist religious activists to minimize changes in the gendered and racial power balance. As Development Studies has become more post-modern, many individuals have adopted the most pro-market stream of religion in the form of the prosperity gospel or market Islam, which are unashamedly consumerist and wealth-oriented; but the opposite, the re-creation of monastic communities, or an ecological kosher movement, can also be found. These are complemented by liberationist or progressive forms of religious activism within the World Social Forum or the Occupy movement.

Theoretically, religious activists could mobilize about 79% of the world's population (Toft et al. 2011, p. 2). Consequently, IPE needs to understand how these activists interpret and organize around neoliberal economic globalization. My book answers Bellin's (2008) call to integrate the study of religion into the central questions of the field. I

intend to show how religious activism is relevant for International Political Economy as a discipline, with a focus on the history, governance, contestation, and potential transformation of the neoliberal globalization project.

Structure and the Argument of the Book

In the contemporary moment, the study of International Political Economy should be a good way to help us understand the changing nature of the global political economy. Unfortunately, the discipline, especially in the United States, has chosen to retreat into specialized subject matters; some observers even claim that it has become boring (Cohen 2010). Still, now is an opportune time to reconsider some of the original insights that came out of IPE research, especially in its constructivist or interpretivist (Ruggie 1982; Lynch 2013) and neo-Gramscian version (Overbeek 2004; Carroll 2007: Gill 1994, 1995). These approaches conceptualized neoliberal globalization as a reversal of the Bretton Woods system of embedded liberalism (1930s–1070s). One of the key puzzles for IPE has been how to explain the emergence and then, more importantly, the staying power of the neoliberal system in the face of its manifold contradictions and negative impact in terms of inequality, financial instability, and lower GDP growth (Rodrik 2011). While the origins and development of neoliberalism have been traced back convincingly to corporate power and their interests by Colin Crouch (2011) this book opens a new and innovative avenue of inquiry by focusing on the role of religious activism in its various forms.

The structure of the book is informed by a multiplicity of perspectives. In the first instance, this means that sometimes IPE will be replaced by GPE, Global Political Economy, because from the perspectives taken by these chapters there is now a global level of analysis. Global governance processes were created to address border crossing forms of organization, mostly geared toward market creation and not market correction. Yet, states still compete in a global economy. Both levels of analysis—the interstate and the global—are therefore important. Secondly, each chapter is guided by specific theoretical perspectives or levels of analysis that will be introduced in the first part of the chapter while the second part discusses how religious activism fits in with specific reference to neoliberal globalization.

Each chapter contains two discussions: it introduces key debates and arguments within IPE as a first step and secondly discusses religious activism. The book as a whole develops an argument of how intra-elite fractions instrumentalize religion and what this means for specific areas of inquiry and in this sense, it develops an overarching story. At the same time, the book can be read on a chapter by chapter basis and with this type of reader in mind some of the information will appear as repetitive.

Chapter 2 defines the neoliberal globalization project as market creation on the one hand, and the development of a strong state on the other and presents it in its historical context. Neoliberal globalization is paradoxical from the outset: in order to have free markets one needs to limit the freedom of those who oppose deregulation, privatization, flexibilization, liberalization, and further global economic integration. At the same time, the chapter will show how religious studies present the state interventionist period as a time where secular nationalism came into its own. Integrating these two historical descriptions, the chapter will then develop a framework of analysis to understand how religious counter-elites challenged the hegemony of state interventionism by instrumentalizing religious frames. This framework of analysis is influenced by the cultural approach from religious studies (Edgell 2012), the neo-Gramscian perspective (Overbeek 2004), and interprevitism or constructivism from International Relations (Lynch 2013).

The third chapter argues that hegemonic countries provide order in the global economy and introduces hegemony as a theory of global power. Researchers in this tradition study how the United States as a global superpower uses international organizations, its cultural hegemony, and its market weight to shape the global political economy in its interests. From such a perspective, the neoliberal globalization project came to prominence because it originated in the United States and was then projected outward. The chapter shows that the religious resurgence was important in bolstering two major policy shifts: the turn toward neoliberalism itself, and the creation of "political Islam" as a global enemy and the increased use of violence to achieve foreign policy objectives with especially negative consequences for Iraq.

The key story in Chapter 4 is to show that there has been a paradoxical change. While Development Studies moved toward post-development and away from a focus on economic growth, there was an increase in market-friendly religiosity in the South with a focus on prosperity and free markets. Chapter 4 summarizes Max Weber's thesis about the origin of

capitalism and highlights how this Weber inspired research program sheds light on the development of a neoliberal form of religion. Apart from Latin America where Pentecostalism is making inroads into the hegemony of the Catholic Church, market Islam, commercial Buddhism, corporate Hinduism, and market-friendly folk religions emerged in Asia and revitalized more traditional interpretations. This "spiritual economy" acts like an industrial policy and in this way creates niches on the global or national market and may lead to some form of wealth diffusion through Islamic finance, halal food, or salvation wares bought from religious organizations (Osella and Rudnyckyj 2017, p. 2).

The diffusion of neoliberal religion is changing politics and interstate competition and is influencing global power struggles in a more multipolar world order. This chapter accepts the argument by scholars who focus more on interstate competition. Both Realists and Marxists have developed explanations of how some states are contesting the power of the United States. Chapter 5 shows that states do this increasingly by drawing on religious ideas while at the same time, and paradoxically, often implementing neoliberal reforms at home. A whole set of strongmen has developed who use religious ideas in their quest for power, including but not limited to Erdogan in Turkey, Putin in Russia, Modi in India, Orban in Hungary. This perspective argues that a US-centered view underestimates the role of other power centers, overestimates the power of the United States and, potentially, of neoliberal globalization itself (Desai 2013). This development has led some to speak of the emergence of a post-Western world order and calls have emerged to decolonize and globalize IPE in order to reflect this new global reality.

As a consequence of the diffusion of fundamentalist right-wing religious interpretations in all world religious traditions, freedom for women and all those fighting for a more complex gendered order is under severe threat. Chapter 6 makes the case for the integration of households into the core of the IPE agenda. It was households who through their aspirations for homeownership created the debt mountain that led to the financial crisis of 2008 (and that was increased through securitization). Migrant households now send more money back to the Global South than the Global North sends in public aid. Households are also under strain due to global care chains that provide vital home services in the Global North while family needs in the Global South are neglected.

Chapter 7 highlights that the current debate about the potential end of the liberal order—as for example argued by Ikenberry (2017)—is rather