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POLITICAL ISLAM AND DEMOCRATIZATION: THE OUTLOOK FOR MALDIVES' POLITICAL PROCESS

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THESIS

**POLITICAL ISLAM AND DEMOCRATIZATION:
THE OUTLOOK FOR MALDIVES' POLITICAL PROCESS**

by

Ibrahim Shan Shakir

December 2022

Thesis Advisor:	Siamak T. Naficy
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13. ABSTRACT (maximum 200 words)

Despite the widespread dominance of democracy across the globe and many countries undergoing regime transitions and modernization, the importance of political socialization in fostering a stable and legitimate democracy and reducing political violence in Islamic states remains largely unexplored.

Political Islam and democracy appear to be developing concurrently, albeit not at the same rate and often not in harmony. Without adequate and effective political socialization of democratic values in developing democracies, particularly in South Asia, the changing political landscape provides fertile ground for Islamists to shape the cultural and political narrative, to hamper democratization, and even to fuel political violence. Since 2008, the Maldives's young democracy has struggled to introduce the values and practices of modern Western democracy in a way that resonates with its traditional culture.

This thesis explores the challenges of democratizing the Maldives's political system, in which native socio-cultural and religious beliefs shape the country's identity as a Muslim society. Using regression analysis, the study also develops a model to predict how likely certain values are, if not properly socialized, to spark political violence going forward. Contextualizing politics in the Maldives, striving toward democracy, it is found that the legendary native religious, socio-cultural, and constitutional bearings in the Maldives remain the same.

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POLITICAL ISLAM AND DEMOCRATIZATION:
THE OUTLOOK FOR MALDIVES' POLITICAL PROCESS

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

**MASTER OF SCIENCE IN INFORMATION STRATEGY
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from the

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ABSTRACT

Despite the widespread dominance of democracy across the globe and many countries undergoing regime transitions and modernization, the importance of political socialization in fostering a stable and legitimate democracy and reducing political violence in Islamic states remains largely unexplored.

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This thesis explores the challenges of democratizing the Maldives's political system, in which native socio-cultural and religious beliefs shape the country's identity as a Muslim society. Using regression analysis, the study also develops a model to predict how likely certain values are, if not properly socialized, to spark political violence going forward. Contextualizing politics in the Maldives, striving toward democracy, it is found that the legendary native religious, socio-cultural, and constitutional bearings in the Maldives remain the same.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AD	Adaalath Party
AIC	Akaike Information Criterion
DRP	Dhivehi Rayithunge Party
EFSAS	European Foundation for South Asian Studies
FTFs	Foreign Terrorist Fighters
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HC	Heteroskedasticity-Consistent
IED	Improvised Explosive Device
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
IDP	Islamic Democratic Party
ISIL	Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant
JP	Jumhoori Party
MDP	Maldives Democratic Party
MDN	Maldives Democratic Network
MIA	Ministry of Islamic Affairs
MNDF	Maldives National Defence Force
OLS	Ordinary Least Square
PPM	Progress Party of Maldives
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drug and Crime
v-Dem	Varieties of Democracy
VIF	Variance Inflation Factor

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Maldives is a unique country that limits religious freedom beyond Islam, claiming that religious monopoly and unity create a peaceful and harmonious community. However, the country experienced a protracted authoritarian regime that sparked opposition, and eventually a democratic transition started in 2005. The first multi-party democratically elected president's smooth transition after 30 years of totalitarian control was applauded by Western ideologues based on Western modernity and the perceived need for internal political changes in the Maldives. The government and society had previously neglected and misinterpreted (misjudged?) the crucial role of guaranteeing adequate liberal political socialization as it modernized, and this has disrupted the country's political stability. Since 2005, the country has worked to solidify a modern democracy that conforms to the nation's increasing Westernization principles.

Recognizing how democracy has spread throughout the world, and how democratic ideals have rippled from the West to the East, the study analyzes global trends that have shaped the dominance of democracy since the third wave of democratization. A linear model is developed to analyze the effect of the age of democracy on political violence, taking into account the liberal democracy indices derived from v-Dem country-year data accumulated from 1882 to 2022. Based on the analysis from the developed model, it is possible to observe a linear decline in political violence. This study also identifies the prevalence of socio-cultural religious and political ideals that have shaped the global phenomenology of how the native religion and its inherent culture have influenced political relationships.

The democracy of the Maldives is currently still in its infancy. The government's primary objective is to secure the nation's existence in the face of weak institutions and fragmented opposition. The democratic process is contested by elite organizations, religious elites, conservatives, and long-standing social and cultural traditions. Unexpected political instability and political bloodshed are frequent. Examining the influence of local socio-cultural and religious concepts on political Islam and democracy in the Maldives, this thesis utilizes liberal democracy and political socialization

principles to explore political disputes fueled by libertarian and conservative goals that undermine stability.

"Institutionalizing and consolidating democracy takes a significant amount of time and extra discipline."[1] Despite assuring that "free and fair elections" are held on a regular basis, "democracy means more than just holding elections, since it is involved in the policy process between elections, from what should be worked on to what the policies are to how they are executed."[2] Figuring out how political institutions, such as political parties and legislatures, which are essential components of a democratic society, should function and how to shape and manage a society are significant challenges.

Unlike many democratic countries, the Maldives has no multi-ethnic or significant cultural diversity. Islam, as a pillar of national unity in the Maldives, confronts the most important spirit of nationalism and its efforts to foster national unity.

According to Ruth Braunstein, professor of sociology at the University of Connecticut, "Growing evidence links the rise in religious disaffiliation to a political backlash against the religious right."[3] This "political backlash" is still poorly understood, however, limiting our ability to assess how it has affected religion and politics. People of all ages are both optimistic and pessimistic about the country's future, suggesting a liberal attitude toward emerging social trends. Ideology divides people, societies, and nations, often disastrously. In practice, "politics" refers to the ability to influence others' social and economic behavior. This power's philosophy ranges from traditional values and the status quo to change and egalitarianism.[4] Liberals are creative,

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[1] Sangmook Lee, "An Analysis of Democratic Consolidation in South Korea" (Master's thesis 5013, Western Michigan University, 1996), iii, https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/masters_theses/5013.

[2] Lauren Frohne, "Democracy Is More Than Just Holding Elections," Open Society Foundation, April 11, 2014, https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/voices/democracy-more-just-holding-elections.

[3] Ruth Braunstein, "A Theory of Political Backlash: Assessing the Religious Right's Effects on the Religious Field," *Sociology of Religion* 83, no. 3 (November 15, 2021): 1, https://doi.org/10.1093/socrel/srab050.

[4] Mario F. Mendez, "A Neurology of the Conservative-Liberal Dimension of Political Ideology," *The Journal of Neuropsychiatry and Clinical Neurosciences* 29, no. 2 (April 2017): 1, https://doi.org/10.1176/appi.neuropsych.16030051.

curious, and open to new experiences through democracy. Nonetheless, as the incidents of political violence across South Asia indicate, citizens within nation-states in the region who believe their culture is superior to others seek ethnic and religious homogeneity in society and are less ready to accept religious and ethnic minorities as family, neighbors, or fellow citizens.

Considering the findings from a cross-regional comparison of political violence and the promotion of Western liberal values within Asia and the sub-continent, it is evident that the Maldives faces various legislative, constitutional, social, and religious challenges if it is to develop into a liberal democratic, religiously moderate, and modern state. The government and society have lost sight of the essential notions of political socialization and the social contract, which have provoked discrepancies within the political sphere of the Maldives since 2008. This loss of vision significantly impacts the government's ability to determine what society wants and to promote those values.

Also pertinent to successful democratization is understanding how socialization affects citizens' political views and polity. The concept of "generations" as meaningful categories to gain insight into the socialization process is arguably fruitful, attracting both sociologists and political scientists. As this study notes, exploring divergent views between generations can be a worthwhile endeavor for discerning a country's liberal democratic future, especially as "Millennials" and members of "Gen Z" begin entering politics with liberal attitudes and openness to modernity and social trends.

The study's findings of this research provide evidence for the proposed hypothesis that regimes tend to adapt and fulfill the needs of their native society by promoting Western values favorable to democracy—which can lead to increasing political violence. This is consistent with evidence from the democratization transition period, in which roadblocks were associated with insecurity and the frequent eruption of political violence.

This thesis is a first step in the study of how liberal democracy can best be molded to suit the unique needs of each nation-state. Similarly, focusing on the island nation of the Maldives, the study's evidence enables the prediction of potential further violence,

primarily due to the monopolization of religious legitimacy and authority. To mitigate such conditions, the government must play an essential role in reversing the Maldives' disastrous trend. Political institutionalization, the transition of regimes, and the social acceptance of change should culminate in and solidify notions of citizenship, political socialization, and favorable institutions to mitigate political violence.

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I.   INTRODUCTION

Unlike many Western countries, the Maldives has an official state religion, Islam, and limits its citizens from exercising their fundamental right to freedom of religion other than Islam, which the Maldives Constitution and the rules of law guarantee. The Maldives prides itself on being a one hundred percent Muslim nation.[1] Throughout the country's long history, Maldivians have been repeatedly told that their society is peaceful and cohesive due to this religious monopoly. At the same time, however, the Maldives endured an authoritarian regime, which while facing stiff opposition, began a transition to democracy in early 2005.[2] This transition first flourished under Western ideologies and liberal democratic culture. This peaceful transition from 30 years of autocratic leadership to the first multiparty democratically elected president was praised by Westerners. However, since 2008, the nation has struggled to translate these endeavors into a modern democracy. Solidifying political socialization in local communities has been neglected or misunderstood, which has thrown off the dynamics of political stability in the country.

A.   SIGNIFICANCE

On October 8, 2008, the Maldives held its first multiparty presidential election after 30 years of authoritarian rule.[3] Nevertheless, this five-year term ended after just two and a half years. The democratically elected leader was compelled to resign because of social and political pressure. The emergence of unethical interpretations of Islamic culture and belief; the failures in delivering on campaign promises; accusations of elected party members, activists, and family members abusing public funds for personal and political gain; and corruption among government regulatory institution leaders were the major

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[1] United States Department of State, "2016 Report on International Religious Freedom - Maldives," August 15, 2017, https://www.refworld.org/docid/59b7d87c13.html.

[2] Matt Mulberry, "The Maldives: From Dictatorship to Democracy and Back? (1978–2012)" (International Center on Nonviolent Conflict, July 2012), 10, https://www.nonviolent-conflict.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Maldives-1.pdf.

[3] Pime Asia News, "Maldivians to Elect President in Their First Multi-Party Elections in More than 30 Years," accessed August 12, 2022, https://www.asianews.it/news-en/Maldivians-to-elect-president-in-their-first-multi-party-elections-in-more-than-30-years-13428.html.

causes of public uproar and turmoil.[4] Even though the Maldives Democratic Party (MDP) gained power, loyalists of the 30-year dictator still occupied many senior positions in the government, including the legislature, judicial, and independent commissions. The ruling party had to deal with roadblocks in enacting new laws in the legislative branch and implementing new, modernized, digitalized procedures in government ministries.[5] Government institutions were left to deal with internal politics rather than the promised constitutional improvements. For years, Maldivians have complained that public funds are not distributed evenly among residents and that each government selects and uses public funds for close political associates and family members. The average person's standard of living is poor in terms of gross domestic product (GDP) per capita. Furthermore, the Maldives' ruling parties have prioritized the development and modernization of the capital, Malé City, resulting in a significant disparity in living standards and discrimination among the remaining 1,189 islands.

Since the first democratically elected leader stepped down halfway through his five-year term, a coalition led by one of the leading opposing parties, the Progressive Party of Maldives (PPM), completed the rest of the term. Within a few months of the completion of the term, the new MDP administration assumed power, and the former president was brought to a court trial and sentenced for abusing public funds and committing huge acts of corruption during his time in office.[6] Hence, today, the MDP, which leads the current administration, is also faced with accusations similar to the ones aimed at the previous two administrations and with civil unrest and protest rallies.[7]

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[4] Mark Lynas, "Mohamed Nasheed's Overthrow Is a Blow to the Maldives and Democracy," *The Guardian*, February 7, 2012, sec. Environment, https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2012/feb/07/mohamed-nasheed-overthrow-maldives.

[5] NBC News, "Maldives Gears up for First Democratic Election," accessed August 18, 2022, https://www.nbcnews.com/id/wbna27073594.

[6] Rahul Kumar, "Maldives Former President Yameen Faces Trial over Money Laundering and Bribery Cases," India Narrative, January 5, 2022, https://www.indianarrative.com/world-news/maldives-former-president-yameen-faces-trial-over-money-laundering-and-bribery-cases-140335.html.

[7] Global Civil Society Alliance, "Harassment of Journalists, Activists as Well as Anti-Protest Decree Erodes Freedoms in the Maldives," September 6, 2022, https://monitor.civicus.org/updates/2022/06/09/harassment-journalists-activists-well-anti-protest-decree-erodes-freedoms-maldives/.

Political turbulence generates a wide range of divergent scenarios, culminating in civil unrest that continues to wreak havoc on the country's stability and security. As public preferences and political goals do not match up, opposition groups ramp up their social media campaigns against the government and politics, which causes much public resentment. All of this leads to unrest and efforts by law enforcement and security forces to restore normalcy in society.

Since converting to Islam in 1153 AD, Maldivians regard themselves as 100 percent Muslims. Faith, beliefs, cultural and social well-being, and behaviors have incorporated Islamic fundamentals. According to the Maldives' Constitution, no supplementary religion is permitted.[8] Historically, the monarchy fueled the nation's politics with liberal underpinnings and the foundations of Islamic Shari'a. Since the Maldives' first constitution (1932), society has seen fast transitions, political imbalances, and sociocultural transitions.

Furthermore, under Maumoon Gayoom's presidency (1978–2008) religious and political repression increased. In 2003, opposition to Gayoom's government grew in the Maldives. Calls for more democratic liberties and "true" Islam became louder. Not only were the political aims of Gayoom's rivals different and incompatible, they rejected his treatment of dissenters.[9] However, political practices and their evolution have been consistent with the liberating tenets of Islamic doctrine.

Nevertheless, a study has not been carried out examining the underlying root cause of instability and insecurity within the nation, as some raise the question of whether the government is too young for a modern democracy. According to many debates on social media, the MDP is all about glorifying secular actions while ignoring religious tradition.[10]

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[8] Ministry of Legal Reform, Information and Arts, "Functional Translation of the Constitution of Maldives," 2008, 2, https://storage.googleapis.com/presidency.gov.mv/Documents/ConstitutionOfMaldives.pdf.

[9] La Toya Waha, "Finding the Right Islam for the Maldives: Political Transformation and State-Responses to Growing Religious Dissent," *International Journal of Religion* 1, no. 1 (November 22, 2020): 86, https://doi.org/10.33182/ijor.v1i1.1106.

[10] Public Service Media - Maldives, "MDP Introduced Secular Ideologies to Maldives: Religious Scholars," September 20, 2018, https://psmnews.mv/en/39034.

Political activities and decisions are often made for short-term gain, missing the bigger picture and disregarding public opinion.

B.   RESEARCH PROBLEM

Due to the government's inability to implement systemic changes and address the country's current political instability, the Maldives has been plagued by successive waves of political turbulence. After gaining control of the government, many of those in charge have failed to fulfill the promises made in their manifestos.[11] Society has become disappointed and bewildered by the lack of progress in bridging the gap between desire and tangible improvements.

Rather than a lack of will on the part of political parties to solve these issues, I believe that the lack of a mechanism for political socialization makes it impossible to do so. Often, when it became clear that prior pledges would not be kept or if they failed to be executed, major political parties agreed to form a coalition. The objective is to impeach the ruling party by gaining an advantage from the sociocultural legacy of the nation (Religious and Islamic cultural narratives). Opposition movements and anti-government campaigns induce political polarization, resulting in mass mobilization and riots. These events create divergent factions that encourage the opposition to adopt strategies to tackle the government.

A changing opportunity structure incentivized and enabled religious elites to pursue their political goals through violent means between 2002 and 2008.[12] "The contemporary environment of the Maldives favored political liberalization and reform, Islamification of

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[11] Transparency Maldives (TM), "Climate Finance Governance Update," July 2016, https://transparency.mv/v16/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Governance-bulleting-06_2016.pdf; Amnesty International, "Maldives: New Government Must Break with Repressive Past," September 25, 2018, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2018/09/maldives-new-government-must-break-with-repressive-past/.

[12] International Center on Nonviolent Conflict, "The Maldives – From Dictatorship to Democracy, and Back?," accessed December 15, 2021, https://www.nonviolent-conflict.org/maldives-dictatorship-democracy-back/.

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political discourse, and an influx of populist pan-Islamic organizations."[13] "Purifying" Islam from local cultural traditions has fueled militant Islamism in the Maldives and Maldivians' participation in overseas wars as foreign combatants.[14] Former President Gayoom's persecution of dissent also helped give rise to fundamentalist ideas. His repression of opposition has given agents a significant opportunity structure, allowing for escalation.[15] However, violence as a tool of politics is not solely based on power and force to achieve political goals.[16] My view is that political violence and the causes of instability are due to the heightened actions that forced the nation to adopt a multiparty democracy. Furthermore, the governing system adopted after 30 years of authoritarian government and the parenting system has resulted in an inappropriate process of democratic consolidation. In comparison to mature democracies, the Maldives' democratic consolidation left no room for education on proper political socialization and clean democratic norms that suit Maldivian society.

C.   OBJECTIVE

For the objective of this thesis, I investigate the Maldives' recent history of democratic instabilities. Specifically, I identify the challenges associated with the political-ideological norms of liberalism and Islamism, and their sources, as they occur in the Maldives.

Democracy is clearly in its infancy in the Maldives. The government's top objective is to secure its existence, which it believes is threatened by weak institutions and a fragmented opposition that advocates for its demise. At the same time, the democratic process is being fought over because of the rivalry between elite groups, religious elites, conservatives, and long-standing social and cultural traditions.

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[13] Animesh Roul, "The Threat from Rising Extremism in the Maldives," Combating Terrorism Center at West Point, March 27, 2013, https://ctc.westpoint.edu/the-threat-from-rising-extremism-in-the-maldives/.

[14] Counter Extremism Project, "Maldives: Extremism and Terrorism," accessed October 19, 2022, https://www.counterextremism.com/countries/maldives-extremism-and-terrorism.

[15] Waha, "Finding the Right Islam for the Maldives," 13.

[16] Machira Apollos, "Ethnicity, Violence and Democracy," *Africa Development / Afrique et Développement* 26, no. 1/2 (2001): 1, https://www.jstor.org/stable/43661157.

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This thesis looks at the theoretical and historical aspects of understanding political Islam and democracy in the Maldives, considering the importance of local sociocultural and religious views. The reasons for political disagreements leading to instability in this young democracy are examined through the lenses of liberal democracy and political socialization.

The study also examines global trends in Westernization, the emergence of democracy, and the progression toward liberal democracy. In addition, this research provides a statistical analysis of the factors that predict the likelihood of violent political actions.

D.   THESIS OVERVIEW AND CHAPTER OUTLINE

This thesis is divided into eight parts. The introductory chapter has covered the contextualizing background, including the significance of the research, the problem statement, and the objective of this research. Chapter II focuses on the literature review, while the political history of the Maldives is covered in Chapter III.

Chapter IV analyzes the global patterns that have spread liberal democratic ideals from the West to the East. This chapter also focuses on contextualizing liberal ideals that have shaped the political arena of the Maldives' recent political system.

Utilizing RStudio for exploratory data analysis and graphical representations of selected and combined datasets, Chapter V discusses the approach, which includes regression analysis and analytical interpretations. The findings and discussion are presented in Chapter VI.

Chapter VII focuses on contextualizing political Islam, political socialization, and political violence in the Maldives based on the analytical findings and interpretations, and Chapter VIII serves as the conclusion.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. ISLAM, ISLAMISM, AND DEMOCRACY

Islam is now a dominant force in the Muslim world, influencing social institutions and politics.[17] In stark contrast to predictions from just a few decades ago, Islam (encompassing Islamic symbols, philosophy, organizations, and institutions) has resurfaced as a prominent influence in public life. Islamic mainstream groups have developed into significant social and political forces in society.[18] Islam is one religion, a set of common practices for Muslims. While wildly varying interpretations exist throughout and within, like that espoused by the Taliban and similar organizations exude a sense of ancient nostalgia, they are in reality highly contemporary movements with modern views of Islam,[19] like the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). Meanwhile, some avowed-atheist Sufis articulate a kind of "tawhid," in which a conventional concept of "God" is too small a term to encompass what they believe, and thus this "God" does not exist. Even so, they are Muslim because they say so; in the name of Allah, "La Ilaha Illallah." Likewise, pre-Islamic movements up through current Buddhism and Christianity feature a long history of violence and non-state terrorism against similar communities.[20] Consequently, it is clear that the community desires to educate, train, and serve as a positive role model for the youth in order to instill in them religiously based morals. Nonetheless, modernization, contemporary political systems, leaders, and parents act contrary to Islamic principles, while some youths value and imitate Westernization, which is so stimulating and exciting that they disregard the cultural and parental system.

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[17] N. P. Stromquist and K. Monkman, *Globalization and Education: Integration and Contestation across Cultures* (Lanham, Maryland: R&L Education, 2014), 237.

[18] J. L. Esposito et al., *The Oxford History of Islam* (New York: Oxford University Press, USA, 1999), xii.

[19] Siamak Naficy, "Of Culture and Cliché: Politics and the Uses (and Abuses) of Anthropology," *Combating Terrorism Exchange*, 4, no. 4 (November 1, 2014): 42, https://doi.org/11/1/2014.

[20] Richard J. Kilroy Jr., *Threats to Homeland Security: Reassessing the All-Hazards Perspective* (Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, 2018), 242.

Hence, youths may lack faith or act against those with religious faith, implying the absence of Islamic morals in their religious observance.[21] As stated by Bassam Tibi, "Islam implies specific ethical principles such as faith, culture, and ethical framework, and it does not assume a particular structure of governance."[22] According to the author Wanjala Nasong'o, "ethnic group members are said to share subjective or psychological aspects of identity distinctiveness, including emotional satisfaction derived from group belonging, a shared belief in a myth of common ancestry, and a belief in the sacredness of social relations that include the dead."[23] Thus, it can be said that ethnic groupings are described as "natural networks" into which people are born and assimilated. Language, religion, customs, traditions, food, and music are among the objective cultural characteristics they share. The ethnic and ethical cohesiveness within Muslim society has its roots in Islam. However, Islamism is a political ideology separate from Islam's religious teachings. It is born of a certain interpretation of Islam but not Islam itself.[24]

Islam and democracy are major topics of contention in today's democratized world. Scholars, political theorists, Muslim societies, and Western authors have different perspectives on the relationship between Islam and democracy. As such, a conclusive debate on Islam and democracy in this democratic era is unclear. As stated by Giorgio Agamben, the term "democracy" sounds false when it comes up in debates because the word "democracy" has so much ambiguity that makes it hard for people to understand each other.[25] This is especially true when it is accompanied by policies that are in conflict with democratic principles, like a "Free World" with unelected leaders, such as Saudi Arabia. Individual freedom is also a fundamental feature of democracy, but many such nations claim to oppose such principles. Alternative values, such as the importance of order and

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[21] Kasetchai Laeheem, "Problems in Promoting Islamic Ethics in Adherence to the Faith among Thai Muslim Youths of Ban Kha Ling, Pattani Province," *Kasetsart Journal of Social Sciences* 39, no. 3 (September 2018): 530, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.kjss.2018.07.004.

[22] Bassam Tibi, *Islamism and Islam* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), 1.

[23] Wanjala S. Nasong'o, ed., *The Roots of Ethnic Conflict in Africa: From Grievance to Violence* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 1, https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137555007.

[24] Tibi, *Islamism and Islam*, 2.

[25] Giorgio Agamben and William McCuaig, eds., *Democracy in What State?, New Directions in Critical Theory* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011), 1.

hierarchy over individual will, may be promoted by non-democracies in order to justify the abolition of individual liberties mediated by those in power.[26] Like the term "freedom" or "terrorist," democracy can be used to describe anything we want, including our political and economic allies, even if they are democracies only in a vague sense, as well as our rivals and adversaries, regardless of their actual domestic policies.

According to Thomas N. Mitchell, in democracy, there are more things to think about than how to choose a leader.[27] It is a set of political ideals that come from a certain way of thinking about people's nature, dignity, and needs. The rules and institutions of democracy are based on these ideals and are meant to make them a reality. These ideals are what make democracy unique, and they are what make it what it is.[28] Indeed these can be argued as a set of principles. Many people in Islamic countries have a negative view of democracy, making it hard for them to move toward democracy. One of the main reasons Islamic civilization is opposed to democracy is the belief that secularization works against God.[29] According to Arun Venkataraman, many devout Muslims dislike democracy because the labels "secular" and "atheist" are interchangeable. Secularists were first identified as Ar-Rad' ala ad-Dahriyin' in *The Answer to Temporalists* by Jamal-Eddin Al-Afghani, a famous Muslim thinker of the 19th century.[30] Jamal-Eddin Al-Afghani adopted the name "Dahriyin" to characterize secularists, but it had previously been used to denote atheists in the Qur'anic text.[31]

> When Muslims and Europeans first met in the modern era, they faced each other head-on in intellectual battles. When Jamal-Eddin Al-Afghani (1838–97), one of the earliest and most important MGD Muslim philosophers and

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[26] Dino Bozonelos, "Comparative Government and Politics," August 26, 2022, 97, socialsci.libretexts.org.

[27] Thomas N. Mitchell, *Democracy's Beginning: The Athenian Story* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015), 3.

[28] Mitchell, 5.

[29] Arun Venkataraman, "Islam and Democracy: A Tocquevillian Approach," University of Texas at Austin, USA, 2007, 24.

[30] Kedourie Elie, "Jamal Al-Din al-Afghani," Biography, History, & Facts - Britannica, accessed October 7, 2022, https://www.britannica.com/biography/Jamal-al-Din-al-Afghani.

[31] Florian Zemmin, *Modernity in Islamic Tradition: The Concept of 'Society' in the Journal al-Manar (Cairo, 1898–1940)* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2018), 165.

fighters in the battle against oppression, took on European secularists, he became famous. For his attempts to counter European opponents of religion, and of Islam in particular, he became well-known. 'Ar-Rad ala ad-Dahriyin,' the title of an article he authored in response to Ernest Renan in 'The Answer to Temporalists.' Secularists were regarded as 'Dahriyin,' which means 'temporalists' in Arabic.[32]

Islam and democracy were considered incompatible by conservative Muslim thinkers for three reasons: first, the Islamic concept of the outright sovereignty of God, which they argued contradicts the idea that democracies are based on the people's sovereign right to make decisions in every means; second, the Islamic concept of law as defined and promulgated by God, which they argued could not be altered by elected parliaments; and third, the concept of the Shari'a (interpretation of the way), which they claimed could not be changed by elected parliaments.[33]

Numerous significant thoughts and events in Islam have affected current conceptions of what a fair society should be. Subsequently, individual experiences and the history of the Islamic community, or *umm'ah*, have been included. This demonstrated that Muslims did not always agree with their rulers. Hence, there are several thoughts and teachings applicable to a variety of oppositional circumstances. Even though modern Muslims exhibit much dynamism and variety in terms of expressing their political opinions, the underpinnings of Islamic notions of democracy are evident.

B.   LIBERAL DEMOCRACY AND IDEOLOGY

The distinct movements of liberalism gained popularity during the age of the Enlightenment.[34] The trend of liberal democracy emerged during the early 20th century. A new era was ushered in by the fall of the Berlin Wall and the Soviet Union. This era

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[32] Elie, "Jamal Al-Din al-Afghani."

[33] John O. Voll, "Islam and Democracy: Is Modernization a Barrier?: Islam and Democracy: Is Modernization a Barrier?," *Religion Compass* 1, no. 1 (January 2007): 172, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1749-8171.2006.00017.x.

[34] History Crunch, "Classical Liberalism Overview," accessed August 20, 2022, https://www.historycrunch.com/classical-liberalism.html.

paved the way for nations and their European regimes to transition to democracies.[35] In practice and theory, liberal democracy has triumphed over the years. It was the only system of government that happened to be in its native form which is legitimized by the people and recognized by law. Liberal democracies often rely on a constitution that outlines the government's powers and codifies the social contract. After continuous growth throughout the 20th century, liberal democracy emerged as the world's preeminent political system.[36] In a liberal democracy, the government system often has universal suffrage, which empowers citizens with political rights, regardless of ethnicity, property ownership, age, sexual orientation, social status, religion, and other primarily native societal factors. However, this is to be accounted for within the lines of a given constitution, which is usually intended to limit the government's power and strengthen society.

Liberal democracy and democracy are the terms most commonly used to describe the most progressive governments, today found in developed Western countries and among many developing nations. However, similar to global, cultural, and social transformations and modernization, the fundamentals of liberalism have been subject to change over time. In general, contemporary liberals are of the opinion that the government ought to meddle in the market and provide a comprehensive range of welfare programs in order to guarantee the health and equality of all individuals living in society.[37] It has also been erroneously interpreted as presenting an abstract, solitary, and pre-social view of the individual.[38]

The liberal-communitarian argument revolves around this fundamental dispute about the significance of the community in the process of value formation. As Rebecca Ilana Shane claims, "true freedom must be 'situated' since the [liberal] demand to be freely

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[35] William A. Galston, "The Populist Challenge to Liberal Democracy," *Brookings* (blog), April 17, 2018, https://www.brookings.edu/research/the-populist-challenge-to-liberal-democracy/.

[36] European Center for Populism Studies (ECPS), "Liberal Democracy," accessed June 14, 2022, https://www.populismstudies.org/Vocabulary/liberal-democracy/.

[37] Khan Academy, "Ideologies of Political Parties," Khan Academy, accessed August 21, 2022, https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/us-government-and-civics/us-gov-american-political-ideologies-and-beliefs/us-gov-ideologies-of-political-parties/a/lesson-summary-ideologies-of-political-parties.

[38] Susan Moller Okin, "Review of Review of Liberalism, Community, and Culture, by Will Kymlicka," *Political Theory* 19, no. 1 (1991): 124, https://www.jstor.org/stable/191742.

self-determining is indeterminate."[39] Liberals maintain that people should have the liberty to pick their own standards for what constitutes a decent life and to follow the path of action that they consider to be the most productive. Conversely, "the communitarians claim that choices of identity are necessarily framed in the context of our community, and thus individual identity comes from the community in which we are raised."[40]

How can society be organized along the lines of liberal democracy if we cannot agree on its meaning?

Liberal democracy and liberalism have become too malleable, used to justify a wide range of contradictory policy options, leaving citizens perplexed.[41] The purpose of liberal democracies is to establish and preserve societies that are just, egalitarian, and welcoming, and in which people work to strike a healthy balance between the core principles of individualism, community, and equality, where no one is enslaved by poverty, ignorance, or conformity.[42]

Liberalism, as an idea of a political system, is a foundational ideology that promotes liberty and equality for all individuals. It advocates the equal legal treatment of all persons, and it also asserts that there are numerous facets of an individual's life that the government has no authority to regulate.[43] According to the research conducted by Rebecca Ilana Shane and presented in *The Importance of Cultural Identity to Liberal Democracy*, it is stated that "[Will] Kymlicka responds to communitarian concerns by presenting a liberal account of community and culture and connecting these ideals to the liberal perspective regarding the rights of individuals and the impartiality of states."[44]

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[39] Rebecca Ilana Shane, "The Importance of Cultural Identity to Liberal Democracy" (bachelor's thesis, Claremont McKenna College, 2019), 34, https://scholarship.claremont.edu/cmc_theses/2264.

[40] Shane, 33.

[41] Jan Hornat, "The Complicated Relationship between Liberalism and Democracy," ORF, accessed August 20, 2022, https://www.orfonline.org/expert-speak/complicated-relationship-liberalism-democracy/.

[42] Mark Pack, "What Do the Liberal Democrats Believe?," Mark Pack Org, accessed August 21, 2022, https://www.markpack.org.uk/libdem-beliefs/.

[43] Study.com, "Liberalism Ideology," accessed August 21, 2022, https://study.com/learn/lesson/what-is-political-liberalism.html.

[44] Shane, "The Importance of Cultural Identity to Liberal Democracy," 68–69.

Kymlicka argues that liberalism also contains a broader account of the relationship between the individual and society—and, in particular, of the individual's membership in a community and a culture (Kymlicka 1985:1). He argues that group rights are part of liberal thought. Group rights can be viewed as admissible within liberalism and even necessary for freedom and equality.[45]

Kymlicka believes that liberal theory must account for the individual's social standing.[46] Therefore, although liberal ideas may not directly address the ways in which a person's community might affect his judgments about what is desirable to do, accomplish, and be, the emphasis that liberals place on individual liberty addresses this issue.

According to a study by Paul Spicker, the conservative notions of individual liberty, social equality, and fraternity are founded on a distinct understanding of society.[47] Similar to such distinct understandings of societies and perceptions of social ideas, the practical outset of political governance is an commonly agreed idea of governance. Similarly, Saul Newman claims that an idea is the liberty of equality, justice, and solidarity and how it is interpreted.[48] Therefore, a political ideology encompasses fundamental beliefs within society.

The theoretical clash between what should be done and what should ideally be done has heightened attention in the practical political sphere, where Idealism is a dilemma between philosophers and politicians based on a perception or interpretation. Idealism is a term that can be applied to any concept, objective, or behavior that is regarded as being impractical. Similarly, the idea that power can be channeled, disseminated, and exploited for the common good is part of what is known as political Idealism. The rationalistic premise is that harmony exists or can be reached between individual concerns and the

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[45] P. Kesava Kumar, "Liberal Democracy and Kymlicka's Conception of Minority Rights: Towards a Perspective of Dalit Rights," *Round Table India* (blog), May 24, 2013, https://www.roundtableindia.co.in/liberal-democracy-and-kymlicka-s-conception-of-minority-rights-towards-a-perspective-of-dalit-rights/.

[46] University of Regina, "Introduction to Kymlicka, Multicultural Citizenship," December 23, 1997, https://uregina.ca/~gingrich/k1.htm.

[47] Paul Spicker, *Liberty, Equality, Fraternity* (Bristol, UK: Policy Press, 2006), 165.

[48] Saul Newman, *The Politics of Postanarchism* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010), 20.

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general good. However, men's interests, rights, and obligations are inextricably interwoven.[49]

In the context of modern philosophy, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770–1831) is considered the originator of modern Idealism and the most influential thinker in the first half of the 18th century, as well as one of the foundational characters of Western philosophy.[50] Scholars interpret Idealism in a diverse context, as political science links to international relations and international matters. As stated by authors Jeremy Dunham, Iain Grant, and Sean Watson, "Idealism is a philosophy on a grand scale, combining micro and macroscopic problems into systematic accounts of everything from the nature of the universe to the particulars of human feeling."[51] Author Louay Safi, in the book *Islam and the Trajectory of Globalization,* states that Karl Marx (1818–1883) instinctively recognized a link between the human desire for freedom and the organization of global history, which was subsequently clarified in Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel's writings (1770-1831).[52] Freedom, according to Hegel, is the result of a dialectical logic that drives global history. He claimed that social contradictions and the fight to resolve those are the sources of human growth, and these conflicts result in significant behavioral, institutional, and technological changes.

Social evolution and political developments caused the beginning of the establishment of liberal democracy, whereas social contradictions had previously been the driving force behind historical change.[53] This supporting evidence for Idealism reflects the significance of the superiority and spirituality of one's views. Additionally, it is the engine that propels world awareness and the impetus for human action.

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[49] John H. Herz, "Idealist Internationalism and the Security Dilemma," *World Politics* 2, no. 2 (January 1950): 158, https://doi.org/10.2307/2009187.

[50] Paul Redding, "Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel," *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy Archive*, February 13, 1997, https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2014/entries/hegel/.

[51] Jeremy Dunham, Iain H. Grant, and Sean Watson, *Idealism: The History of a Philosophy* (Ontario, Canada: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2013).

[52] David A. Duquette, "Hegel: Social and Political Thought," *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (blog), accessed October 26, 2022, https://iep.utm.edu/hegelsoc/.

[53] Louay M. *Safi, Islam and the Trajectory of Globalization: Rational Idealism and the Structure of World History*, 1st ed. (London: Routledge, 2021), 26, https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003203360.

According to George Berkeley, one of the prominent philosophers of the early modern period, Idealism can be defined as the conviction that everything that exists is either a mind or is dependent on the mind for its existence and that God produces the idea of such sense.[54] Like many of his contemporaries, Berkeley believes that "natural religion is based on two major doctrines; the existence of God and the natural immortality of the soul,"[55] and claims that such ideas can inherently be bound to the societal and parental system.

C. POLITICAL SOCIALIZATION

Political scientists have taken up socialization and sought to place it in a political framework. Political socialization, a phenomenon that occurs in practically every human culture, is one topic of investigation that must be addressed in relation to the process of democratization. It is, in essence, a process through which a person adopts socially and culturally accepted attitudes, values, beliefs, and behaviors about politics. As suggested by Hakim Rashid, political socialization refers to how people in society learn about politics and how they think and act.[56] According to Jacques Hymans, political socialization is when a person learns social patterns, communicated through different social institutions, that match his social position.[57]

Similarly, Gabriel Almond says that political socialization is "the process of initiation into a political culture," which results from a group of attitudes about the political

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[54] Georges Dicker, *Berkeley's Idealism: A Critical Examination* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 236.

[55] Richard Brook and Bertil Belfrage, eds., *The Bloomsbury Companion to Berkeley* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, September 21, 2017), 458.

[56] Hakim M. Rashid, "Secular Education and the Political Socialization of Muslim Children," *American Journal of Islam and Society* 9, no. 3 (October 1, 1992): 338, https://doi.org/10.35632/ajis.v9i3.2576.

[57] Jacques E. C. Hymans, "Applying Social Identity Theory to the Study of International Politics: A Caution and an Agenda," (paper presented at International Studies Association Convention, New Orleans, LA, March 24, 2002), 4. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/228956532_Applying_Social_Identity_Theory_to_the_Study_of_International_Politics_A_Caution_and_an_Agenda.

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system, its many roles, and its incumbents.[58] Thus, it can be said that native societal culture plays a paramount role in socialization or social development, incubates its roots in culture, and is bound to native society. Political socialization is a learning process that encompasses the roots of the political traits within a society. According to Daniel J Elazar, a society's political culture defines the bounds of political behavior that are considered appropriate for that society.[59] Therefore, as to the defining statements by most scholars, political socialization can be summarized as a long-term process in which individuals learn political attitudes (thinking, feeling, and acting) from their parents and other members of their communities that reflect emerging political ideologies or attitudes.

Concurrently, religion is vital in fostering goodwill within a society that reflects various cultures, such as ethics, habits, and legal and political systems. It could also be said that there is a significant relationship between religious culture and how people learn about politics. Diane R. Brown and Lawrence E. Gary elaborate on religious socialization from three different angles. First, as a religious person grows in self-awareness, he or she learns to evaluate his or her behavior and connect with others from a religious perspective. The second point of view is that of the group or society, which looks at how religious organizations help maintain social and cultural continuity.[60] The third holds that "socialization is life-long, taking place not only during childhood and youth but also throughout the adult years."[61] This relationship between political socialization and religion tends to overlap. Gimpel James, Schuknecht Jason and Lay Celeste claim that "American political institutions are the very expression of Judeo-Christian values. From this point of view, liberal democracy, in its American embodiment, cannot hope to survive without the disciplining force of religion, belief in religious practice, and the strong force closely

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[58] Gabriel A. Almond, *A Functional Approach to Comparative Politics* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2015), 27–28.

[59] D. J. Elazar, *The American Mosaic: The Impact of Space, Time, and Culture on American Politics* (New York: Avalon Publishing, 1994), 3.

[60] Diane R. Brown and Lawrence E. Gary, "Religious Socialization and Educational Attainment Among African Americans: An Empirical Assessment," *The Journal of Negro Education* 60, no. 3 (1991): 412–13, https://doi.org/10.2307/2295493.

[61] Brown and Gary, 413.

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associated with American identity."[62] As Cristian Smith recounts, de Tocqueville demonstrated observed how religion's values and associations influenced American democracy.[63] Many scholars admit that political socialization is a process that needs to be examined via psychological and educational models. Betty Dobrat, Lisa Wakdner and Timothy Buzzell in the book *Power, Politics, and Society: An Introduction to Political Sociology* instinctively recognized several dynamics that occur at different stages in political socialization, from preschool to political adulthood.[64] According to David Sears and Jack Levy, political socialization is the lifelong openness paradigm where throughout their lives, people gravitate toward liberal views in their youth and conservative views as they become older.[65]

Political opinions can be influenced by various variables, including religious organizations, families, schools, communities, and the media. Islam uses the word *Tarbiya*,[66] referring to the Islamic Brotherhood's core tenet of socialization. Additionally, it refers to the process of altering an individual's identity via practice.

> The word 'Tarbiya' is an Arabic word that linguistically means increase, growth, and loftiness. Conventionally, Tarbiya means the development and training of people in various aspects. The word is commonly used to describe children's upbringing as the parents provide them with physical, educational, moral, and spiritual needs to help them grow up and become useful parties in society.[67]

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[62] James. G. Gimpel, Lay. J.Celeste, and Jason. E. Schuknecht, *Cultivating Democracy: Civic Environments and Political Socialization in America* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2003), 131.

[63] Christian Smith, "Theorizing Religious Effects among American Adolescents," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 42, no. 1 (2003): 17–30.

[64] Betty. A. Dobratz, *Power, Politics, and Society: An Introduction to Political Sociology* (Oxfordshire, UK: Taylor & Francis, 2015), 84.

[65] Shanna Pearson-Merkowitz and James Gimpel, "Religion and Political Socialization," in *The Oxford Handbook of Religion and American Politics*, James L. Guth, Lyman Kellstedt, and Corwin Smidt, ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 10, https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/ 9780195326529.003.0006.

[66] Muslim American Society, "Tarbiya," 1993, https://mas-az.org/mas/tarbiya/.

[67] Kerala Muslim Community Association SF Bayarea (KMCA), "Tarbiya," 2015, http://www.kmcabayarea.org/index.php/activities.

As another example of religion as a factor in shaping political opinions, modern fundamentalist Christian criticism of culture and morals often attacks modernity and everyday life. Fundementialist, according to Martine Marty and Scott Appleby, which was further eleblrated in the research conducted by Andrew Hoffmeister and presented in the *Fundamentalism and Modernity: A Critique of the 'Anti-Modern' Conception of Fundamentalism*, states "Modern cultures include at least three dimensions uncongenial to fundamentalists: a preference for secular rationality; the adoption of religious tolerance with accompanying tendencies toward relativism; and individualism."[68] Therefore, as a critical source of values, religion encourages individuals and communities to diverge from other groups in society, including political and governmental institutions, in their values, attitudes, or political activity. This, in turn, leads to political orientations and attitudes.[69]

The system of governance is exercised in a broader spectrum, in line with fundamental principles that are agreed upon within a communal society of a nation-state. Despite differences in geopolitical boundaries and political and governing systems, a common aspiration to govern society resides in nation-states. To that end, the governing system will continuously redefine its place in society.[70] Democracy and Islamism claim fundamental principles that require application in society, but they are often misinterpreted as to their relevance in the real world. Nevertheless, it can be argued that there is an inherent inconsistency between Islamism and democracy, which emanates from how both perceive each other, reflecting the society and the governing system within a nation-state such as the Maldives.

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[68] Andrew Hoffmeister, "Fundamentalism and Modernity: A Critique of the 'Anti-Modern' Conception of Fundamentalism" (master's thesis, Georgia State University, 2006), 3, https://doi.org/10.57709/1062065.

[69] Manuel Castells, *The Power of Identity*, 2nd Edition (New Jersey: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 90.

[70] Anna L. Ahlers et al., *Democratic and Authoritarian Political Systems in 21st Century World Society: Vol. 1 - Differentiation, Inclusion, Responsiveness*, 1st ed. (Bielefeld, Germany: Verlag, 2020), 8, https://doi.org/10.14361/9783839451267.

III. POLITICAL HISTORY OF THE MALDIVES

During the medieval period, Muslim-majority and Muslim-ruled civilizations saw significant changes. According to Gustave E. Von Grunebaum, the general trend of medieval history may be summarized as a movement toward breaking the religious oneness of Christendom and Islam.[71] During this period, seafarers and early settlers from neighboring countries influenced the region of the Maldivians and its culture.[72]

A. THE KINGDOM AND ISLAMIC CONVERSION OF THE MALDIVES

Throughout their lengthy history, the Maldivians have refined a system of government that works well with the islands' geography and population density. According to Clarence Maloney, the Maldives' political system was adapted from that of Sri Lanka, "modified for the Maldives' particular topography."[73] Even though its land area and population were small, the Maldives kept diplomatic ties with many countries.[74] In fact, the Maldives' ancient rulers have been depicted in historical records receiving gifts and pleasantries from other nations' ancient monarchs. Similarly, according to a Roman soldier and historian, Ammianus Marcellinus, in 362 AD, a Maldivian delegation of nobles presented gifts to Julian, Emperor of the Roman Empire in the East, at Constantinople, modern-day Istanbul, Turkey. Between 658 and 662 AD, according to Tang Dynasty historical documents, King Baladitya of the Maldives offered gifts to the Emperor of China.[75] These goodwill exchanges reveal that the Maldives had a thriving empire. The

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[71] Gustave E. Von Grunebaum, *Medieval Islam - A Study in Cultural Orientation, Second Edition* (Chicago & London: The University of Chicago Press Ltd, 1969), 8, https://oi.uchicago.edu/sites/oi.uchicago.edu/files/uploads/shared/docs/medieval_islam.pdf.

[72] Clarence Maloney, "The Maldives: New Stresses in an Old Nation," *Asian Survey* 16, no. 7 (1976): 663, https://doi.org/10.2307/2643164.

[73] Maloney, 659.

[74] Maldives Finest, "Maldives History: Small Old Country with Sound Diplomacy," Maldives Finest, accessed July 7, 2022, https://maldivesfinest.com/en-us/history.

[75] Naseema Mohamed, "Pre-Islamic Maldives," *Man and Environment Journal of the Indian Society for Prehistoric Studies*, no. XXVII (June 2002): 4, http://www.qaumiyyath.gov.mv/docs/whitepapers/history/Pre-Islamic%20Maldives.pdf.

kings and queens of the Maldives, as well as their successors, served as the country's rulers throughout the first millennium BC.[76]

Buddhism dominated the political and religious system during the early 12th century and grounded early Maldivians' culture and religious traditions. According to the 19th century author, H.C.P. Bell, Buddhism was introduced to the Maldives about the same time Emperor Asoka promoted missionary activities, which resulted in the religion's founding in several South Asian countries.[77] However, according to Dr. Jagat K. Motwani, the sculptures, stupas, and pyramidal Havittas excavated in the Maldives are comparable to those excavated by Buddhists in Sri Lanka and Hindus in South India. Like the Indian subcontinent, the Maldives may have seen Hinduism before Buddhism.[78]

Persistent naval commerce between the Persian Gulf and China arose as a critical innovation in Indian Ocean long-distance trading in the eighth and ninth centuries.[79] By the first millennium, Maldivians were adept navigators capable of extended expeditions. Frequent travelers and commercial relationships exposed them to the region's politics and affairs.[80] The Maldives, being geographically situated at the crossroads for many seafarers,[81] history records their influences that have molded native religion and culture.

For the most part, the Maldives islands remained independent, building up their own culture and system of rule, remaining "unheard of" globally. The religious conversion

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[76] H.C.P. Bell, "The Maldive Island - An Account of the Physical Features, Climate, History, Inhabitants, Production and Trade" (Ceylon: Acting Government Printer, 1882), 23–26.

[77] Naseema Mohamed, "Maldivian Seafaring in the Pre-Portuguese Period," The National Centre for Linguistic and Historical Research, 2005, 7, http://www.qaumiyyath.gov.mv/.

[78] J. K. Motwani, *Discovery of Prehistory Ancient India: Krishna & Radha* (iUniverse, 2018), https://books.google.com/books?id=-Z9ODwAAQBAJ.

[79] Pınar Emiralioğlu, "Imperial Geographies in Byzantine and Ottoman Space," The Center for Hellenic Studies, accessed July 7, 2022, https://chs.harvard.edu/chapter/3-cartography-and-the-ottoman-imperial-project-in-the-sixteenth-century-pinar-emiralioglu/.

[80] Mohamed, "Maldivian Seafaring in the Pre-Portuguese Period," 16.

[81] Husnu Al Suood, "Political System of the Ancient Kingdom of Maldives" (Maldives Law Institute, 2014), 1, http://saruna.mnu.edu.mv/jspui/bitstream/123456789/1903/1/Book%20-%20Political_System_of_the_Ancient_Kingdom.pdf.

(Islamification) began in early 1153 AD,[82] introduced by a Muslim traveler named Abul Barakat Yoosuf Al Yusuf Al Barbari from Maghrib (Morocco).

Religion and politics are sometimes thought to be opposed; in reality, they interact. Religion can be a vital political tool; it can be used not only to achieve political goals but to establish and legitimate political systems.[83] Such was the case in the enforcement of religious conversion in the Maldives, although some islands clung to their ancestral religion and refused to demolish Buddhist temples and shrines. Moreover, it is important to note that the threat of civil disturbance has existed throughout Maldivian civil history, a concept of pre-Islamic disorder whose repetition adds to a broad denigration of the state.[84]

Most anthropological studies of religion have focused on belief, ritual, and the overall integrative value of religious institutions for society. Most of these studies do little to clarify the many issues related to the power dynamic between religious affiliation and political systems. Religion's political ramifications raise practical as well as theoretical issues.[85] In many countries, state authority is seen as a body of religiously motivated activity. In the Maldives, the Sultan's authority is maintained through his subordinates.[86] The conversion accounts reinforce the government's power portrayed as implementing the Divine Code, which the state guarantees.[87]

During the introduction of Islam, the Sultan dispatched individuals to each island in the Maldives with the mission of converting all inhabitants, "willing or unwilling, to the

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[82] Mohamed, "Pre-Islamic Maldives," 1.

[83] Raymond Firth, "Spiritual Aroma: Religion and Politics," *American Anthropologist* 83, no. 3 (1981): 582, https://www.jstor.org/stable/676754.

[84] Rizwan A. Ahmad, "The State and National Foundation in the Maldives," *Cultural Dynamics* 13, no. 3 (November 1, 2001): 294, https://doi.org/10.1177/092137400101300303.

[85] Firth, "Spiritual Aroma," 582.

[86] United States Agency for International Development (USAID), *Maldives Rule of Law Assessment*, prepared for Asia Emerging Opportunities (AEO) (Washington, DC: Integra Government Services International LLC, June 2019), 11, https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00WRSJ.pdf.

[87] Hassan Ahmed Maniku, "Conversion of Maldives to Islam," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society Sri Lanka Branch* 31 (1986): 79, https://www.jstor.org/stable/23731038.

Muslim faith."[88] During this time, strict enforcement was used to keep individuals who freely became Muslims away from non-converts. Women in the Maldives were historically segregated in *purdah* through the enforcement of seclusion and veiling.[89] This accounts for the re-founding of the state on true religion and the idea of divine guidance that Muslims follow to live a righteous life—Shari'a. It is recorded that Islam took more than two and a half centuries to encompass the entire state, around late 1450 AD.[90] Thus, all became Muslims, and the royal will for the true religion has been reconstituted through religious circumscription.[91]

Islam and Islamic cultural autonomy have remained strong since the Maldives embraced Islam. Islam was adopted by subsequent Sultans and widely promoted. Islamic regulations were enforced, and mosques were established throughout the kingdom, followed by madrassas under their direct sponsorship. Islam was the cornerstone upon which the state was built and the source of all its regulations, laws, and traditions. When Sultan Muhammad Samusuddin Iskandar III wrote the Constitution of 1932, he compelled Islamic *tradition and Quranic interpretations* as the guiding foundation of the nation's legal, administrative, and political governance. This trend was fully codified in the Maldives Constitution from the beginning.[92]

Although the Maldives archipelago is fragmented, the monarchy has had a structured centralized government system and political autonomy throughout its known history, which is akin to government of the recent past.[93] According to historical archives,

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[88] Andrew D.W. Forbes, "The Mosque in the Maldive Islands : A Preliminary Historical Survey," *Archipel* 26, no. 1 (1983): 48, https://doi.org/10.3406/arch.1983.1844.

[89] J. H. Fewkes, *Locating Maldivian Women's Mosques in Global Discourses* (Berlin, Germany: Springer International Publishing, 2019), 88, https://books.google.com/books?id=as2NDwAAQBAJ.

[90] H.C.P. Bell, *The Maldive Island - An Account of the Physical Features, Climate, History, Inhabitants, Production and Trade*, 24.

[91] Rizwan A. Ahmad, "The State and National Foundation in the Maldives," *Cultural Dynamics* 13, no. 3 (November 1, 2001): 298, https://doi.org/10.1177/092137400101300303.

[92] American Foreign Policy Council, "American Foreign Policy Council - Maldives," 6, accessed March 21, 2022, https://almanac.afpc.org/uploads/documents/Maldives_3.pdf.

[93] Suood, "Political System of the Ancient Kingdom of Maldives," 11–23.

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the Maldives had a system similar to a consultative monarchy.[94] It is believed that the king or queen's rule extended across their whole territory and that they were free to dispose of all things as they pleased under the circumstances.[95] According to H.C.P. Bell, the government's manner was dictatorial, but this was mitigated by the peaceful attitude of the people and the general lack of awareness of public opinion.[96]

B. POLITICAL HISTORY OF MALDIVES AND ITS EVOLUTION

The Maldives' political history is characterized by several distinct eras, from monarchy to republic and finally to democracy. "The position of the ancient Maldivian kings was inherited according to the customary order of succession among the members of the royal family."[97] The successive kings had absolute power over their realm and could do as they pleased.[98] As the guardian of justice, the king instructed his judges, lords, and officials to uphold the law so that order would be preserved, misbehavior punished, and people could appeal to him.[99] The king made significant decisions in consultation with the *Ameerun* (noble chiefs) and *Furadhaana* (ministers).[100] The king could override the councils' decisions and advice.[101] Rules governed the country's administration, and religious laws were strictly enforced. Accordingly, "an Atoll Chief to every atoll was appointed by the head of state (from as far back when Maldives was a Sultanate) to manage the affairs of the atolls; such Atoll Chiefs were accountable only to the state government

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[94] Suood, 11–23.

[95] Francois Pyrard, *The Voyage of François Pyrard of Laval to the East Indies*, vol. The Hakluyt Society (United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 207.

[96] H.C.P. Bell, *The Maldive Island - An Account of the Physical Features, Climate, History, Inhabitants, Production and Trade*, 64.

[97] Suood, "Political System of the Ancient Kingdom of Maldives," 12.

[98] Mohamed, "Pre-Islamic Maldives," 2.

[99] Husnu Al Suood, *The Maldivian Legal System* (Maldives Law Institute, 2014), 9, 27–30, https://books.google.com/books?id=FUHnAgAAQBAJ.

[100] H.C.P. Bell, *The Maldive Island - An Account of the Physical Features, Climate, History, Inhabitants, Production and Trade*, 182–86.

[101] Suood, "Political System of the Ancient Kingdom of Maldives," 1.

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centralized in Malé, the capital."[102] According to Urmila Phadnis and Ela Dutt Luithui, religious and nonspiritual leaders at all levels were subject to the Sultan's ultimate authority.[103] Spiritual knowledge was widely disseminated, idolatry was eradicated, and mosques were constructed throughout the Islands to ensure the proper observance of Friday congregational prayers.[104]

1.   The First Written Constitution

Maldives history records that the Portuguese, the Dutch, and the British competed in the Maldivian trade. Due to financial troubles and harassment from Portuguese, Borah,[105] and other foreign merchants, and the British interest in the Indian Ocean, the Sultan sought assistance from the British. On December 16, 1887, the British Crown and the Sultan agreed that the Maldives would become a British protectorate. According to Maloney, "the British in 1887 signed an agreement with the Sultan affording protection and monopolizing the Maldives' foreign affairs, but the British took no hand in internal administration, so the Maldives lacks the colonial imprint [evident] on the rest of South Asia."[106] However, the Maldives continued to seek guidance from the British Governor-General in Ceylon on all major problems affecting the nation.[107]

During the 1920s, the prime minister lavished power on influential family groups, constraining the powers of Sultan Mohamed Shamsuddin III. The prime minister, Abdul Majeed Rannabandeyri Kilegefaanu, also dictated actions on all matters.[108] Due to rivalries and the prime minister's dictatorial measures, the Sultan sought assistance from

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[102] Mariyam Zulfa, "Decentralised Administration in the Maldives," June 1, 2019, 24, https://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3442109.

[103] Urmila Phadnis and Ela Dutt Luithui, "The Maldives Enter World Politics," *Asian Affairs* 8, no. 3 (1981): iii, https://www.jstor.org/stable/30171822.

[104] Rizwan A. Ahmad, "The State and National Foundation in the Maldives," *Cultural Dynamics* 13, no. 3 (November 1, 2001): 294, https://doi.org/10.1177/092137400101300303.

[105] Shafeenaz Abdul-Sattar, "Maldives: Trade, Economy and International Integration," *Maldives Economic Review* 1, no. 1 (September 2019): 3.

[106] Maloney, "The Maldives," 656.

[107] Suood, "Political System of the Ancient Kingdom of Maldives," 23.

[108] Suood, 23.

the British, who took a keen interest in the Maldives' reform movement and recommended an appropriate government. Led by Sir Bernard Bourdillon (1883–1948), the British offered a government-run council of ministers headed by the prime minister with the promise of introducing democracy, but the offer to consider democracy was rejected by the prime minister. At the time, the Maldivians were not prepared for such a transition.[109]

Until late 1932, a written constitution did not exist in the Maldives. Meanwhile, conflict among Sultan Mohamed Shamsuddin's family members over the succession to the throne brought about the need for a constitutional monarchy. This controversy pitted the Sultan against his chief minister,[110] Abdul Majeed Rannabandeyri Kilegefaanu, who was married to the king's sister. This internal conflict over succession and the tarnishing of traditional royal decrees led to calls for the country to become a republic. This political rivalry occurred from 1930 to 1952.

The constitution was drafted in a manner such that neither the aging Sultan nor the Chief Minister benefited. On March 19, 1931, Sultan Mohamed Shamsuddin convened a Constituent Assembly, or *Majlis*, to draft a constitution "appropriate to the Maldives" in response to Sir Bernard Bourdillon's recommendations. The royal decree establishing the Majlis included specific instructions from the Sultan.[111] According to Husnu Suood's study on the *Political System of the Ancient Kingdom of Maldives*, the Sultan insisted that the constitution

- Should not violate Islamic Shari'a,
- Should consider long-standing local customs,
- Should be within the state's means,
- Should not cause hardship "to my people," and
- Should not violate the 1887 Protection Agreement signed between Britain and the Maldives.[112]

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[109] Suood, 25.

[110] Zulfa, "Decentralised Administration in the Maldives," 24.

[111] Suood, *The Maldivian Legal System*, 20.

[112] Suood, "Political System of the Ancient Kingdom of Maldives," 25.

This constitution calls for establishing the Maldives' hereditary but "elected monarchy." According to Urmila Phadnis and Ela Dutt Luithui, which was subsequently quoted by Mariyam Zulfa, article on *Developing Constitutional Culture in the Context of Constitutional Implementation : The Case of the Maldives' First Democratic Constitution* quotes the constituent assembly remained a "close family reserve" of the Sultan.[113] To that end, I contend that the foundation of this first constitution was confined and bound to nepotism and patriotic means that have idealized family models, which have further influenced Maldives' political understanding.

2.   The Republican Era

According to Ameen Didi, who served on one of the drafting committees designated by the Sultan and is quoted in Suood,[114] the constitution was based on English common law and the Egyptian constitution. As a result, while the basic framework of the first constitution was based on Maldivian customs, it borrowed English common law and Islamic Shari'a articles from the Egyptian constitution.[115] (Specifically, the Maldives' constitution drew on the second Egyptian constitution, which was ratified in 1923, after Egypt's official split from the Ottoman Empire in 1914 and its partial independence from the British during the 1919 revolution.[116]) Nonetheless, in drafting the constitution, the framers ignored Bourdillon's advice, claiming that the system of government he advocated was "inferior to the stature of the Maldives."[117] The first conclusive constitution was

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[113] Mariyam Zulfa, "Developing Constitutional Culture in the Context of Constitutional Implementation : The Case of the Maldives' First Democratic Constitution," *IDEA*, Melbourne Forum on Consitution-Building, Constitution Transformation Network, 2008, 2.

[114] Suood, "Political System of the Ancient Kingdom of Maldives," 26.

[115] Mohamed Ibrahim and Ahmad Hidayat Buang, "Maldives Legal System: Islamic and Legal Reform," 2018, 76. https://www.academia.edu/42089784/ maldives_legal_system_islamic_infulence_and_legal_reform

[116] Rachel M. Scott, Recasting Islamic Law (Cornell University Press, 2021), 64.

[117] Kevin Holmes, "The Rule of Law in the Maldives and the Tax Regime's Contribution to Its Failure" (University of Canterbury, 2018), 28.

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completed on June 12, 1932. On December 22, 1932, the king ratified the first constitution (and established the consultative monarchy) of the Maldives.[118]

The first constitution included 92 articles and a bill of rights that guaranteed equal treatment under the law; freedom from arbitrary arrest and torture; personal property protection; freedom of speech, association, and press; and a pension after 25 years of public service.[119] By 1934 a second constitution was written and brought into effect, establishing new laws and finite penalties for theft and assault, and restrictions on trading routines and foreign investments.[120]

According to Maloney, the public and powerful foreign merchants in the Maldives were outraged by the new restrictions.[121] Foreign businessmen with a monopoly on food imports initiated a series of strikes on July 26, 1933, seeking the repeal of the new administration.[122] The public 'literally' ripped the second constitution apart, and the constitution of the Maldives was reduced to 80 sections in 1937.[123] Sultan Mohammed Shamsudheen was accused of violating the constitution and overstepping his legal authority. Sultan Hassan Nooraddeen II replaced him.

Under the rule of Sultan Hassan Nooraddeen II, a third constitution was written and brought into effect on January 30, 1940. With the advent of World War II, the constitution and general provisions were found to be inapplicable to the Maldives' circumstances; thus, the constitutional system was dissolved.[124] On April 23, 1942, "Sultan Hassan Nooraddeen II sent a 17-article constitution to the Majlis, saying he wanted a suitable constitution to

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[118] Minivan News, "A Short Constitutional History of the Maldives," December 22, 2013, https://minivannewsarchive.com/politics/a-short-constitutional-history-of-the-maldives-73902.

[119] Minivan News. "A Short Constitutional History of the Maldives,"

[120] Trav Maldives, "Maldives History," May 23, 2015, https://travmaldives.com/maldives/maldives-history/.

[121] Maloney, "The Maldives," 669.

[122] Minivan News, "A Short Constitutional History of the Maldives."

[123] Minivan News.

[124] President Mohamed Nasheed et al., "Constitution of the Maldives," Academic Dictionaries and Encyclopedias, accessed March 24, 2022, https://en-academic.com/dic.nsf/enwiki/1092808.

exist in the Maldives."[125] However, due to public demand, Sultan Hassan Nooraddeen II was pronounced unsuitable and removed by the People's Majlis in 1942.[126] Moreover, Majid Didi, a well-respected member of the royal élite, was elected Sultan.

In 1950, the People's Majlis of the Maldives decided to overthrow the monarchy and create a republic. The Maldives established a presidential form of government for the first time on January 1, 1953, after the approval of a popular vote.[127] The 1953 Constitution decreed a republic with a president as the head of state (instead of a Sultan). It established a Senate and a Lower House, and an Attorney General.[128] The new democratic constitution established a Senate consisting of 18 members and a House of Representatives consisting of 47 members, both of which were elected by the people. It also set up an independent judiciary that the president appointed. In addition, the new constitution set a term limit of five years for the presidency and named Mohamed Ameen Didi as the country's first president. As president from January 1, 1953, to August 21, 1953, he presided over a revolving-door cabinet.[129]

The regime of the first republic with President Ameen became unpopular due to taxation and suspicions that his administration was making capital with Borah merchants. The president also undertook women's liberation in the Maldives, removed the purdah system, and allowed for women's active and unveiled participation in society.[130] More conservative elements of the population resented Ameen Didi's efforts to emancipate women and implement other reforms. He was overthrown on August 21, 1953. This first

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[125] Trhtbjrui, "Constitution of the Maldives," *Constitution of the Maldives* (blog), accessed October 25, 2022, http://trhtbjrui.blogspot.com/2019/03/constitution-of-maldives.html.

[126] Minivan News, "A Short Constitutional History of the Maldives."

[127] Minivan News.

[128] Zulfa, "Developing Constitutional Culture in the Context of Constitutional Implementation : The Case of the Maldives' First Democratic Constitution," 2.

[129] Anand Kumar, Multi-Party Democracy in the Maldives and the Emerging Security Environment in the Indian Ocean Region (New Delhi: Pentagon Press in association with Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, 2016), 9.

[130] Kumar, 10.

attempt at a republic culminated in a coup and a violent insurrection.[131] The public's discontent with the government's inability to improve their economic status was growing. In addition, many individuals considered that Amin's administration was overly corrupt and that he used the state's scarce resources to maintain his many loves and female companions.[132]

After his return from a medical visit in Colombo, Amin was escorted to Dhoonidhoo Island (the modern remand facility) instead of the capital of Malé. The crew explained that it was for his good. He spent four months on Dhoonidhoo.[133] Amin was reassured in Dhoonidhoo that he retained support and needed only to retake Malé. Amin returned to Malé in the dead of night on December 31, 1953, only to be mobbed and tortured while the army stood by.[134] It is widely believed that Amin's vice president, Ibrahim Didi (Amin's cousin), was responsible for the riot.[135]

In September 1953, Amin's cousins Muhammad Farid Didi and Ibrahim Ali Didi took on a leadership role. On January 31, 1954, the old Maldives' People's Majlis was dissolved. A special Majlis decided to conduct a secret ballot to elect a sultan[136] and voted to return to the previous system of governance, becoming a Sultanate once again.[137] In a meeting that took place in the nation's capital city of Malé on February 22, 1954, the Maldivian National Assembly selected Amer Mohamed Farid Didi to serve as the 84th Sultan of the Maldives.[138] In December 1957, Ibrahim Ali Didi, who was serving as the

[131] Maldives Democratic Reform Watch, "Book of Maldivian Political History," May 4, 2013, https://maldivesreformwatch.tripod.com/id23.html.

[132] MRW, "Mohamed Amin Didi," Maldives Resort Workers, accessed October 20, 2022, https://maldivesresortworkers.wordpress.com/tag/mohamed-amin-didi/.

[133] Maldives Independent, "Killed, Exiled or Deposed," November 15, 2015, https://maldivesindependent.com/feature-comment/killed-exiled-and-deposed-119827.

[134] Maldives Democratic Reform Watch, "Book of Maldivian Political History."

[135] Zaheena Rasheed, "Killed, Exiled or Deposed," *Maldives Independent* (blog), November 15, 2015, https://maldivesindependent.com/feature-comment/killed-exiled-and-deposed-119827.

[136] DBpedia, "About Muhammad Fareed Didi," accessed October 22, 2022, https://dbpedia.org/page/Muhammad_Fareed_Didi.

[137] Kumar, "Multi-Party Democracy in the Maldives and the Emerging Security Environment in the Indian Ocean Region," 10.

[138] Maldives Democratic Reform Watch, "Book of Maldivian Political History."

Prime Minister at the time, was pressured into resigning, and Ibrahim Nasir was selected to take his place.[139]

On November 15, 1967, the Maldives' parliament voted on whether to remain a constitutional monarchy or become a republic. Forty of the 44 parliamentarians voted for a republic. On March 15, 1968, a national referendum was held, with 81.23 percent of voters favoring a republic. Thus, 853 years of monarchy ended on November 11, 1968.[140]

In 1968, Prime Minister Ibrahim Nasir Rannabandeyri Kilegefan became the second republic's first president. He stayed there for ten years before leaving. He is credited with introducing the current school curriculum, tourism, state modernization, and industrial developments. Nevertheless, he has also been criticized for human rights abuses and for using authoritarian methods against opponents.[141] He fled in 1978 amid public resentment due to unproven allegations of general fund corruption.[142]

When President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom was elected president for a five-year term in 1978, the peaceful election was hailed as the beginning of stable political conditions and healthy economic growth. Gayoom prioritized the development of the country's less-developed islands.[143]

Throughout Gayooms' 30-year rule, "a political system and an authoritarian form of governance persisted."[144] Demonstrating the extreme concentration of authority, "the power was so centralized that the executive held president, commander-in-chief, finance

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[139] DBpedia, "About Muhammad Fareed Didi."

[140] Mark Joseph Jochim, "Maldives, Republic of #735 (1978)," *A Stamp a Day* (blog), April 9, 2017, https://stampaday.wordpress.com/2017/04/09/maldives-republic-of-735-1978/.

[141] The Sunday Times International, "Former Maldivian President Ibrahim Nasir Dead," *The Sunday Times International*, November 23, 2008, https://www.sundaytimes.lk/081123/International/sundaytimesinternational-06.html.

[142] The Associated Press, "Ibrahim Nasir, 82, Maldives President, Is Dead," *The New York Times*, November 26, 2008, sec. World, https://www.nytimes.com/2008/11/26/world/asia/26nasir.html.

[143] Srimal Fernando, "The Making of Modern Maldives: A Look at Maumoon Gayoom," *Modern Diplomacy* (blog), November 15, 2018, https://moderndiplomacy.eu/2018/11/15/the-making-of-modern-maldives-a-look-at-maumoon-gayoom/.

[144] Al Jazeera, "Maldives Ex-Leader Gayoom Freed on Bail," News, September 30, 2018, https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/9/30/former-maldives-leader-gayoom-freed-on-bail-a-week-after-election.

minister, and defense minister."[145] In addition, eight members of the 50-member legislature could be appointed by the president, who also held the position of highest judicial authority.[146] The Gayoom government did not allow any legal opposition.[147] Thus, by then "the lawmakers and the ministers were allowed to hold dual jobs and could advance forward as independent candidates."[148] As a result, "until the 2008 Constitution, the executive had nearly complete control over all three branches of government."[149]

Despite his efforts in building up the nation,[150] President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom's tenure is characterized by the "widespread use of torture, routine detention of political opponents, and a grossly unfair legal system."[151] This view is evidenced by the fact that the international community was alarmed by the early 1980s coup attempts against Gayoom's presidency,[152] as well as the November 1988 coup attempt. Gayoom also faced opposition in the early 1990s, this time from Islamists (also known as fundamentalists) seeking to impose a traditional way of life, as well as from some influential local business leaders.[153] This evolution of opposition to Gayoom's oppressive administration is arguably an example of how states and networks become Islamized, gradually adopting the narratives and ideology of fundamentalists. The Brotherhood's anti-monarchism and anti-

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[145] PraBook, "H.E. Maumoon Abdul Gayoom," accessed October 20, 2022, https://prabook.com/web/h.e.maumoon_abdul.gayoom/326783.

[146] Mariyam Zulfa, "From Big Bang to Incrementalism: Choice and Challenges in Constitution Building" (International IDEA and the Constitution Transformation Network, 2017), 2.

[147] Urmila Phadnis and Rajat Ganguly, *Ethnicity and Nation-Building in South Asia* (SAGE Publications India, 2001), chap. 4.

[148] Amnesty International, *Republic of Maldives: Repression of Peaceful Political Opposition*, ASA 29/002/2003 (Amnesty International, 2003), 4, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/ASA29/002/2003/en/.

[149] Xavier Nuttin, Virginie Vuylsteke, and Stefan Schulz, "Commonwealth Expert Team Report on Maldives Parliamentary Elections" (Brussels, European Parliament, May 22, 2006), 8–9, https://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2004_2009/documents/fd/200/200605/2006052_maldivesen.pdf.

[150] Jeffrey Hays, "Maumoon Abdul Gayoom and His 30 Years as the Maldives President (1978-2008)," Facts and Details, 2022, https://factsanddetails.com/south-asia/Maldives/History_Maldives/entry-8036.html.

[151] Paul Roberts, "Maldives on the Brink of Revolution as the Hunger for Democracy Proves Insatiable," CHRI News (Autumn 2004): 1, www.friendsofmaldives.co.uk.

[152] Mother Earth Travel, "History of Maldives," accessed March 26, 2022, http://motherearthtravel.com/maldives/history.htm.

[153] Trav Maldives, "Trav Maldives."

Nasserism, for example, arose as a consequence of their suffering under such governments. The totalitarian regime of President Gayoom imprisoned society during his last two terms (1998–2008). As a result, despite being enshrined as fundamental rights in the Constitution, "civil liberties such as freedom of expression, association, the right not to be held arbitrarily, to a fair trial and to be free from torture are denied to Maldivian citizens."[154]

The Maldives ratified seven constitutions between 1932 and 2008, most of which were ratified between 1932 and 1978. Proposals for reforms were initiated in June 2004 by President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom, including a pledge to rewrite the constitution for a multiparty democracy.

C.   DEMOCRACY AND THE POLITICAL SPECTRUM OF THE MALDIVES

The Maldives had power vested in the empire during the pre-Islamic era, although there are only a few records from that period and from as late as the 12th century. These records come from when Buddhism was the major religion in the Maldives. Archives make clear that the political spectrum was substantially more conservative, led by affluent regional sects; Buddhism and its culture affected how the political power was counterbalanced.

The Maldives had a consultative monarchy before 1932, with the Sultan possessing the executive, legislative, and judicial power. As a constitutional monarchy, the country had a power-sharing arrangement between the king and a liberal challenger to royal rule. The king's wishes are considered in legislative decisions, and Islamic tradition and local culture are typically valued. However, with the transition to the Republican era, the Maldives' administration and authority were vested in executive leaders.[155] Sultans, prime ministers, and presidents have also overseen and controlled legislative and judicial power. Furthermore, traditional religious principles have been strictly enforced.

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[154] Roberts, "Maldives on the Brink of Revolution as the Hunger for Democracy Proves Insatiable," 1.

[155] Zulfa, "From Big Bang to Incrementalism: Choice and Challenges in Constitution Building," 1.

Since the second republic (1968–2008), the president has been elected by direct public polls. The president holds the executive and legislative powers, which are composed of elected and appointed members, and the president holds the judicial authority. However, despite relaxing the restrictions on freedom of expression and limited civil autonomy, from 1968 to 2008, the government of the Maldives retained a dictatorial and totalitarian framework.

Since 2008, the Maldives has benefited from establishing a Western and democratic system based on competitive party politics through a democratic reform movement. The system is exercised by independent legislative, executive, judicial, media, and civic organizations. The elected representatives are responsible for the entire population and the state. Yet, over the last decade, democratic reform and democratic movements have challenged the nation's stability and the smooth governance of a democratic environment.

1. The Democratic Reform Movements

In the late 1990s, independent political movements in the Maldives emerged, challenging the government and the president, and demanding democratic reform.[156] An independent Majlis bloc launched a reform movement comprised of many young Western-educated reformers skeptical of Gayoom. Members who voted against Gayoom were removed from their seats. Many others were arrested, including "Ilyas Ibrahim, President Gayoom's brother-in-law who sought to run as a presidential candidate,"[157] and others who sought to run for president were reportedly charged with "unconstitutional behavior for attempting to influence the members of the Majlis."[158] Gayoom had not allowed political parties to exist in the Maldives for three decades because he said they would make the country less homogeneous.

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[156] Mohammed Nasheed, "Continued Detention of Prisoner of Conscience, Mohammed Nasheed," Amnesty International ASA29/02/96 (May1996): 2, https://www.amnesty.org/en/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/asa290021996en.pdf.

[157] Nasheed, 3.

[158] Nasheed, 2.

As a result, in 2001, the MDP, which was founded by a group of politically inexperienced citizens, started organizing in the United Kingdom.[159] The party was instrumental in "unifying and organizing the various opposition groups into one coherent popular nonviolent movement"[160] for a democratic state.

On August 12, 2004, supporters of the MDP conducted a peaceful demonstration in Republic Square, drawing roughly 10,000 people to the island capital of Malé, demanding the release of numerous activists and the resignation of President Gayoom.[161] The demonstration swelled in size until it was brutally suppressed by police the next day. Multiple individuals were hurt, and over 141 activists were arrested. Later, the day was called "Black Friday."[162]

In March 2006, a long-overdue "Roadmap to Democracy" with a detailed reform schedule was released by the government. It contained constitutional change plans, expanded human rights pledges, and promises of enhanced government investment in civic organizations.[163] In addition, the government started accepting international assistance and advice to educate judges, reform prisons, bolster official media, and train journalists. More promises temporarily appeased the international community but did little to mend his relationships with Gayoom's domestic opponents.

Constitutional amendments took place in August of 2007, paving the way for democratic elections to be held in their proper form in 2008. However, due to the speedy formulation and the reform of the of government, the Justice Minister and the Attorney General, along with top cabinet officials began to defect.[164] Gayoom sought re-election on a program of change. However, his reputation was severely damaged since he had broken

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[159] Mulberry, "The Maldives: From Dictatorship to Democracy and Back? (1978-2012)," 5.

[160] Mulberry, 5.

[161] "The Maldives – From Dictatorship to Democracy, and Back?"

[162] The Edition, "141 People Arrested from Friday Night's Protest: Police," accessed March 27, 2022, http://edition.mv/news/5535.

[163] European Commission, "Republic of the Maldives – Presidential Election, 8 October and 28 October 2008," EIDHR – NEW Democracy and Human Rights (European Commission, November 19, 2008), 9, https://www.eods.eu/library/FR%20MALDIVES%202009_en.pdf.

[164] Mulberry, "The Maldives: From Dictatorship to Democracy and Back? (1978–2012)," 12.

practically all of his commitments during the preceding four years. On the other hand, Gayoom maintained absolute control of the nation's only broadcast television station, Television Maldives (TVM), which he used as a propaganda engine.[165]

The next president of the Maldives from 2008 until his resignation in 2012, President Mohamed Nasheed, was well-liked by many young and energetic dissidents who supported the endeavors in democratization and efforts that led to the democratic transition, by becoming influential political campaign strategists and organizers. They thought it was easy to use civil disobedience tactics in a legally recognized presidential campaign, so they did it. The election was held on October 28, 2008. The election was monitored by UN diplomatic missions and the non-governmental organization (NGO) Transparency Maldives. Gayoom was defeated in the polls, receiving 46 percent of the vote, with the remaining 54 percent going to the victor, Mohamed Nasheed "Anni."[166] The MDP won on a campaign pledge to embody popular ideals after seizing the right to free and fair elections.

2. The Political Spectrum of the Maldives: Political Parties

The Maldives' first political party was founded on September 23, 1951; Al'Ameer Mohamed Ameen Didi led this party, dubbed "Muthaga'dhim." Due to the absence of other political parties, lack of competition, and the novelty of democratic values at the time, this party existed only during the government of Mohamed Ameen Didi.[167]

More than 50 years later, a petition signed by 42 people asking for a political party to be registered was sent to the Ministry of Home Affairs. The Attorney General turned down the request since the law did not allow political parties. Consequently, the issue of developing a multiparty system in the Maldives was raised in parliament and heavily debated. On June 17, 2001, 43 members voted against a multiparty democracy in the

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[165] International Media Support (IMS), "Difficult Times for Press Freedom in the Maldives," *IMS* (blog), April 15, 2013, https://www.mediasupport.org/maldives-difficult-times-for-press-freedom-in-the-maldives/.

[166] Election Commission of Maldives, "Presidential Election 2008," accessed March 27, 2022, https://www.elections.gov.mv/en/ec/elections/presidentialelectionresults2008.html.

[167] Election Commission of Maldives, "Beginning of Political Parties in the Maldives," June 26, 2005, https://www.elections.gov.mv/en/ec/page/political-parties.html.

Maldives. Nevertheless, the Maldives' political party development work continued. From September 2003, the Maldives' political landscape changed dramatically.[168] On June 9, 2004, President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom spoke publicly about the need for a multiparty democratic system. On June 23, 2005, the president, citing Article 42 of the Constitution, issued a decree allowing political party registration and tasked the Minister of Home Affairs with managing them.[169]

Act 4/2013 (Bill for Political Party Registration) requires a minimum of 300 signatories (Article 11, 18 years and above)[170] to register a political party in the Maldives. In addition, within three months of the party's registration, a minimum of 3,000 supporters must be enrolled. To date (April 2022), there are 11 registered political parties.[171] As tabulated in Table 1, as of now, the total eligible voting population is 419,732.[172]

The Elections Commission officially announced the formal campaign period on the evening of September 28, 2008. This allowed for a legal campaign period of nine days, which was insufficient for such a significant electoral event. However, the Elections Commission knew that candidates had been campaigning well before the official start of the campaign.[173]

The political arena is dominated by six major political parties that compete for votes. Thus, elections are frequently worn on the backs of coalitions of parties. MDP, which former President Mohamed Nasheed leads, is considered to be more liberal than the other parties. The Dhivehi Rayithunge Party (DRP), which was founded by former President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom and is currently led by Abdulla Jabir, can be described

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[168] Election Commission of Maldives, "Beginning of Political Parties in the Maldives.,"

[169] The Maldivian Democratic Party, "Our History – Maldivian Democratic Party," accessed March 30, 2022, https://mdp.org.mv/about-mdp/our-history.

[170] Election Commission of Maldives, "Beginning of Political Parties in the Maldives."

[171] Election Commission of Maldives, "Siyaasee Partythah," accessed October 8, 2022, https://www.elections.gov.mv/ec/political-parties/Siyaasee%20Partythah.html.

[172] World Population Review, "Maldives Population 2022 (Demographics, Maps, Graphs)," July 2022, https://worldpopulationreview.com/countries/maldives-population.

[173] Commonwealth Secretariat, "Maldives Presidential Election 1st Round of Voting 2008," October 8, 2008, 10, https://aceproject.org/ero-en/regions/asia/MV/maldives-final-report-presidential-elections/at_download/file.

as more conservative and nationalistic. The PPM, which Abdullah Yameen leads, can be described as more conservative and nationalistic. Umar Naseer, the former Minister of Home Affairs, is the leader of the Islamic Democratic Party (IDP), which is more conservative in its approach to preserving the tenets of Islam. The Adhaalath Party (AD), led by Imran Abdullah, has as its primary goal the preservation of the nation's Islamic identity. The Jumhoori Party (JP), led by the well-known businessman Gasim Ibrahim, dominates the rest of the handful of smaller political parties registered.

Political parties and their internal disputes are frequently witnessed by the public. By 2011 President Gayoom formed PPM after resigning from his first initiative, the DRP. This occurred after in-party disputes with Gayoom's running mate. The MDP enjoys an outright majority. Hence, the JP's best interest is to remain a stalwart member of the MDP-led coalition.[174] However, over the last two years, JPs' Parliament Members have frequently switched allegiances, assisting the regimes in tightening their grip on parliament. Success in presidential elections has always resulted from a coalition, especially one with religious parties. In the Maldives, religiously motivated political groups are part of a political coalition.

In 2013, the PPM nominated Gayoom's half-brother, Abdulla Yameen Abdul Gayoom, to run against Nasheed in the presidential election in 2013. Although the AP and JP supported the MDP against Gayoom in 2008, it supported the PPM against Nasheed in 2013.[175] During the September 2018 presidential elections, the united opposition comprising the MDP, JP, AP, and the PPM faction led by Gayoom waged a concerted campaign against the Abdulla Yameen government's policies.[176]

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[174] Amit Ranjan, "A Comprehensive Election Victory: What Next for the Maldivian Democratic Party?," ISAS, April 10, 2019, 3. https://www.isas.nus.edu.sg/papers/559-a-comprehensive-election-victory-what-next-for-the-maldivian-democratic-party/.

[175] Azim Zahir, "The Maldives: The Rise and Fall of a Muslim Democracy," accessed April 2, 2022, https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2018/9/23/the-maldives-the-rise-and-fall-of-a-muslim-democracy.

[176] Samatha Mallempati, "Forthcoming Parliamentary Elections in Maldives: Initial Observations - Indian Council of World Affairs (Government of India)," Indian Council of World Affairs, Sapru House, New Delhi, accessed April 3, 2022, https://www.icwa.in/show_content.php?lang=1&level=3&ls_id=4311&lid=3203.

The MDP is credited with efforts toward creating a better democracy that culminated in President Nasheed's election in the first multiparty election in 2008, ending President Gayoom's 30-year regime. Most political parties have also characterized the MDP as more Western-oriented and liberal, implying that it compromises Islam's tradition, culture, and revered religion. According to election results from 2013, the MDP has the most significant number of supporters of any single political party in the country.

According to President Nasheed, who announced his resignation from the presidency on state television in 2012, the reason for his resignation was a military-led coup.[177] Former President Gayoom orchestrated the operation, which extremists backed.[178] Opposition parties that had gathered significant support during Nasheed's presidency have staged several protests against the MDP, claiming that it was Nasheed's secular attitudes and disregard for state law, as well as his order to the Maldives National Defence Force (MNDF) to arrest the chief criminal justice, that led to public pressure that resulted in Nasheed's resignation.[179] Thus, its supporters are becoming increasingly unhappy with its independent politics and political goals, which have been hampered by its disjointed coalition membership and a lack of coherence in its governance policies.

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[177] *Mohamed Nasheed Speaks Exclusively to Al Jazeera, Al Jazeera*, video, 2012, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7gbG-M7GogE.

[178] Minivan News, "MDP Suggests Extremist Ideologies Prevalent within the Security Services," accessed April 3, 2022, https://minivannewsarchive.com/date/2014/05/15.

[179] *RaajjeTV Broadcasts Live, a Live Recording of BBC HardTalk before BBC Airs It (Clip 3 of 3)*, 2012, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=87uOCFi9D7Q.

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Table 1.   Maldives' political parties, status, and political ideology.[180]

#	ABB	PARTY	FOUNDED	STATUS	IDEOLOGY	REMARKS
1	MDP	Maldives Democratic Party	2005	Active	• Liberal conservatism • Islamic democracy	
Z	JP	Republic Party (Jumhooree Party)	2008	Active	• Economic liberalism • Social conservatism • Islamic democracy	
3	PPM	Progressive Party of Maldives	2011	Active	• Political Islam • Conservatism • Nationalism	Faction from DRP
4	PNC	People's National Congress	2019	Active	• Political Islam • Conservatism	Faction from PPM
5	MDA	Maldives Development Alliance	2012	Active	• Economic liberalism • Political Islam	Coalition with PPM supporting 2013 Election
6	DRP	Maldives People's Party (Dhivehi Rayyithunge Party)	2005	Active	• Conservatism • Islamic democracy • Populism	
7	AP	Justice Party (Adhaalath Party)	2005	Active	• Religious conservatism • Islamism • Islamic democracy	AP has been active in the political arena and instrumental in all the recent government changes. Along with JP Party, AP has played a pivotal role in the election.
8	MRM	Maldives Reform Movement	2019	Active	• Conservatism • Islamic democracy • Populism	Faction from PPM
9	MLSDP	Maldives Labor and Social Democratic Party	2019	Active	• Social democracy	
10	MTWD	Maldives Third Way Democrats	2018	Active	• Third way	
11	PA	People's Alliance	2008	Dissolved 2018	•	
12	DQP	Dhivehi Qaumee Party	2009	Dissolved 2013	•	
13	GIP	National Unity Party (Gaumee itthihaad)	2009	Dissolved 2013	• Social democracy • Environmentalism	
14	IDP	Islamic Democratic Party	2005	Dissolved 2013	• Islamism • Islamic democracy	
15	MSDP	Maldives Social Democratic Party	2006			
16	PP	People's Party	2007			
17	MNC	Maldives National Congress	2007			
18	SLP	Social Liberal Party	2007	Dissolved 2013	• Social liberalism	
19	MLP	Poverty Alleviating Party	2008		• Socialism	
20	MNP	Maldives National Party	2021	Active		

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[180] Adapted from Election Commission of Maldives, "Siyaasee Partythah."

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IV. DEMOCRATIZATION: LIBERAL DEMOCRACY AND POLITICAL VIOLENCE

Based on known history, from the country's religious conversion until the present, Islam has been the official religion of the whole population of the Maldives,[181] and devotion to it is a requirement for citizenship. In addition, religious elites and conservative parties also play a significant role in securing its political influence, comparable in many ways to the endeavors of Islamists and the Muslim Brotherhood. Religion as a tool for political gains and achievements coincides with commitments to Islamic values and can mobilize the masses through emotional appeal. However, the events of the Arab Spring have had far-reaching effects on democratic representation in the region.[182] Unlike in Tunisia and Egypt, remarkable "democratic" achievements have not been reproduced elsewhere in the Arab World. Some Egyptians, however, are starting to doubt the effectiveness of their nation's democratic revolution. Syria's government and military are violently fighting peaceful threats to their power, while Libya is in chaos.[183] Likewise, for the people of the Maldives, it is still unclear if their country is on the way to becoming a genuinely democratic, religiously moderate, and modern state.

In this chapter, I analyze the global trends that have rippled from the West to the East, carrying the ideals of liberal democracy, and examine the waves that have recently rippled through the Maldives' democracy.

A. INTRODUCTION

In a democracy, citizens of a nation-state are ostensibly permitted to express their opinions and interests via rational discourse. The sphere of intense political activities within any nation employs political means and measures—violence or non-violence—to

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[181] Library of Congress, "Maldives - Places in the News," webpage, accessed October 28, 2022, https://www.loc.gov/today/placesinthenews/archive/2008arch/20080109_maldives.html.

[182] Saltanat Berdikeeva, "The Arab Spring and Its Aftermath: A Review of the Decade," *Inside Arabia* (blog), January 1, 2020, https://insidearabia.com/the-arab-spring-and-its-aftermath-a-review-of-the-decade/.

[183] Elias D. Mallon, "Will Democracy Bloom?: A Closer Look at Arab Spring," *America Magazine*, October 10, 2011, https://www.americamagazine.org/issue/789/article/will-democracy-bloom.

41

protect its existence and combat violent groups rejecting political ideals. Such violence might evade democratic control and erode fundamental liberty. In recent years, it has been evident that political violence threatens democracies.[184] Nevertheless, in the majority of nascent democracies, violent political groups simply want acknowledgment and inclusion. It must be examined how democratic countries react to such issues. Empirical evidence from a wide range of established and developing democracies elucidates political violence. The democratic theory approaches the problem of establishing a liberal democracy in the face of conflict, violence, and social division from a unique perspective—that at both the societal and governmental levels, forces and powers must work together.

According to a survey conducted by the Pew Research Center, many nations are dissatisfied with the level of democracy in their country. In this study, in 27 countries surveyed, 51 percent are dissatisfied with how their democracy functions, compared with 45 percent who are satisfied.[185] The degree to which people are dissatisfied varies slightly across the globe. However, this study claims that in the Asia-Pacific, people are generally content with how democracy functions in their nations.[186] I disagree with this—"as the economic or social change has inexorably led to dissatisfaction with democracy and a backlash from populists."[187] This view is corroborated by Sherri Berman, who posits that "economic and social changes only become problems if politicians, parties and governments do not recognize and respond to them."[188]

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[184] Sarah Repucci and Amy Slipowitz, "Democracy under Siege," Freedom House, accessed July 31, 2022, https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2021/democracy-under-siege.

[185] Richard Wike, Laura Silver, and Alexandra Castillo, "Many Across the Globe Are Dissatisfied With How Democracy Is Working," Pew Research Center's Global Attitudes Project, April 29, 2019, https://www.pewresearch.org/global/2019/04/29/many-across-the-globe-are-dissatisfied-with-how-democracy-is-working/.

[186] Wike, Silver, and Castillo, "Many Across the Globe Are Dissatisfied With How Democracy Is Working."

[187] Mark J. Gasiorowski, "Economic Crisis and Political Regime Change: An Event History Analysis," *The American Political Science Review* 89, no. 4 (1995): 883, https://doi.org/10.2307/2082515; Steven Levitsky and Daniel Ziblatt, "The Crisis of American Democracy," American Federation of Teachers, May 23, 2021, https://www.aft.org/ae/fall2020/levitsky_ziblatt.

[188] Sheri Berman, "Why Are We so Dissatisfied with Democracy? The Reasons Are Many," *The Guardian*, December 22, 2018, sec. Opinion, https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/dec/22/why-are-we-so-dissatisfied-with-democracy-the-reasons-are-many.

In a democratic system, civil and political rights help keep an exchange society going. This is a social field where public symbols (like what a flag or a cross means to a person or community), values, and norms which have both tangible and intangible components.[189] "Its social forces are embedded in this medium and flow in one direction or another, creating different balances between what people want, can get, and will try to get. Conflict or cooperation in this field, as well as violence or peace, depends on how well these balances match up with what people expect to happen when they act."[190]

People who live in a democracy are spontaneous, different, and open to different ideas. As stated by F.A Hayek, this is the result of the actions of autonomous equals, which result from conflicting plans, where coordinating structure directs individuals with different ideas to work together to create a dynamic pattern.[191] Similarly, R. J. Rummel states, "they belong to independent and overlapping occupational, religious, recreational, and political subgroups, each with its own interests. They are moved by the separate and even antagonistic desires of different age, sex, ethnic, racial, and regional strata."[192] This reflects the lifelong process when individuals form their ideas about politics and how they acquire political values,[193] where "Political Socialization is the process in which people develop their political values, beliefs, attitudes, and ideology. It is a process that is continuous, which means it happens throughout one's life."[194]

The term "liberal in liberal democracy does not imply that the government of such a democracy must follow the political ideology of liberalism."[195] It is only a reference to

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[189] Northeast Wisconsin Technical College, "The Elements of Culture," accessed November 4, 2022, https://wtcs.pressbooks.pub/diversityintro/chapter/1-2-the-elements-of-culture/.

[190] R.J. Rummel, "The Democratic Peace: A New Idea," accessed June 14, 2022, https://www.hawaii.edu/powerkills/POLSYS.ART.HTM.

[191] Gus diZerega, "Spontaneous Order and Liberalism's Complex Relation to Democracy," *The Independent Review* 16, no. 2 (2011): 176–78, https://www.jstor.org/stable/24563151.

[192] R. J. Rummel, "The Politics of Cold Blood," *Society* 27, no. 1 (November 1989): 34, https://doi.org/10.1007/BF02695453.

[193] Avijit Biswas, "Political Socialization: Meaning, Characteristics, And 7 Agents," September 14, 2020, https://schoolofpoliticalscience.com/agents-of-political-socialization/.

[194] Isabela Padilha Vilela, "Political Socialization Review," June 7, 2020, https://library.fiveable.me.

[195] McGill University, "Liberal Democracy," 2007, https://www.cs.mcgill.ca/~rwest/wikispeedia/wpcd/wp/l/Liberal_democracy.htm.

the fact that thinkers championing liberty established the foundation for contemporary liberal democracy through "cultural exchange during the Age of Enlightenment [that] ran between particular European countries and also in both directions across the Atlantic."[196] They highlighted the individual right to immunity against the arbitrary use of power. There are now a variety of political philosophies that promote liberal democracy.[197] Conservative thought such as "Christian democracy, social democracy, and various kinds of socialism" are a few examples.[198]

As seen in Figure 1, political violence has become a regular occurrence throughout the world. Those states that revoke the new democratic system or embrace modern Western liberal democracy find themselves amid such political squabbles and domestic political violence. It is often used to describe contemporary political occurrences in many established democracies.[199]

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[196] Lumen Learning, "The Age of Enlightenment - History of Western Civilization II," accessed October 21, 2022, https://courses.lumenlearning.com/suny-hccc-worldhistory2/chapter/the-age-of-enlightenment/.

[197] European Center for Populism Studies (ECPS), "Liberal Democracy."

[198] Philip Manow, "The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly: Esping-Andersen's Regime Typology and the Religious Roots of the Western Welfare State," September 4, 2004, 15.

[199] William A. Galston and Elaine Kamarck, "Is Democracy Failing and Putting Our Economic System at Risk?," *Brookings* (blog), January 4, 2022, https://www.brookings.edu/research/is-democracy-failing-and-putting-our-economic-system-at-risk/.

Plot 01: Geographical Representation of Political Violence Index

POLITICAL VIOLENCE INDEX

0: Not at all.
1: Rare.
2: Occasionally.
3: Frequently.
4: Often.
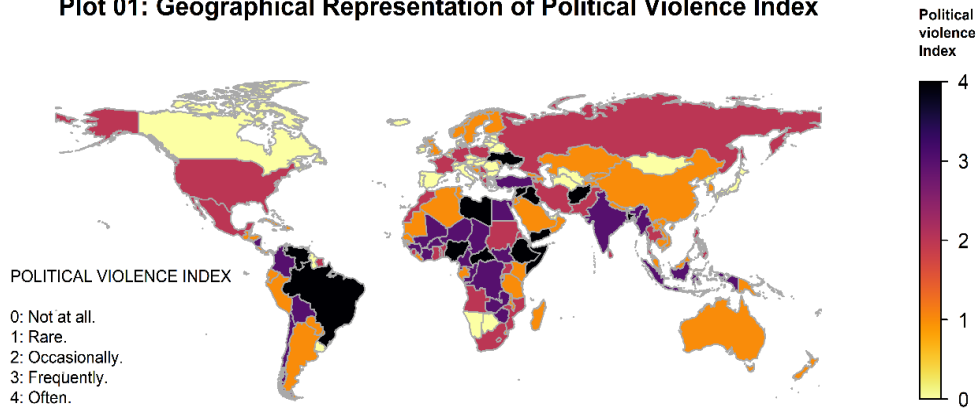
Plot 02: Geographical Representation of Liberal Democracy

LIBERAL DEMOCRACY INDEX

Scale: Interval, from low to high (0-1).
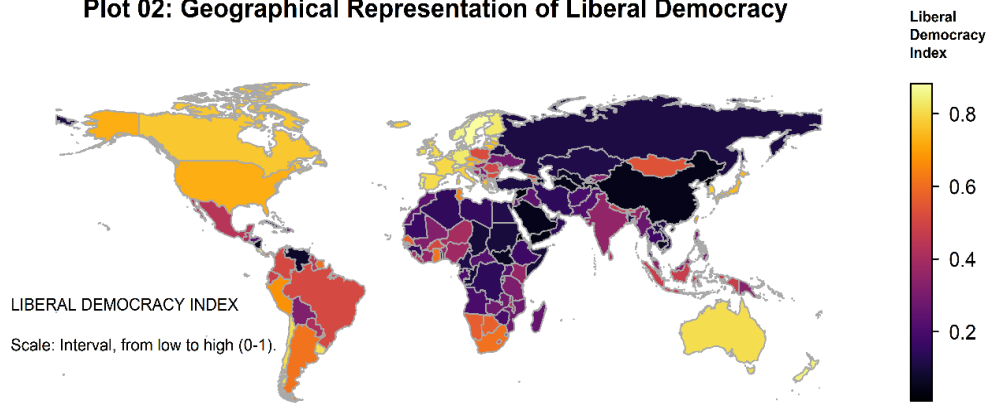
Figure 1.   Geographical representation of political violence
and liberal democracy indices.[200]

According to Armed Conflict Location and Event Data (ACLED), violent political disorder is emerging in locations where it has been present for decades, such as Afghanistan, as well as erupting in steady regions, such as the United States.[201] As illustrated in Figure 2, political violence can be seen from a broader perspective across all polity scores around the world. "The growth of political polarization globally has raised concerns about its detrimental effects on politics and society, including increased political

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[200] Adapted from University of Gothenburg, v-Dem Institute, "Varieties of Democracy V-Dem Project (v-Dem Full+Others) Version 12 Dataset," March 2022, https://www.v-dem.net/data/the-v-dem-dataset/country-year-v-dem-fullothers/.

[201] Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED), "10 Conflicts to Worry About in 2020," January 23, 2020, https://acleddata.com/2020/01/23/ten-conflicts-to-worry-about-in-2020/.

violence, a decline in democracy and governance, and more."[202] Therefore, figuring out how to alleviate some of these baseline triggers is a pressing issue that must be addressed.

Figure 2 visualizes the distribution of political violence by polity scores of countries experiencing it for the 1797 to 2020 period (source: v-Dem, unit of measure: country-year). It represents a distribution with a higher mean, resulting in concentrated data around the mean (low standard deviation), which can be interpreted as a high polity score resulting in lower levels of violence. Intriguingly, a bimodal distribution of high-level violence across the samples (countries) is seen with a significant large standard deviation clustered between the polity scores of +5 to -5, where the polity scores indicate an anocracy.[203]
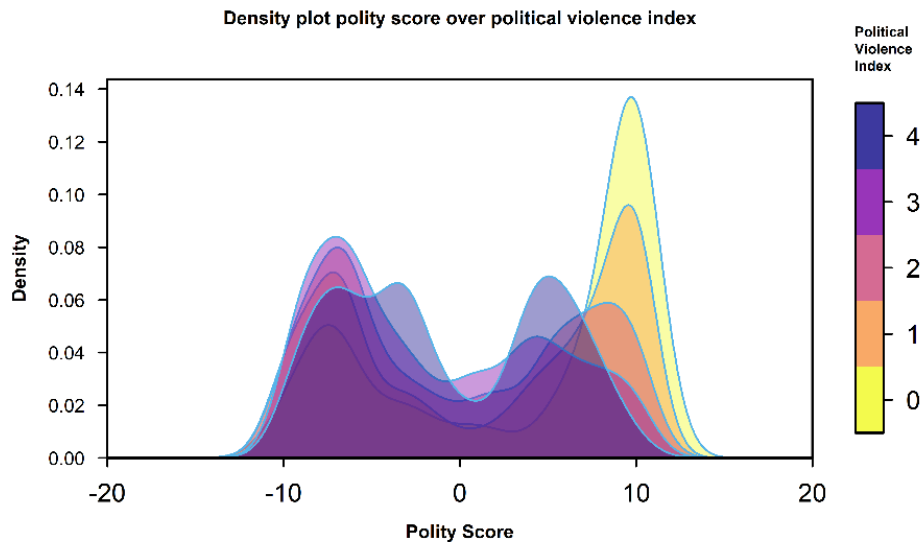
Figure 2.   Density plot polity over political violence index.[204]

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[202] Jennifer McCoy Tuncel, Benjamin Press, Murat Somer Ozlem, "Reducing Pernicious Polarization: A Comparative Historical Analysis of Depolarization," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, accessed November 1, 2022, https://carnegieendowment.org/2022/05/05/reducing-pernicious-polarization-comparative-historical-analysis-of-depolarization-pub-87034.

[203] Center for Systemic Peace, "The Polity Project," 1997, https://www.systemicpeace.org/polityproject.html.

[204] Adapted from "Varieties of Democracy V-Dem Project (v-Dem Full+Others) Version 12 Dataset."

B. DEFINING POLITICAL VIOLENCE

The line between political violence and other forms of violence has also been blurred. Although there is a broad consensus that political violence is better understood as a subset of violence in general, others disagree. There is also widespread disagreement among political violence theorists about whether violence in politics is an effort to determine if political authority is legitimate.[205]

In most contemporary cultures, political violence results from societal conflicts that arise for various reasons, often as a result of a gridlock; Max Weber (1864 – 1920) broadened this notion to include multiple class levels based on race, gender, and religion. He felt that, in addition to political revolution, debate and the flow of ideas might result in social strife and transformation.[206] The state is often the target of political violence since it is seen as the primary source of injustice and repression. Consequently, some sectors of society resort to violence to draw attention their grievances. They resort to violence because the state has failed to ensure regular compliance. Zachary M. Jones and Yonatan Lupu describe regimes and their relation to violence. Citing claims presented by Kristine Eck, Lisa Hultman, Helen Fein and Hávard Hegre; Jones and Lupu state that "A series of influential studies have suggested this relationship is curvilinear, with violence most likely in regimes in the middle range—often referred to as anocracies—that are neither fully autocratic nor fully democratic."[207]

Violence is a deliberate political action intended to oppose the government's wrong policies by some segments of society. Similarly, "Revolution, which was dominant throughout the nineteenth century, … gave us our modern idea of revolution as an *arrested*

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[205] Rachel Kleinfeld, "The Rise of Political Violence in the United States," *Journal of Democracy*, October 2021, https://www.journalofdemocracy.org/articles/the-rise-of-political-violence-in-the-united-states/.

[206] R. Swedberg, *Max Weber and the Idea of Economic Sociology* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2018), 1, https://books.google.com/books?id=soFcDwAAQBAJ.

[207] Zachary M. Jones and Yonatan Lupu, "Is There More Violence in the Middle?," *American Journal of Political Science* 62, no. 3 (July 2018): 652, https://doi.org/10.1111/ajps.12373.

turn in the wheel of progress, received its quietus for liberals in the recrudescence of the dictatorships."[208]

In summary, according to ACLED, political violence is when a group uses force for a political goal or reason. A politically violent event is a single fight where one or more groups often use force to achieve a political goal. Protests and other nonviolent actions are also seen as ways a conflict may have started or reached a turning point.[209]

For this paper, I am analyzing how liberal ideas may lead to conflict in both liberal and social democratic traditions that are intertwined throughout a political transition.

C.   POLITICAL VIOLENCE AND DEMOCRACY

The bulk of the last half-century has been marked by a phenomenal expansion of democratic governments all over the globe. This trend can be traced back to the 1960s. The number of democratic governments almost tripled between 1970 and 2010, with democratic transitions spreading from the "southern cone of South America to West Africa, Southeast Asia, and the countries that were a part of the former Soviet bloc."[210] By 2000, more than half of the global population lived in countries governed democratically for the first time in recorded history.[211]

"The viable alternative to democracy, whether of ancient or of modern origins— suffered political, economic, diplomatic, and military failures that greatly lessened their appeal."[212] The monarchy, aristocracy, and oligarchy of antiquity lost their legitimacy when the Allies won World War I. Fascism, a more recent alternative, was also cast off

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[208] Peter A. R. Calvert, "Revolution: The Politics of Violence," *Political Studies* 15, no. 1 (February 1, 1967): 2, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9248.1967.tb01831.x.

[209] Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED), "Definitions of Political Violence, Agents and Event Types," 3, accessed June 14, 2022, https://www.acleddata.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Definitions-of-Political-Violence_2015.pdf.

[210] Drew Desilver, "Despite Global Concerns about Democracy, More than Half of Countries Are Democratic," *Pew Research Center* (blog), accessed June 23, 2022, https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2019/05/14/more-than-half-of-countries-are-democratic/.

[211] Bastian Herre and Max Roser, "Democracy," *Our World in Data*, March 15, 2013, https://ourworldindata.org/democracy.

[212] Robert A. Dahl, "Democracy - The Spread of Democracy in the 20th Century," Britannica, August 24, 2022, https://www.britannica.com/topic/democracy/The-spread-of-democracy-in-the-20th-century.

after the military losses of Germany and Italy in World War II, and Soviet-style communism was repudiated following the economic and political collapse of the Soviet Union in 1990–1991. In Latin America in the 1980s and 1990s, military dictatorships gradually vanished due to similar failings.[213] This is a fact that democracies do not form in a vacuum. The Cold War and the availability of nuclear weapons in Europe had more to do than anything else with why political violence came about. Thus, as war decreased within Europe immediately after World War II, it escalated elsewhere, as "[m]any countries emerged from colonialism with little political experience."[214] These shifts in political systems and the emergence of political violence can be examined through a variety of techniques that quantify regime instability, and some of them suggest that shifts in either direction—towards more democracy or toward greater autocracy—increase the probability that civil war will break out in a nation.[215]

The democratic wave of the past 60 years has resulted in a historic decline in the frequency of interstate wars while simultaneously granting hundreds of millions of individuals various political and social rights. Figure 3 depicts a comparative trend across regions where political violence has been most prominent.

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[213] Robert H. Dix, "Military Coups and Military Rule in Latin America," *Armed Forces & Society* 20, no. 3 (1994): 451, https://www.jstor.org/stable/45347010.

[214] World101, "How Did Decolonization Reshape the World?," Council on Foreign Relations, accessed October 25, 2022, https://world101.cfr.org/historical-context/global-era/how-did-decolonization-reshape-world.

[215] Lars-Erik Cederman, Simon Hug, and Lutz F. Krebs, "Democratization and Civil War: Empirical Evidence," *Journal of Peace Research* 47, no. 4 (2010): 379, https://www.jstor.org/stable/20752195.

Political Violence Scores Across Regions
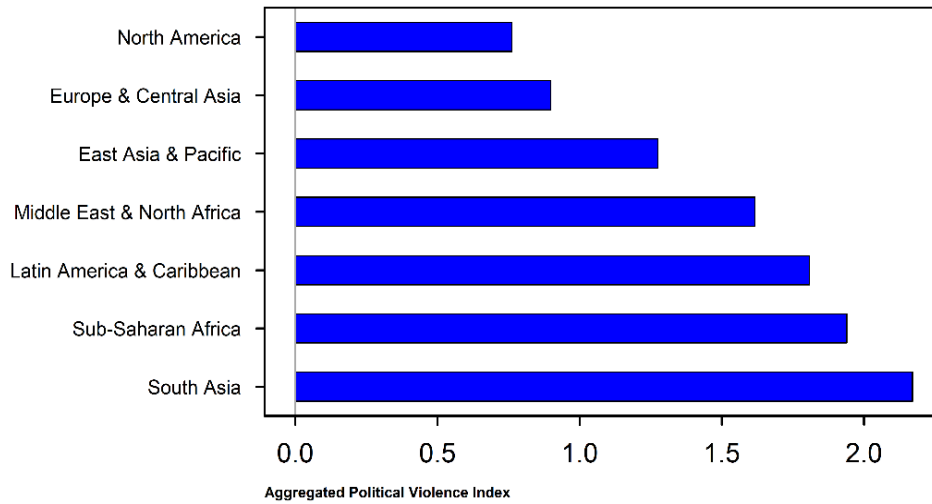
Figure 3.   Political violence scores across regions.[216]

D.   LIBERAL DEMOCRACIES AROUND THE WORLD

Libertarian ideas sparked the American and French Revolutions at the end of the 18th century, giving rise to liberalism as an ideology and establishing political structures based on the ideals of Enlightenment philosophers.[217] This was the cradle of modern liberal democracy, even though these first democracies were ones in which voting rights were restricted to a small percentage of the population. Liberalism helped these governments gain the name liberal democracies because of the liberal support.[218]

Various organizations and political scientists maintain lists of free and unfree countries. These organizations include Polity Dataset and Freedom House. There is a widespread consensus among these organizations that liberal democracies can be found in the countries that make up the European Union, Japan, the United States, Canada, India, South Africa, Australia, and New Zealand. At the same time, many governments in Africa

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[216] Adapted from Our World in Data, "Age of Democracy Dataset (1800 – 2020)," March 15, 2022, https://ourworldindata.org/grapher/age-of-democracy-polity?tab=table&country=ARG~AUT~GRD.

[217] Thomas DeMichele, "The Age of Enlightenment and the Birth of Liberalism," Facts and Myths, May 16, 2016, http://factmyth.com/the-age-of-enlightenment-and-the-birth-of-liberalism/.

[218] McGill University, "Liberal Democracy."

and the former Soviet Union claim to be democratic, Freedom House believes that, in reality, they are anything but not.[219] This is often due to the incumbent government's stronghold on election results. Many of these nations are undergoing dramatic political transformations. There are more dictatorships and one-party states in East Asia, the Middle East, and North Africa than anywhere else. Typically, dictators maintain their hold on power by putting an end to criticism of their policies and rules. Dubious methods often accomplish this, such as intimidation, incarceration (legal or not), physical assault, or even execution.[220]

However, when looking at the trend of the age of a democracy in relation to political violence and liberal democracies across the globe, we see a linear decline in political violence, as shown in Figure 4. This prediction and the relationship are achieved with a linear model generated to analyze the correlation between the age of a democracy and political violence, considering the liberal democracy index from the accumulated v-Dem country-year dataset from 1882 to 2022, with a sample size (N) of 3138, which resulted in a statistically significant *p-value* of less than 0.01 with an R-squared of 0.124. (Equation 1)

$$\textit{Political Violence} = \partial + \beta_1 * \textit{Liberal democracy} + \partial + \beta_2 * \textit{Age of democracy} \tag{1}$$

Political violence increases when liberal principles are diminished or less liberal within a democracy. Consequently, with the passage of the age of democracy, political violence is seen as a declining tendency. In fact, countries with more liberal principles tend to have fewer incidents of political violence (Figure 5). Conversely, although political violence declines over time, it does not disappear entirely.

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[219] McGill University, "Liberal Democracy,"

[220] World Population Review, "Dictatorship Countries 2022," accessed August 3, 2022, https://worldpopulationreview.com/country-rankings/dictatorship-countries.

Trend of Liberal Democracy and Political Violence over Age of Democracy (1822 - 2022)
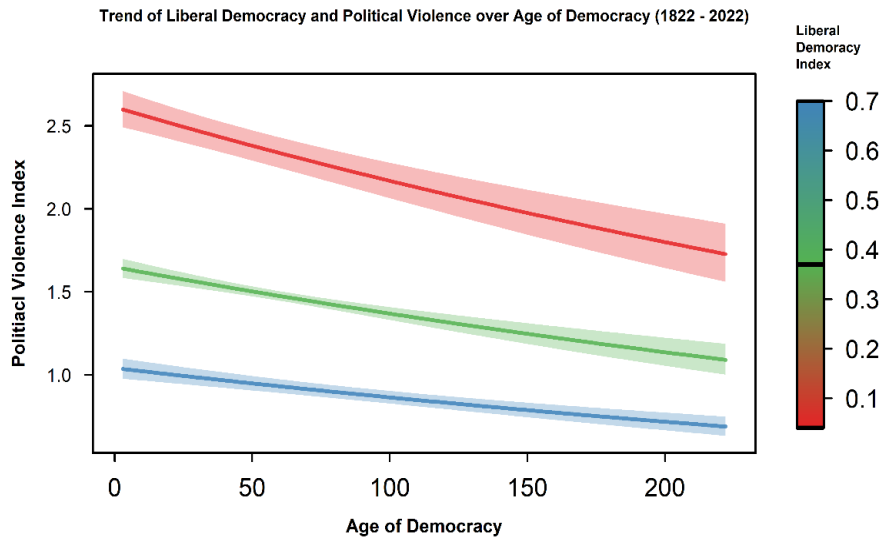
Figure 4.   Liberal democracy and political violence in relation to the age of democracy.[221]

Density plot liberal democracy index over political violence index
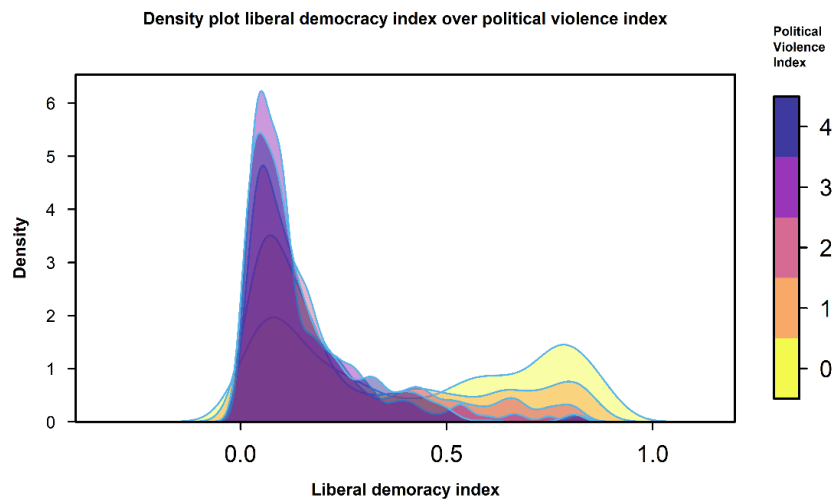
Figure 5.   Liberal democracy and political violence density plot.[222]

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[221] Adapted from The World Bank, "World Development Indicators (1990-2022)," March 15, 2022, https://databank.worldbank.org/reports.aspx?source=2&series=NY.GDP.MKTP.KD.ZG&country=; "Age of Democracy Dataset (1800 – 2020)"; "Varieties of Democracy V-Dem Project (v-Dem Full+Others) Version 12 Dataset."

[222] Adapted from "Varieties of Democracy V-Dem Project (v-Dem Full+Others) Version 12 Dataset."

E.   CAUSES OF POLITICAL VIOLENCE

Most of the time, when people talk about liberal democracy they are referring to certain rights and freedoms. "They were originally considered essential for the functioning of a liberal democracy, but they have acquired such prominence in its definition, that many people now think they are democracy."[223] These defining characteristics are usually fought over because no country wants to admit it is "not free" and because its enemies may be called "tyrannies" by its propaganda.[224] In practice, democracies do place restrictions on certain liberties. For example, restrictions could be placed on speech that is hostile to democracy and attempts to trample on human rights, as well as speech that promotes or justifies acts of terrorism.

According to this view, to extend freedom and maintain a balance between the governing authorities and the citizens, it is vital to ensure the existence of democracy, as well as its associated individual liberties and freedoms. These include, but are not limited to, the following fundamentals of liberal democracies:

- Right to life and security of person.
- Freedom from slavery.
- Freedom of movement.
- Equality before the law and due process under the rule of law.
- Freedom of speech.
- Freedom of information.
- Freedom of the press and access to alternative information sources.
- Freedom of association and assembly.
- Freedom of education.
- Freedom of religion.
- An independent judiciary.
- The right to own property and to buy and sell the same.[225]

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[223] McGill University, "Liberal Democracy."

[224] Raymond D. Gastil and Leonard R. Sussman, *Freedom in the World: Political Rights and Civil Liberties, 1980* (New York: Freedom House, 1980), 6–19.

[225] United States Department of State, "Democracy in Brief" (Bureau of International Information Programs (IIP)), accessed November 1, 2022, https://static.america.gov/uploads/sites/8/2016/07/Democracy-in-Brief_In-Brief-Series_English_Hi-Res.pdf.

"The state is a social institution, and the main goal of the state is to bring its citizens together in economic, social, and political ways."[226] Similarly, according to Ravi Kishan, "A State is a politically organized group or society inside a defined region that a single sovereign government governs and is a unique institution that serves the common good or a social class."[227] However, multiple independent political authorities were able to coexist within ancient and medieval states because these states allowed for it.[228] Conversely, in the modern age, "the state has jurisdiction over territory insofar as its people own the territory, and delegates its jurisdictional powers over their land to the state."[229] There may be distinct cultural and ethnic groups in each state. On the other hand, "when racial or ethnic groups merge in a political movement as a form of establishing a distinct political unit, then such groups can be termed nations that may be seen as representing beliefs in nationalism."[230] In light of this, challenges and civil disturbances are evident in many nations.[231] According to research conducted by Demet Yalcin Mousseau "Such societies will face more intense forms of political violence than other democracies, … considering that the maturity of democracy and a highly developed economy appear as important conditions for peaceful conflict resolution."[232] Therefore, political authorities should seek to unite such groupings into a unified state.

There are several root causes of political violence, but citizens generally turn to violence as a last option. Citizens opt to utilize violent measures when they believe their

[226] Druk Journal, "The State and Its Institutions," accessed November 1, 2022, http://drukjournal.bt/the-state-and-its-institutions/.

[227] Ravi Kishan, "The State as a Social Institution: Its Function and Influence on Other Institutions," accessed November 1, 2022, https://www.socialworkin.com/2022/01/the-state-as-social-institution-its.html.

[228] Qian Chengdan, "Transformation of European States: From Feudal to Modern," *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences* 2, no. 5 (2010): 6683, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2010.05.013.

[229] eGyanKosh, "Unit 10-Political Violence" (Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), 2018), 15, https://egyankosh.ac.in/bitstream/123456789/23723/1/Unit-14.pdf.

[230] Polly Rizova and John Stone, "Race, Ethnicity, and Nation," in *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of International Studies* (New York & London: Oxford University Press, 2010), 1, https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190846626.013.470.

[231] Demet Yalcin Mousseau, "Democratizing with Ethnic Divisions: A Source of Conflict?," *Journal of Peace Research* 38, no. 5 (2001): 564, https://www.jstor.org/stable/424775.

[232] Mousseau, 564.

community's existence is in jeopardy and that they would be forced to endure unending suffering if they do not fight back. Typically, individuals exhaust all legally accessible channels to rectify their problems. However, when legal means fail to produce results, people resort to violence. The ideological differences between the political system and society that may lead to violence may be prompted by different causes. Likewise, generalizing a concept that may suit the range of political violence differs due to numerous inherent characteristics of a nation-state. Thus, the efforts to promote liberal democracies are frequently hampered by the pervasive influence of political violence. Consequently, liberal democracies tend to be diverse in terms of nations and societal hierarchies.

This paper aims to contribute to a better understanding of the relationship between political socialization and political violence within states deemed to excel in promoting Western liberal concepts or Westernization. In light of these facts and to show the tendency that leads to political violence in a democracy, the following chapter analyzes how the promotion of Western liberal ideas can intensify political violence within a nation.

F.   HYPOTHESIS

Referring to the aforementioned literature, it is globally observable that in recent decades, the promotion of Western liberal democracy has drawn the attention of many nation-states, where regimes tend to adopt this political system to fulfill the needs of their native society. In transitioning to a democratic environment and in nascent democracies, we frequently see instability and the eruption of political violence. In light of the foregoing, I assert that:

Promoting Western values that are favorable to democracy causes an increase in political violence.

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V. METHODOLOGY

This study attempts to validate the hypothesis presented at the end of Chapter IV by examining data derived from open sources. Also, for this real-world data, a multivariable regression is used to create models that generate statistical results and correlations between the dependent and independent variables and to evaluate results with strong correlations that support the claimed hypothesis.

A. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

I have considered expanding explanatory data to include theoretical aspects to build a simple and traceable model that serves as a useful guide on how measurable indicators can determine the probability of political violence occurring within a democracy. In a liberal democracy, for instance, it is generally accepted that economic growth promotes political stability. According to Andrew Moravcsik's explanation of the liberal theory, governments' commitment to growth appears to result primarily from the aggregation of societal preferences.[233] Therefore, I have considered polity scores, GDP, and population. Since the GDP and population bounds of a nation-state are a vital element of the nation's prosperity and economic growth, these variables are considered as control variables. Political violence, which is the most critical factor, will be judged against the essential values of liberal democracy (Figure 6).

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[233] Peter Ferguson, "Liberalism and Economic Growth: A Theoretical Exploration," *Environmental Values* 125, no. 5 (2016): 593, https://www.jstor.org/stable/44075204.
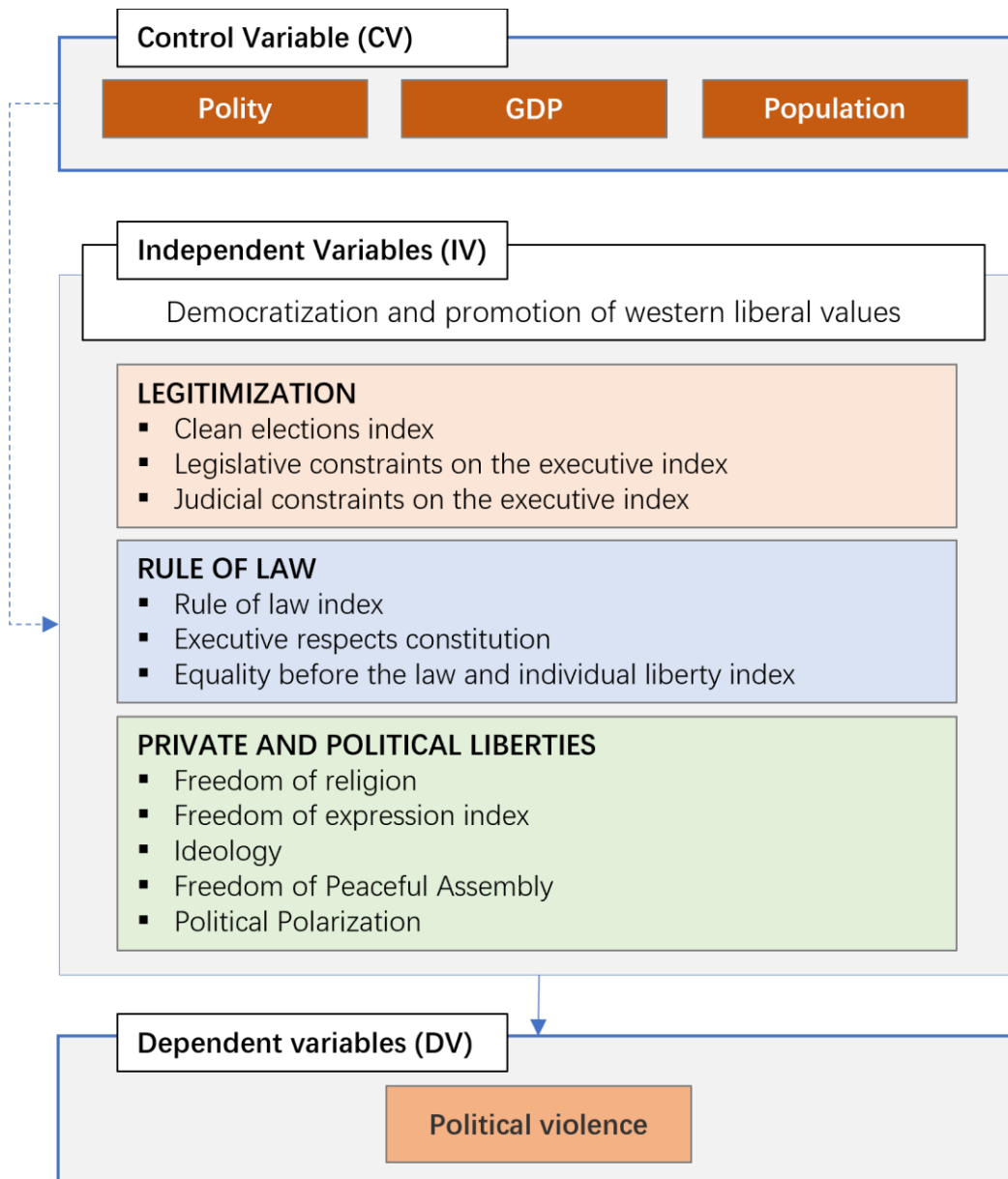
Figure 6.   Research conceptual framework.

B.   DATA SOURCES AND CONSTRAINTS

The analysis collects data from three open-source data sources (Table 2), with a unit of analysis by country from 1960 to 2022.

Table 2.　　Data sources and constraints.

		DESCRIPTION
1	Varieties of Democracy (v-dem) **Dataset**: March 2022. Country-Year: V-Dem Full+Others	
	URL	https://www.v-dem.net/
	Constraints	The V-dem dataset has yearly country data from 1789 until 2021. However, for this study, considering the age of democracy, I will be limited to the last 77 years of data due to the limitation on data available on World Bank Indicators Dataset.
2	The World Bank	
	URL	https://www.worldbank.org/en/home.
	Constraints	Due to World Bank indicators dataset constraints, not all the variables have data before 1960, so this research is limited to the period of 1960 to 2022.
3	Our World in Data	
	URL	https://ourworldindata.org/democracy.
	Description	Mainly for data visualization – no constraints.

C.　　VARIABLES AND DESCRIPTIONS

For the statistical analysis, I have considered the aggregated indices from the consulted data sources. A statistical summary of the regression dataset is provided in Appendix A (Data Summary). Table 3 presents the descriptions of the variables used for the analysis.

Table 3.　　Description of the variables.[234]

#	Variable / Description	Data Type	Variable Type
1	Population A rapid rise in population puts a strain on political institutions and adds to the demands placed on services.	Continuous	Control variable
2	GDP per Capita Over time, accumulating more socially and economically capable citizens drives economic development in democracies. According to Acemoglu et al. (2019), democracy results in economic reforms, increased investment, an enhanced supply of education and healthcare, and less social unrest; these factors contribute to economic development.	Continuous	Control variable

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[234] Adapted from University of Gothenburg, v-Dem Institute, "Varieties of Democracy - Code Book Version 11.1," March 2021, https://www.v-dem.net/static/website/img/refs/codebookv111.pdf.

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#	Variable / Description	Data Type	Variable Type
3	**Age of Democracy**	Continuous	Control variable
	Democracy grants society the fundamental freedoms to express their opinions. In a democracy, every person has the opportunity to choose and replace their representatives if they are not fulfilling the indiviual's needs.		
4	**Clean elections**	Ordinal	Independent variable
	The Electoral Democracy Index measures the principle of electoral democracy, also known as representative democracy. This index takes into account several factors, such as whether or not elections were held in a free and fair manner, as well as the presence of a media that is both free and independent. As a fundamental element of democratic governance, this indicator is integrated into each and every one of the other indices.		
5	**Equality before the law and individual liberty**	Ordinal	Independent variable
	This indicates the extent to which laws are transparent and rigorously enforced and public administration impartial, and to what extent citizens enjoy access to justice, secure property rights, freedom from forced labor, freedom of movement, physical integrity rights, and freedom of religion.		
6	**Judicial constraints on the executive**	Ordinal	Independent variable
	This indicates the extent to which the executive respects the constitution and complies with court rulings, and to what extent the judiciary is able to act in an independent fashion.		
7	**Legislative constraints on the executive**	Ordinal	Independent variable
	Most individuals are aware of the differences between legislative and executive responsibilities. The legislative branch is responsible for enacting laws, whereas the executive implements them. The people choose legislators, but the vast majority of bureaucrats advance in their careers based on their performance in exams and other evaluations, which aligns with the conventional understanding of democracy.		
8	**Executive respects constitution**	Ordinal	Independent variable
	The implementation of government plans and programs, as well as the upholding of public laws, is the principal responsibility of the executive branch. The executive formulates policies and laws, which are submitted to the legislature for debate and approval. The legislative power is		

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#	Variable Description	Data Type	Variable Type
	given to the executive branch, which is responsible for making laws.		
9	Freedom of religion	Ordinal	Independent variable
	The separation of church and state is necessary to defend religious liberty and promote equal rights. It is possible to debate what exactly defines a secular democracy since many nations, like the United States, include aspects of religion into their legal systems.		
10	Ideology	Ordinal	Independent variable
	An ideology is a set of core beliefs that rationalize a particular political or economic philosophy. Ideologies serve as the guiding concepts for the daily operations of a society.		
11	Political polarization	Ordinal	Independent variable
	The term "political polarization" refers to situations in which an individual's position on a particular subject, policy, or person is more likely to be firmly defined by his or her association with a particular political party. This may happen in several different contexts. These activists can then influence legislators, causing them to adopt either more conservative or more liberal positions.		
12	Freedom of peaceful assembly	Ordinal	Independent variable
	People are allowed to bring concerns to the public's notice, demand changes, and question public leaders. Without the right to peacefully assemble, citizens would have fewer chances to participate in transparent government and fewer avenues through which they might utilize information in the time between elections.		
13	The rule of law	Ordinal	Independent variable
	The principles of democracy are strongly related to the rule of law. A democratic state that upholds the rule of law is one in which the populace chooses its government, which is obligated to uphold the law while simultaneously working to ensure that the populace upholds the law.		
14	Freedom of expression	Ordinal	Independent variable
	This indicates the extent to which government respects press and media freedom, the freedom of ordinary people to discuss political matters at home and in the public sphere, as well as the freedom of academic and cultural expression.		
15	Polity	Ordinal	

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#	Variable		Data Type	Variable Type
	Description			
	The polity score is computed by subtracting the autocracy score from the democracy score. The resulting unified POLITY scale ranges from +10 (strongly democratic) to -10 (strongly autocratic).			Independent variable

1. Statistical Model

The model focuses specifically on the question of how many times (per year) non-state actors have used political violence against individuals. As to v-Dem, the response concerning dependent variable (DV), political violence, is classified into five levels.

Table 4.　　　Level of political violence measurements.[235]

STATISTICAL VALUES				GRAPH
Mean (sd)	**RESPONSE / DESCRIPTION AND FREQUENCY (% OF VALIDITY)**			**GRAPH**
1.6 (1.1)	0	Non-state actors did not use political violence.	2910 (15.9%)	
min ≤ med ≤ max	1	Non-state actors rarely used political violence	7341 (40.1%)	
0 ≤ 1 ≤ 4	2	Non-state actors occasionally used political violence	4211 (23.0%)	
IQR (CV)	3	Non-state actors frequently used political violence	2535 (13.8%)	
1 (0.7)	4	Non-state actors often used political violence	1318 (07.2%)	

Given this, to simplify the regression analysis and make the calculation of confidence intervals easier, this research analyzes variables populated by the v-Dem dataset utilizing "Model Estimates," where the measurement model combines the evaluations from various nation experts and, after accounting for disagreement and measurement error, generates a probability distribution across country-year scores on a uniform interval scale, which is also the preferred variable version for time series regression and other estimation strategies.[236] Therefore, this research project uses a linear regression model for all the models' accounting.

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[235] Adapted from "Varieties of Democracy V-Dem Project (v-Dem Full+Others) Version 12 Dataset."

[236] University of Gothenburg, v-Dem Institute, "Varieties of Democracy - Code Book Version 11.1," 31.

When identifying liberal values or principles that may reflect or be associated with political violence, it is important to consider numerous variables and/or factors. This is due to the fact that certain analytical outcomes may indicate in a higher or lower likelihood of violence, a decline in violence, or something that may not influence political violence. Therefore, I have considered evaluating the considered independent variables for the regression models (Table 5).

Table 5.   Linear relationship between each individual independent variable with control variables.

Dependent: Political Violence

	Linear (1)	Linear (2)	Linear (3)	Linear (4)	Linear (5)	Linear (6)	Linear (7)	Linear (8)	Linear (9)	Linear (10)	Linear (11)
Clean elections index	-1.056*** (0.109)										
Equality before the law and individual liberty index		-2.429*** (0.119)									
Judicial constraints on the executive index			-0.503*** (0.096)								
Legislative constraints on the executive index				-0.255*** (0.095)							
Executive respects constitution					-0.127*** (0.027)						
Freedom of religion						-0.227*** (0.027)					
Ideology							0.284*** (0.015)				
Political polarization								0.284*** (0.016)			
Freedom of peaceful assembly									-0.338*** (0.026)		
Rule of law index										-0.919*** (0.095)	
Freedom of expression index											-1.467*** (0.129)
Population	0.243*** (0.011)	0.204*** (0.010)	0.242*** (0.011)	0.250*** (0.011)	0.247*** (0.011)	0.242*** (0.011)	0.224*** (0.010)	0.216*** (0.010)	0.241*** (0.010)	0.224*** (0.011)	0.244*** (0.010)
GDP per Capita	-0.314*** (0.022)	-0.263*** (0.020)	-0.397*** (0.020)	-0.400*** (0.021)	-0.392*** (0.020)	-0.397*** (0.020)	-0.418*** (0.019)	-0.401*** (0.019)	-0.361*** (0.020)	-0.337*** (0.021)	-0.398*** (0.020)
Age of Democracy	0.002*** (0.001)	0.001 (0.0005)	0.001** (0.001)	0.001 (0.001)	0.001* (0.001)	0.001 (0.001)	0.002*** (0.0005)	0.003*** (0.001)	0.001 (0.001)	0.002*** (0.001)	0.001*** (0.001)
Polity score	-0.001 (0.006)	0.030*** (0.005)	-0.021*** (0.005)	-0.027*** (0.005)	-0.023*** (0.005)	-0.020*** (0.005)	-0.013*** (0.004)	-0.019*** (0.004)	0.010* (0.006)	-0.014*** (0.005)	0.017*** (0.006)
Constant	0.861*** (0.243)	2.069*** (0.233)	1.444*** (0.248)	1.239*** (0.248)	1.346*** (0.245)	1.959*** (0.258)	1.044*** (0.231)	0.869*** (0.233)	1.736*** (0.241)	1.321*** (0.241)	1.973*** (0.249)
Observations	3,127	3,127	3,127	3,100	3,127	3,127	3,127	3,127	3,127	3,127	3,127
MAE	0.717	0.685	0.719	0.723	0.722	0.711	0.680	0.686	0.705	0.714	0.705
RMSE	0.894	0.852	0.903	0.908	0.904	0.897	0.860	0.865	0.884	0.894	0.889
AIC	8,188	7,887	8,253	8,211	8,258	8,210	7,946	7,980	8,119	8,188	8,154
BIC	8,230	7,929	8,295	8,253	8,300	8,253	7,988	8,023	8,161	8,230	8,196
Log Likelihood	-4,087	-3,937	-4,120	-4,098	-4,122	-4,098	-3,966	-3,983	-4,052	-4,087	-4,070
p value:											*p**p***p<0.01

Table 5 shows a bivariate regression resulting from a linear relationship between each independent variable and *political violence*, having considered the control variables. The regression table shows a statistically significant and positive correlation with the *population* for all considered independent variables. Conversely, there is a negative correlation with *GDP per Capita* for all considered independent variables.

Interestingly, the *Age of Democracy* does not show a significant correlation with *Equality before the law and individual liberty index*, *Legislative constraints on the executive index, Freedom of religion, and Freedom of peaceful assembly*. Similarly, the *Polity* score does not result in a correlation with the *Clean elections index*.

2. Multicollinearity

For further clarification and to identify the effect of individual variables considered in this thesis, I have evaluated multicollinearity with the predictors (independent variables) to check if the considered variables correlate strongly with each other. The correlation matrix in Figure 7 shows that the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) for all independent variables is less than 10. Therefore, the variables under consideration for analysis should not exhibit significant multicollinearity.
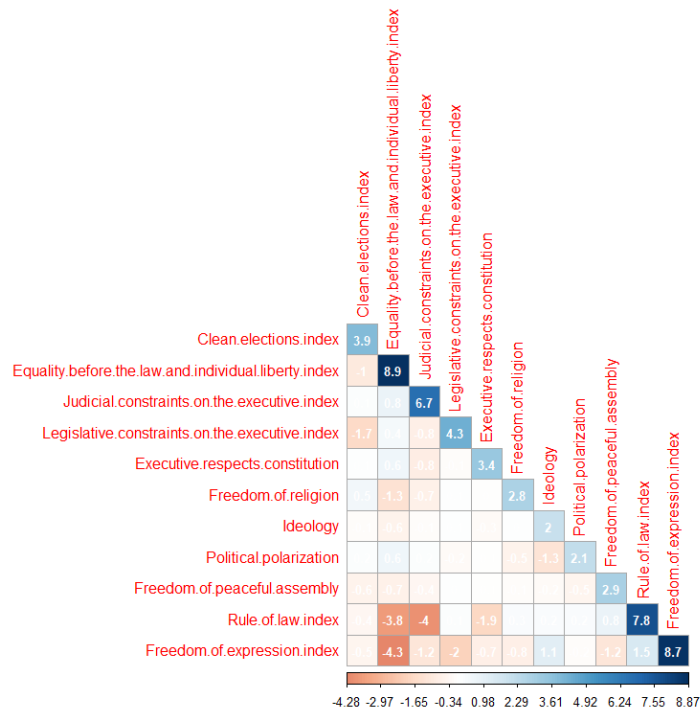
Figure 7.   Multicollinearity of the independent variables considered.[237]

D.   REGRESSION ANALYSIS

The trends in the patterns of political violence and liberal democracy show a smooth, linear decline. As shown in Figure 8, the political violence index rises when the liberal democracy index is lower, and political violence tends to be steady over time. However, the model does not show a total observable decline in political violence as liberal democratic values increase.

With 179 observations (N), the model has a negative coefficient supported by strong statistical evidence, as indicated by a p-value of $p < 0.01$, indicating that a higher level of liberal democracy index decreases the likelihood of political violence. Therefore, the base model will be used to model the test of the hypothesis for further analysis of the

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[237] Adapted from "Varieties of Democracy V-Dem Project (v-Dem Full+Others) Version 12 Dataset."

independent variables related to liberal values, to identify potential indicators that political violence is likely.
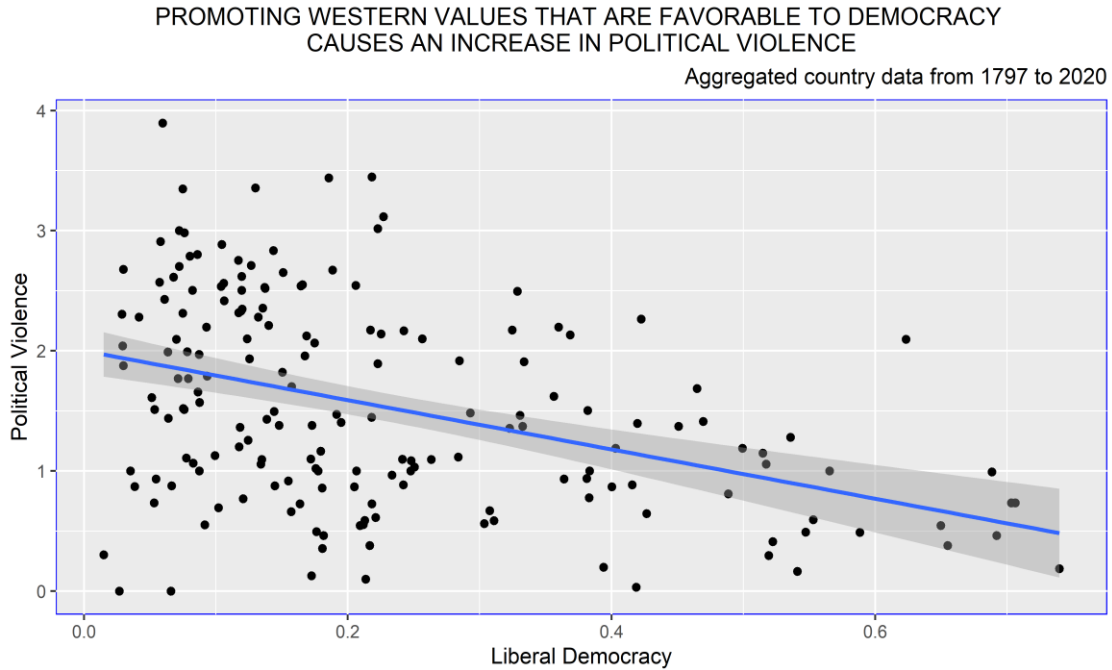
Figure 8.   Base model – Linear regression (Liberal democracy versus political violence).

Given that GDP, population, and polity are essential contributors to economic growth at the global level, these indicators play an important role in defining a nation's development, wealth, and its internal stability. There is widespread agreement that economic liberty and fiscal success are positively associated.[238] As shown in Figure 9, along with the state as a political entity (polity) and with the growth of GDP, it is observable that over the years an unexpected variance rate tends to increase when nations are blessed with prosperity. By contrast, less wealthy nations tend to have more political violence, especially when these nations adopt Western liberal ideas. As seen in Figure 10, the highest political violence indicator depicts an anocracy type of regime (that is, a semi-democratic

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[238] Jason R. Ockey, "Economic Freedom and Fiscal Performance: A Regression Analysis of Indices of Economic Freedom on Per Capita GDP," *Digital Commons @ IWU, 2011, Undergraduate Economic Review* 8, no. 1, (2011): 9.

form of government), with a similar result even for the more affluent countries with this type of government.
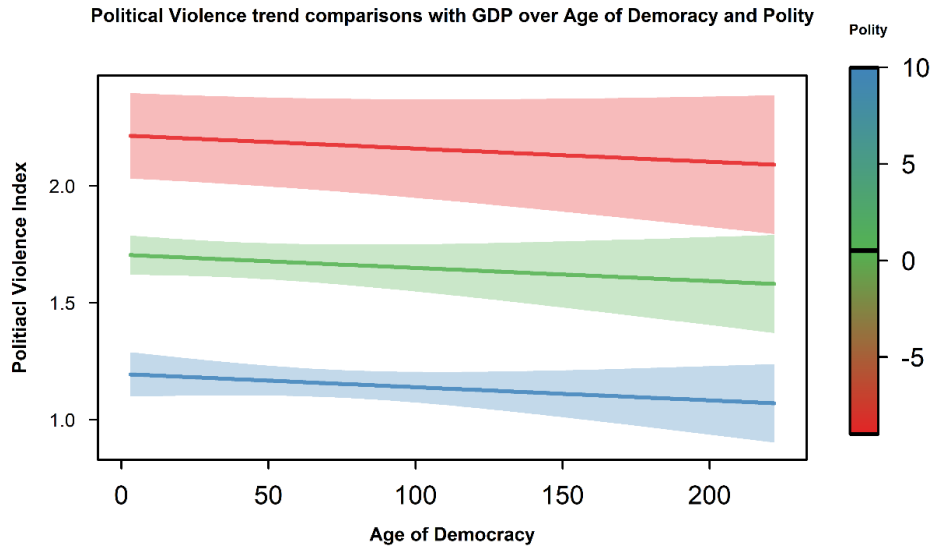
Figure 9.   Political violence trends in comparison to GDP over the age of democracy and polity.[239]

[239] Adapted from "World Development Indicators (1990-2022)"; "Age of Democracy Dataset (1800 – 2020)"; "Varieties of Democracy V-Dem Project (v-Dem Full+Others) Version 12 Dataset."

Political Violence trend comparisons with GDP over Regime Type
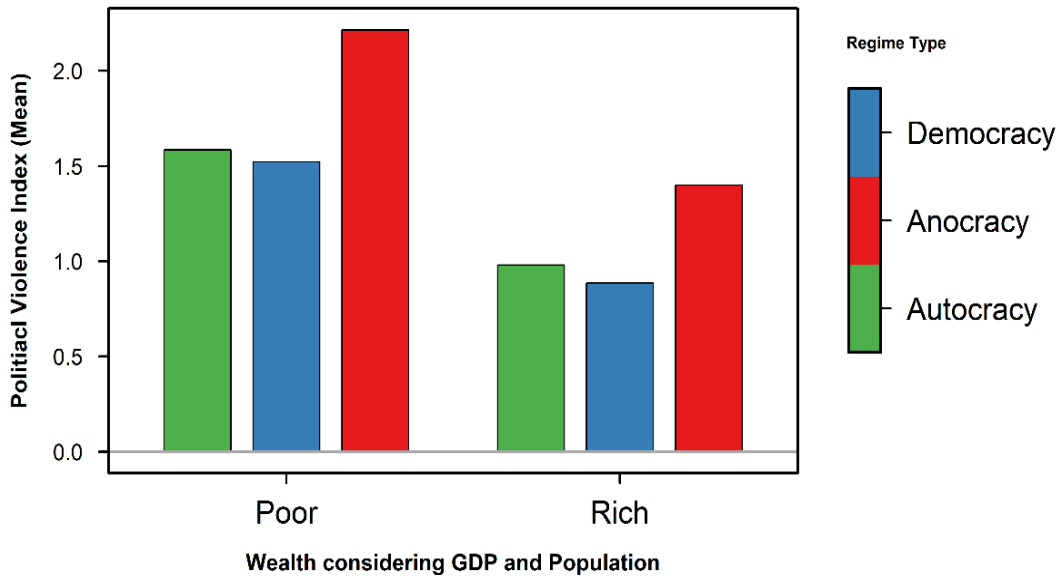
Figure 10.   Political violence trends in comparison to GDP and regime type.[240]

Importantly, it has been observed that over five decades in a democratic environment, political violence tends to decline for a period (Figure 9) with respect to the age of the democracy. Considering the confidence interval for the likelihood of political violence in relation to the age of a democracy, it is observed that lesser uncertainty is seen when the democracy is between 50 to 100 years old. This is a significant finding. As a result, adding these control variables to the regression model is a highly significant decision. However, statistically significant evidence must be visible in the results of further linear regression models.

E.   DATA ANALYSIS

The results of the linear regression models are presented in Table 6, which presents the correlation between and significance of political violence as a dependent variable and

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[240] Adapted from "Varieties of Democracy V-Dem Project (v-Dem Full+Others) Version 12 Dataset"; "World Development Indicators (1990–2022)."

liberal democracy indicators as independent variables, taking into account control variables such as Age of Democracy, Population, and GDP per Capita.

Tests of the five hypothetical models were conducted using linear regression. Among the models tested, Model 03 had the lowest Akaike Information Criterion (AIC) of 7,296, demonstrating statistically significant scores correlating to the factors that may increase or decrease the likelihood of political violence. The number of observations accounted for in the model is 3,100.

Therefore, to further interpret the regression results, visualization of Model 03 is considered, which allows for an examination of the potential effect of each variable that reflects on the likelihood of political violence. Figure 11 reports the elevated probability of political violence in the y-axis w.r.t the index of the variable under the measure.

Table 6.   Regression results.

Results of Regression Analysis in assessing the influence of independent variables that may contribute to political violence.

Dependent: Political Violence

	Linear 01	Linear 02	Linear 03	Linear 04	Linear 05
Clean elections index	-0.307***	-0.139	-0.237**	-0.286***	-0.349***
	(0.106)	(0.100)	(0.120)	(0.104)	(0.123)
Equality before the law and individual liberty index	-3.052***	-2.511***	-3.492***	-3.311***	-3.105***
	(0.174)	(0.149)	(0.205)	(0.184)	(0.195)
Judicial constraints on the executive index	0.344**	0.322***	0.636***	0.345**	0.457***
	(0.138)	(0.105)	(0.154)	(0.139)	(0.154)
Legislative constraints on the executive index	0.665***	0.888***	0.624***	0.698***	0.596***
	(0.102)	(0.096)	(0.111)	(0.099)	(0.115)
Executive respects constitution			-0.083**	0.007	
			(0.033)	(0.029)	
Freedom of religion		0.034	0.083***	0.069***	
		(0.024)	(0.028)	(0.024)	
Ideology			0.229***	0.192***	
			(0.016)	(0.014)	
Political polarization	0.253***	0.249***	0.162***	0.201***	0.241***
	(0.014)	(0.014)	(0.017)	(0.015)	(0.016)
Freedom of peaceful assembly	-0.116***	-0.050**	-0.115***	-0.095***	-0.136***
	(0.027)	(0.025)	(0.030)	(0.026)	(0.030)
Rule of law index	0.047		-0.102	-0.059	0.026
	(0.160)		(0.183)	(0.160)	(0.183)
Freedom of expression index	1.184***		1.787***	1.544***	1.275***
	(0.170)		(0.204)	(0.173)	(0.202)
Polity score			0.009		0.010
			(0.006)		(0.007)
Age of Democracy	0.001**	0.001***	0.002***	0.002***	0.001***
	(0.0005)	(0.0005)	(0.001)	(0.0005)	(0.001)
Population	0.153***	0.161***	0.158***	0.146***	0.174***
	(0.009)	(0.008)	(0.010)	(0.009)	(0.010)
GDP per Capita	-0.181***	-0.225***	-0.196***	-0.181***	-0.203***
	(0.020)	(0.019)	(0.022)	(0.020)	(0.023)
Constant	1.236***	1.427***	0.637**	0.736***	1.067***
	(0.211)	(0.215)	(0.249)	(0.214)	(0.248)
Observations	3,615	3,615	3,100	3,615	3,100
MAE	0.636	0.639	0.622	0.620	0.646
RMSE	0.795	0.801	0.781	0.774	0.808
AIC	8,630	8,675	7,296	8,438	7,506
BIC	8,710	8,749	7,399	8,537	7,590
Log Likelihood	-4,301.840	-4,325.516	-3,630.971	-4,202.910	-3,738.973
p value:					*p**p***p<0.01

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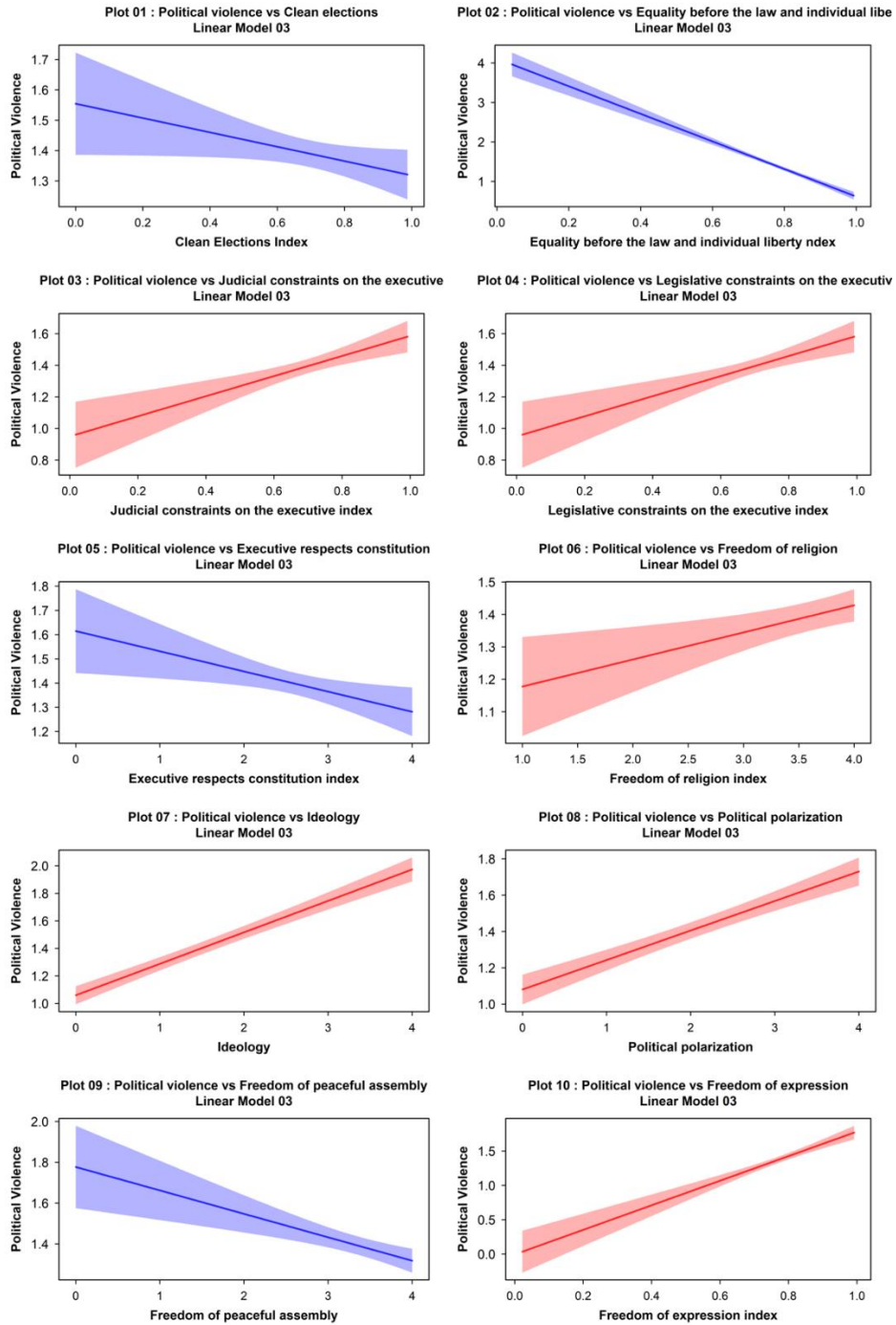
Figure 11.   Significance of dependent variable relationship with
independent variables.[241]

1. Interpretation: Effects of Independent Variables on Political Violence

To visualize the relationship between the dependent variable and the independent variables and to determine whether the hypothesized relationship to the response variables is valid in the selected linear regression Model 03, the independent variables are interpreted independently with the significance and direction of the model coefficients.

a. *Freedom of Religion (Plot 06)*

1. The index of religion is supposed to be lower when religious traditions are not respected or when religious freedom is minimal. When the index of religious freedom is high, it means that people have the freedom to follow any religion they want.

2. As seen in plot 06, the confidence interval range is higher concerning the considered predictor variable. The model predicts a negative but statistically significant coefficient of 0.083 with a p-value of 0.01.

3. It demonstrates that nations with more restricted religious freedom likely to experience more political violence. For example, in a liberal democracy or state promoting liberal ideals, those friendly to religious freedom, particularly in nations where most if not all citizens follow the same religion, may lead to political violence.

b. *Ideology (Plot 07)*

1. In order to justify the regime in place, the more the regime tends to promote an explicit political ideology exclusively, resulting in a higher ideology index. Political violence tends to rise when a government tries to spread a specific idea, like liberal democracy.

2. As seen in plot 07, the linear increase in political violence when a state promotes a specific ideology indicates a lower confidence interval with the predictor variable. The model predicts a confidence interval of 0.229, which is statistically significant with a p-value of 0.01.

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c. *Equality before the Law and Individual Liberty (Plot 02)*

1. This points to the question about the extent to which laws are transparent and strictly enforced, and whether citizens have access to justice, secure property rights, freedom from forced labor, freedom of movement, physical integrity rights, and religious freedom[242] and whether they have the right to their bodies and the right to freedom of religion, which is part of the Bill of Rights.

2. By taking the point estimates from a Bayesian factor analysis model of the different indicators, the v-dem data set computes the index of equality before the law and the individual liberty index.[243]

3. From plot 02, a steep decline in political violence is evident when equality before the law and individual liberty index tends to decrease, which is indicated by a higher confidence interval. With a p-value of 0.05, the model shows a confidence level of -3.492, which is statistically significant.

4. In an ideal democracy, all citizens should have protection, freedom, and justice. When this is the case, political violence tends to decline.

d. *Judicial Constraints on the Executive Index (Plot 03)*

1. How much does the executive branch abide by the constitution and court orders, and how much latitude does the judiciary have to make its own decisions?

2. As seen in plot 03, the confidence interval range is higher concerning the considered predictor variable. The model has statistically significant confidence with a positive coefficient of 0.636 with a p-value of 0.01. It shows that higher judicial constraints or more confinement on the executive index tends to increase political violence.

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[242] University of Gothenburg, v-Dem Institute, "Varieties of Democracy - Code Book Version 11.1," 49.

[243] University of Gothenburg, v-Dem Institute, 50.

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e. *Clean Elections Index (plot 01)*

1. "Free and fair refers to the absence of systematic irregularities, intimidation of the opposition, vote-buying, and violence in elections."[244] Importantly, as witnessed elsewhere, when elections are hampered, violence erupts.

2. In plot 01, the confidence interval range is higher when the clean election is lower. The model has statistically significant results in a negative coefficient level of -0.237 with a p-value of 0.05. It reflects the presence of election fraud corresponds to a higher level of political violence with a slightly higher confidence interval when elections are overly regulated.

f. *Legislative Constraints on the Executive Index (Plot 04)*

1. The majority of people distinguish between legislative and executive duties. The legislative branch enacts laws, but the executive carries them out. Legislators are elected, whereas the majority of bureaucrats gain their posts via tests and merit-based promotions, which is consistent with the mainstream conception of democracy. It is highly irrational to assume, however, that bureaucrats have little to no autonomy.[245]

2. As seen in plot 04, there is a linear increase when there is an extent of questioning, investigating, and exercising or a higher level of oversight over the executive.

3. The model has statistically significant confidence with a positive coefficient of 0.624 with a p-value of 0.01. It shows that more constraints on the executive corresponds to an increase in political violence.

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[244] University of Gothenburg, v-Dem Institute, 69.

[245] Susan Rose Ackerman, "Executive Power in Democracies," Democracy Paradox, October 26, 2021, http://democracyparadox.com/2021/10/25/executive-power-in-democracies/.

g.   *Executive Respects Constitution (Plot 05)*

1.   Do individuals in positions of authority—the president, the prime minister, and cabinet members—show the proper respect for the law and the Constitution? It is most important to favor the strictest kind of discipline, so that members of the executive branch never takes any action that would violate the Constitution.

2.   The model predicts statistically significant confidence with a negative coefficient of -0.083 with a p-value of 0.05. It shows that higher respect for the constitution tends to decrease political violence.

h.   *Political Polarization (Plot 08)*

1.   This is the degree to which political differences impact social interactions outside of political discourse. If members of competing political parties avoid interacting amicably, society is severely divided.

2.   The model has statistically significant confidence with a positive coefficient of 0.162 with a p-value of 0.01. It can be observed that if the supporters of rival political parties typically engage hostilely, then It indicates a rise in the impacts of political violence, such as injuries, fatalities, and property destruction, etc. These are not shown in the data. Instead, the probability of political violence occurring is predicted.

i.   *Freedom of Peaceful Assembly (Plot 09)*

1.   How are state authorities enforcing and respecting the right to peaceful assembly? This is a question of whether the people can bring concerns to the public's notice, demand changes, and question public leaders. Without the right to peacefully assemble, citizens would have fewer chances to participate in transparent government and fewer avenues through which they might utilize information in the time between elections.

2.   The model has statistically significant confidence with a negative coefficient of -0.115 with a p-value of 0.01. It can be observed that there is

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a linear decline in political violence when the state authorities virtually always permit and actively safeguard peaceful meetings.

j.   *Freedom of Expression Index (Plot 10)*

3.   Everyone has the right to receive and share knowledge, as well as the ability to express themselves freely. The freedom of the press is included under this right as well. One of the most important pillars upon which a democratic society is built is the right to free speech and the government to respect the freedom of the press and the media. Therefore, the right to discuss political issues in private or public, as well as the freedom of intellectual or artistic expression, are among the basic cornerstones of democratic governance.[246]

4.   The model has statistically significant confidence with a positive coefficient of 1.787 with a p-value of 0.01. This indicates a linear increase in political violence when the government restricts or confines the freedom of the press and the media within society.

2.   **Predictive Analysis**

Finally, it is intriguing to determine how the control variables affect the interactions between the dependent and independent variables. This analysis was conducted using a predictive model with a confidence level of 95% and only measures results between 5% and 95% to rule out discrepancies. Plot 01 and Plot 02 in Figure 12 show the values predicting the likelihood of political violence change when shifting each variable of interest, while other intervening variables are considered at their mean.

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[246] Sean M. Lynn-Jones, "Why the United States Should Spread Democracy," Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, March 1998, https://www.belfercenter.org/publication/why-united-states-should-spread-democracy.

Plot 01: Substantive Effects on Political Violence
Independent Variables Comparison Plot
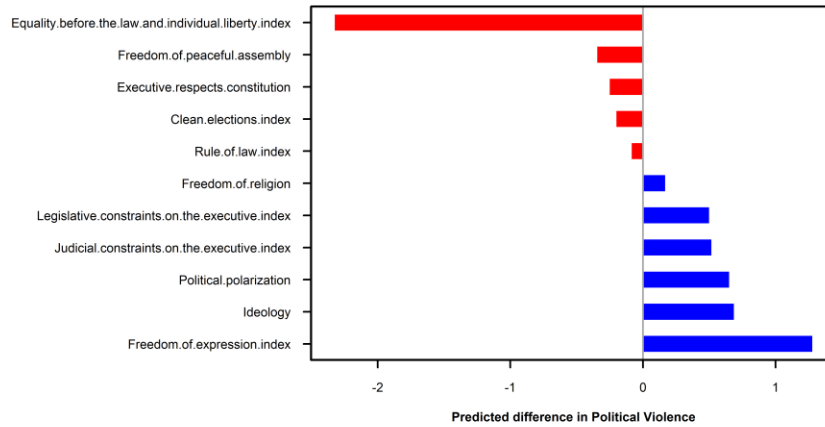
Plot 02: Substantive Effects on Political Violence
Controlled Variables Comparison Plot
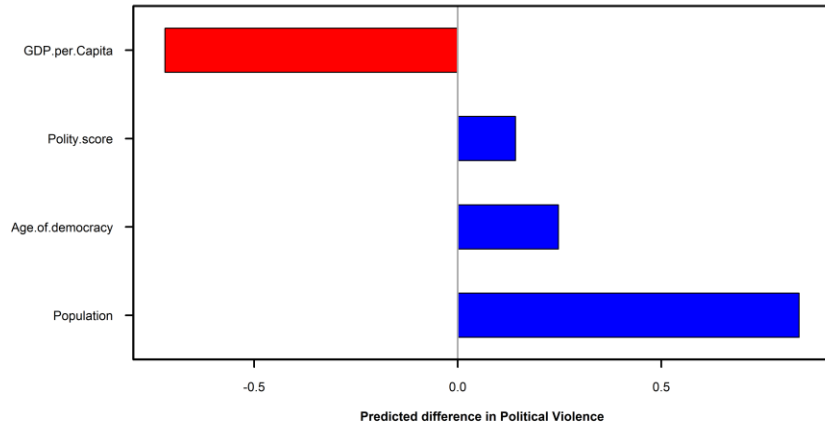
Figure 12.   The difference in predicted likelihood of political violence in relation to independent variables.[247]

As shown, there is a greater negative trend (that is, political violence is more likely to occur) when there is greater equality before the law and individual liberty; freedom of peaceful assembly; executive respect for the constitution; clean elections; and respect for the rule of law. On the other hand, taking into account the wealth of nations (GDP per capita) and the tendencies of these indicators, the results show a positive change in political violence, which may result in greater likelihood of political violence.

[247] Adapted from "World Development Indicators (1990–2022)"; "Age of Democracy Dataset (1800 – 2020)"; "Varieties of Democracy V-Dem Project (v-Dem Full+Others) Version 12 Dataset."

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In a democracy, as the indices for polity, the age of the democracy, and population increase, the political environment of a nation tends to progress or become more responsive within the scope of governing authority.[248] However, this cannot be generalized to all nations since the population fluctuates, higher rates of the population may have a larger turnout in political violence, and since a substantial percentage of countries in the data fall between 50 and 100 years of democracy, such as the post-World War II increase in countries via independence from colonial powers. This indicates that more observations fall within the confidence level, reducing uncertainty in estimations.

Although the indices for religious freedom, judicial and legislative restraints on executives, political polarization, freedom of expression, and the promotion of a particular ideology tend to reflect positively (Figure 11 plot 01), causing negative effects, they still serve as a substantive effect on what will result from that may have a significant impact on a decline in political violence. However, it is also reported that the rules of law and polity do not show significance in relation to the likelihood of political violence (Table 5 and Figure 11 plot 02).

In light of these findings, these variables exhibit statistically significant relationships with the likelihood of political violence. However, since the method applied for regression is that of Ordinary Least Squares (OLS), and the fact that many similar variables were considered, the probability of unequal variance of the errors is high. And since the dataset under consideration is based on a time series (country/year) for a given period, the results may be affected by heteroscedasticity, which means that the error variances are not all the same.

The term "heteroscedasticity" refers to a scattering that is not equal. In regression analysis, heteroscedasticity is typically discussed in relation to the residuals or in terms of error. To be more specific, heteroscedasticity refers to a change that is systematic in nature in the spread of the residuals across the range of values that were measured.[249]

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[248] Center for Systemic Peace, "The Polity Project."

[249] Jim Frost, "Heteroscedasticity in Regression Analysis," *Statistics By Jim* (blog), August 13, 2017, http://statisticsbyjim.com/regression/heteroscedasticity-regression/.

To avoid biases from resulting standard errors that may impact inferences about the considered parameters, it is important to obtain robust standard errors and testing statistics when performing such a linear regression. Therefore, computing heteroscedasticity with consistent standard errors to eliminate or at least reduce any biases is vital.

Figure 13 shows the result of heteroskedasticity (HC) estimation for each independent variable considered. The results of the estimation do not show a larger range of variance. Hence, the variance of the variables considered to measure the standard errors appears consistent with heteroskedasticity and can be utilized to facilitate the fitting of the model that does incorporate heteroskedastic residuals over the range of measured values.
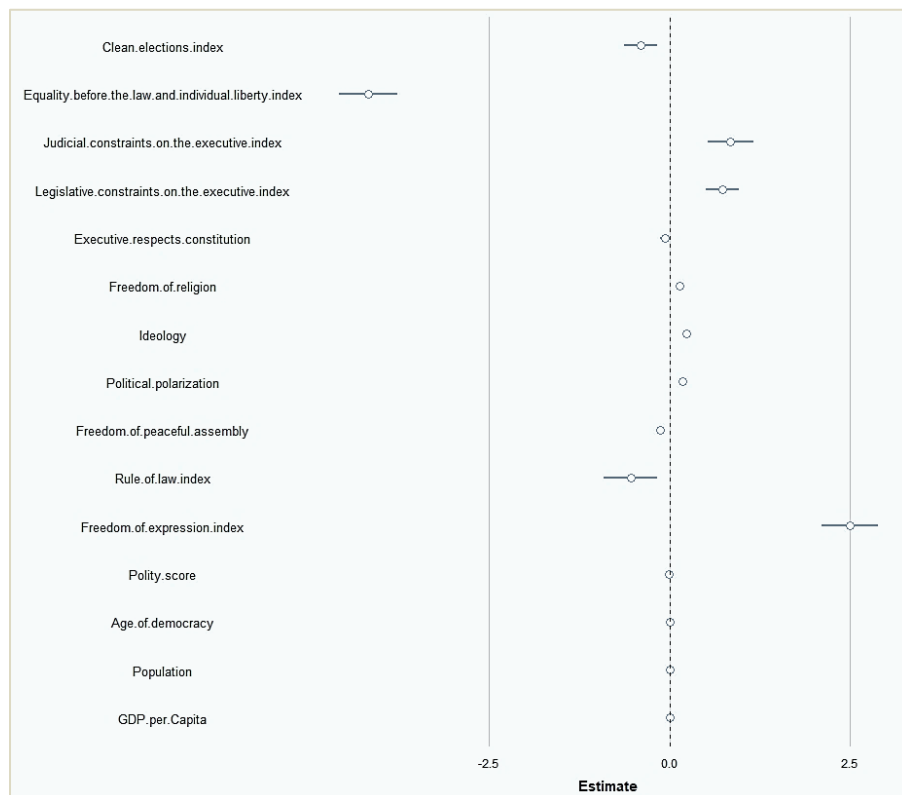
Figure 13.   Heteroskedasticity Consistent (HC) estimation of the model.[250]

[250] Adapted from "World Development Indicators (1990–2022)"; "Age of Democracy Dataset (1800 – 2020)"; "Varieties of Democracy V-Dem Project (v-Dem Full+Others) Version 12 Dataset."

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VI. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

A. EXPLORING THE SUBSTANTIAL EFFECTS

The indicators I have gathered for this study have led me to discover some that merit further investigation. The subsequent analytical and visual findings are the result of triggering indicators.

1. In the geographical representation of where political violence occurs (Figure 1) and the political violence scores across regions (Figure 3), it is evident that political violence is observed most often within the South Asian region.

2. A bimodal distribution of high-level violence between the polity score of +5 and -5 when the age of a democracy is taken into account represents an anocracy (Figure 2). It also reports a concentrated skewed peak towards higher polity scores which reflects a decline in the likelihood of political violence.

3. Lower indices of political violence are observed with fewer samples (nations) in the regression model (Figure 7) when the liberal democracy index tends to increase.

4. The index of liberal democracy and political violence in relation to the age of the democracy indicates that the likelihood of political violence tends to decline for a period in a democratic environment (Figure 8).

5. The regime most ripe for political violence is an anocracy (Figure 9).

6. Similarly, models predict that an increase in political violence is correlated with a decrease in freedom of religion, judicial and legislative constraints on executives, political polarization, freedom of expression, and the promotion of a specific ideology.

The analytical results just presented can be used further to support my hypothesis. For instance, the most apparent indicator predicting the likelihood of political violence is

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a government's effort to promote a particular ideology or social model.[251] According to political scientist Michael Freeden, in promoting an ideology, what is being advanced is a set of "ideas, beliefs, values, and opinions, exhibiting a recurring pattern, that competes deliberately as well as unintentionally over providing plans of action for public policy making in an attempt to justify, explain, contest, or change the social and political arrangements and processes of a political community."[252]

B. TRADITION AND GLOBAL TRENDS

Liberalism, as a political ideology, "rejects traditional social ideas and emphasizes the importance of personal freedom and the power of individual and collective rationality."[253] In this regard, the promotion of this ideology is also closely associated with the second indicator that predicts the likelihood of political violence in line with societal affiliation, which is the connection to religious freedom within a political society (Figure 11).

In contrast, the world views of those who belong to a particular culture can be influenced by religion. As stated by Rhys Williams, "Religion influences political relationships because religion is central in the creation of symbolic worlds; in particular, religion shapes the phenomenology of culture members."[254] Thus, religion can be one factor that may influence political relationships, as sharing "a religious worldview is to absorb a set of assumed assumptions about one's responsibility to God and society."[255] The organizing ties among members of society are essential for cohesion in a state, and

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[251] University of Gothenburg, "Varieties of Democracy - Code Book Version 11.1," 221.

[252] Michael Freeden, "Ideology: Political Aspects," Science Direct, accessed June 21, 2022, https://www.sciencedirect.com/topics/psychology/political-ideology.

[253] Study Smarter, "Political Ideology: Definition, List & Types," accessed June 21, 2022, https://www.studysmarter.us/explanations/politics/political-ideology/.

[254] Rhys H. Williams, "Religion as Political Resource: Culture or Ideology?," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 35, no. 4 (December 1996): 370, https://doi.org/10.2307/1386412.

[255] Libreria Editrice Vaticana, "Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church," 2005, https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/justpeace/documents/ rc_pc_justpeace_doc_20060526_compendio-dott-soc_en.html.

"[r]eligion and politics share this fundamental characteristic."[256] In this sense, religion has a covert impact on people's political participation. As claimed by Williams, "religion is … an effective, if nonarticulated, set of organizing principles."[257] "The religion-as-culture approach focuses heavily on affective and identity-oriented function,"[258] where religion is more about meaning in the world than it is about beliefs.

With this in mind, I further examine the relationship between religious affiliations and the occurrence of political violence by comparing the ages of various democracies across the continents.

Figure 14 shows a treemap visualization of the world's population grouped by continents and religion. Christianity is more prevalent in Europe, Central Asia, Latin America, the Caribbean, and sub-Saharan Africa. At the same time, Islam is more prevalent in the Middle East, North Africa, South Asia, sub-Saharan Africa, and East Asia Pacific. Hinduism and other religions are predominant in South Asia. In light of Figure 15 referring to the world's population, it can be observed that Christianity and Islam are the two dominant religions in the world (representing the West and the East, respectively).

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[256] Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy, "Religion and Politics," accessed November 1, 2022, https://iep.utm.edu/rel-poli/.

[257] Williams, "Religion as Political Resource," 370.

[258] Williams, 370.

Figure 14.   Treemap group by religion across the continents of the world.[259]
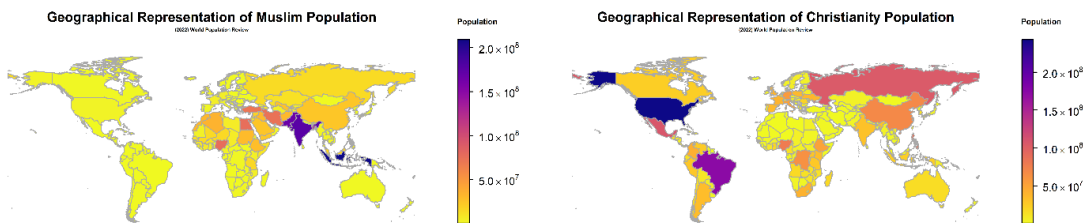
Figure 15.   Two dominant religions across the globe.[260]

In addition to investigating both ends of this religious in terms of predicting the likelihood of political violence (Figure 12), I intend to explore the findings in more detail.

Figure 16 is a two-dimensional (2D) density plot based on the foundational model of this research; it represents the clustering distribution of nations' in relation to liberal

[259] Adapted from "World Development Indicators (1990–2022)"; World Population Review, "Religion by Country 2022," March 15, 2022, https://worldpopulationreview.com/5aef19c5-c1a2-4b13-919d-12344e8f000a.

[260] Adapted from "World Development Indicators (1990–2022)"; "Religion by Country 2022."

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democracy and political violence. When closely examined, it is clear that fewer countries have higher levels of liberal democracy and lower indices of political violence. However, the majority of those nations have intermediate indices. I have extracted and analyzed the data to investigate the clustered patterns and support this assertion.
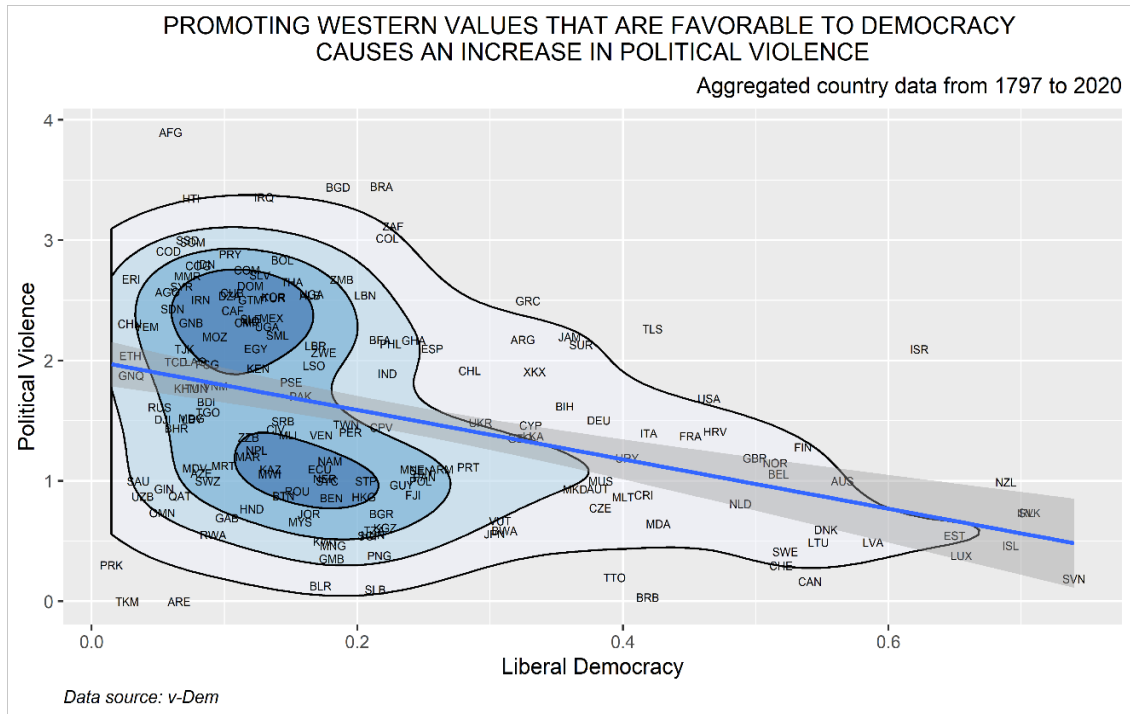
Figure 16.   2D density plot (base model) clustering by nations.

The computation is achieved by calculating the average political violence and the average liberal democracy indices and grouping countries by region, allowing for data analysis and classification. Listed are the 30 countries with the highest scores for liberal democracy and political violence indices, which are tabulated in Appendix B (Indices of Political Violence and Liberal Democracies). The results support the claim, as political violence is more prevalent on the continents of Asia and Africa, and the liberal democratic index is higher on the continents of Europe and North America.

The next step, then, is to examine the trends and their implications associated with religion in the East and the West and how they are reflected in the occurrence of political violence in countries promoting Western liberal values.

The predictive differences shown in Figure 12 (Plot 02), the age of a democracy, population, freedom of religion, and ideology in (Plot 01) exhibit a statistically significant and positive correlation that corresponds to the affiliations of indigenous social norms. With this in mind, I have thought about combining the age of a democracy with these indicators, including religious edges and ideologies. In my view, the age of a democracy is an important factor in enabling a society's political ideas to grow and prosper as its progresses.

In this approach, it is assumed that a liberal attitude increases the likelihood of openness to emerging social trends as people of all ages share roughly equivalent perspectives in terms of their optimism and pessimism about their country's future.[261] By contrast, political ideology can divide people, societies, and nations, often with disastrous results. Although the term "politics" derives from the Greek word for "relationship with other citizens," in practice, it refers to the ability to influence the social and economic behavior of others. The philosophy that guides this power or influence ranges from supporting traditional values and the status quo to favoring change and an egalitarian society.[262] In this way, liberalism is linked to people who like to be creative and curious, try new things, and have new experiences through the work of democracy.[263]

Political scientists examine how citizens' political views evolve and how the polity evolves through the lens of socialization. The concept of "generations" is useful if perplexing in this type of analysis. Members of "Gen X," for example, tend to dominate the political climate in nations that have adopted democratic processes in the last few

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[261] Joel Kotkin, "How Different Generations Are Influencing Our Politics," *Orange County Register* (blog), February 16, 2020, https://www.ocregister.com/2020/02/15/how-different-generations-are-influencing-our-politics.

[262] Mario F. Mendez, "A Neurology of the Conservative-Liberal Dimension of Political Ideology," *The Journal of Neuropsychiatry and Clinical Neurosciences* 29, no. 2 (April 2017): 1, https://doi.org/10.1176/appi.neuropsych.16030051.

[263] Mendez, "A Neurology of the Conservative-Liberal Dimension of Political Ideology."

decades. Furthermore, with liberal attitudes and an openness to emerging social trends, the Millennial generation and even younger "Gen Z" have begun to emerge into the political domain, although this claim may vary from nation to nation. In anticipation of supporting this claim, I considered Siamak Naficy's assertion.

> There may be stereotyped differences between groups of people today that come from their cultural histories, but we cannot forget that there was a cultural history. In other words, culture is a thing that is alive and changes over time. So, any way of putting things into groups, no matter how good it is, must take the possibility of change into account.[264]

In this way, I believe that as society adapts to modernity, its political ideology and culture will also change over time.

As evidence for the preceding assertions, Figure 17 depicts the clustering of democratic transitions in the last two centuries. The pronounced trend toward democracy has been witnessed in the recent past five decades. According to the Pew Research Center, the proportion of democracies among the world's governments has been rising since the mid-1970s. It is approaching its post-World War II peak (58 percent in 2016).[265] Current democratic transitions represent the third wave of democratization in modern world history. Since 1974, more than 60 countries have undergone democratic transitions as part of what Samuel P. Huntington calls the "third wave" of democratization. Although these nations have succeeded in removing authoritarian regimes and replacing them with democratically elected governments, few of them have yet to become stable democracies.[266]

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[264] Naficy, Siamak, "Of Culture and Cliché: Politics and the Uses (and Abuses) of Anthropology," *Combating Terrorism Exchange* 4, no. 4 (November 1, 2014): 38, https://nps.edu/documents/110773463/120119521/CTX+Vol+4+No+4.pdf/d794b10c-cd52-4bdf-7934-541ba8ed181e?t=1589912125395#page=39.

[265] Desilver, "Despite Global Concerns about Democracy, More than Half of Countries Are Democratic."

[266] Marc F. Plattner, Larry Diamond, Yun-han Chu, and Hung-mao Tien, "Consolidating the Third Wave Democracies," *Journal of Democracy* (blog), xix, accessed June 23, 2022, https://www.journalofdemocracy.org/books/consolidating-the-third-wave-democracies/.
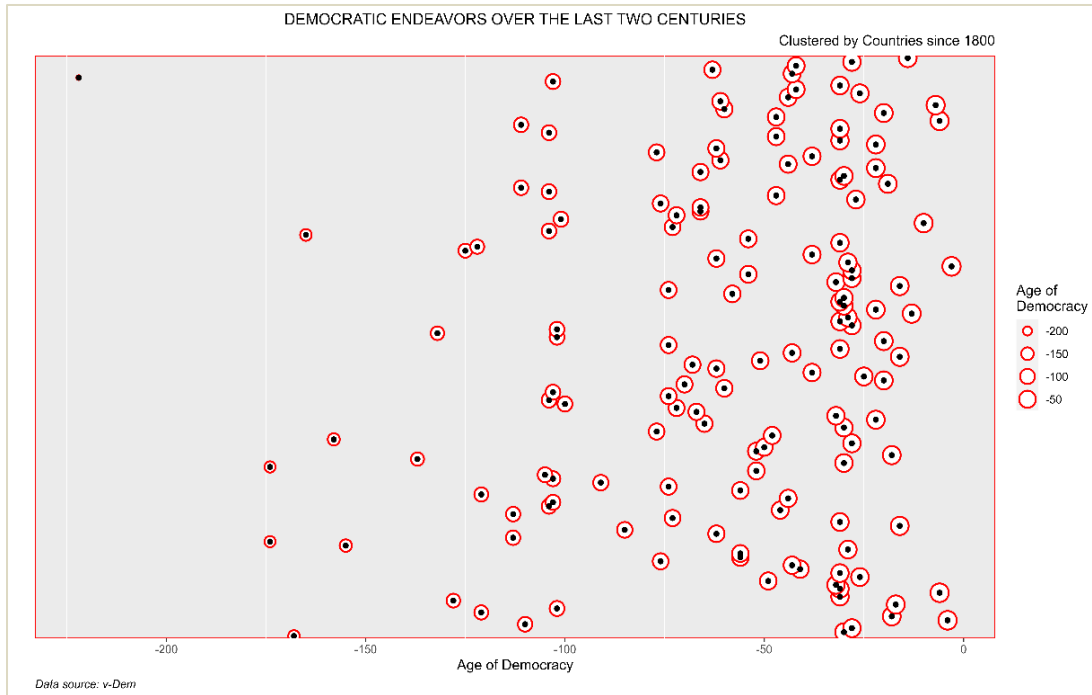
Figure 17.   Democratic endeavors over the last two
centuries.[267]

As depicted in Figure 17, most of these nations transitioning to democracy are clustered within the last 30 years, and referring to Figure 18, it is evident that the global dynamics in promoting liberal democracy in various regions of the world were on the rise within South Asia by the mid-2000s and in the Middle East and North Africa by 2010 (see Appendix C, Age of Democracies).

Similarly, steady states and the rise of liberal democracy indices have been observed in East Asia and the Pacific since the mid-1990s.[268] In this regard, it is observed that liberal indices decline over time (Figure 18), with increasing indices resulting in political violence within East Asia, the Pacific, the Middle East, North Africa, and South Asia (Figure 19).

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[267] Adapted from "Age of Democracy Dataset (1800 – 2020)."

[268] Svend-Erik Skaaning and Mélida Jiménez, "The Global State of Democracy, 1975–2015," 2017, 7, https://www.idea.int/gsod-2017/files/IDEA-GSOD-2017-CHAPTER-1-EN.pdf.

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Plot 02 : Dynamics in Liberal Democracy in Different Regions of the World
Trend model generated based on average index accumulated from v-Dem
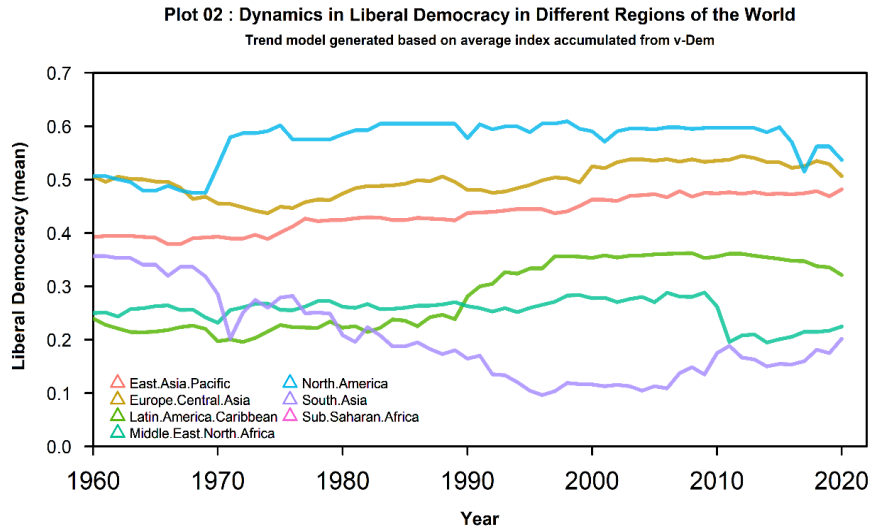
Figure 18.　　Dynamics of liberal democracy across the continents.[269]

Plot 01 : Dynamics of Political Violence in Different Regions of the World
Trend model generated based on average index accumulated from v-Dem

Figure 19.　　Dynamics of political violence across the continents.[270]

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[269] Adapted from "Varieties of Democracy V-Dem Project (v-Dem Full+Others) Version 12 Dataset"; "Age of Democracy Dataset (1800 – 2020)."

[270] Adapted from "Varieties of Democracy V-Dem Project (v-Dem Full+Others) Version 12 Dataset"; "Age of Democracy Dataset (1800 – 2020)."

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VII. CONTEXTUALIZATION: POLITICAL ISLAM IN THE MALDIVES

The process of institutionalizing, fostering, and strengthening democracy is difficult and time-consuming.[271] As stated by Lauren Frohne, "democracy means more than just holding elections since it is involved in the policy process between elections, from what should be worked on to what the policies are to how they are executed."[272] In a similar vein, Khabele Matlosa and Victor Shale state that "part of the challenge lies in how political institutions are able to constitute critical anchors for democratic culture and practice, and in particular how political parties and parliaments provide a solid institutional foundation for a working democracy."[273] Despite such challenges within politics in the Maldives, Islam plays the most significant role in fostering the spirit of nationalism and securing national unity.

A. POLITICAL TRANSACTIONS

In February 1990, President Gayoom signaled the beginnings of a policy of political reform by announcing that he intended to distribute exclusive presidential powers to other official bodies. Towards the end of the year, however, "several politically outspoken magazines including *Sangu* (The Conch Shell) publishing articles critical of the government were banned, and all publications were required to obtain official permission."[274] Among the additional restrictions on the right to free expression was the arrest of several prominent authors and publishers. Amnesty International reports, "since late 1990, there has been a continued reversal of the promise to broaden the enjoyment, by the Maldivian citizens, of the right to freedom of expression."[275]
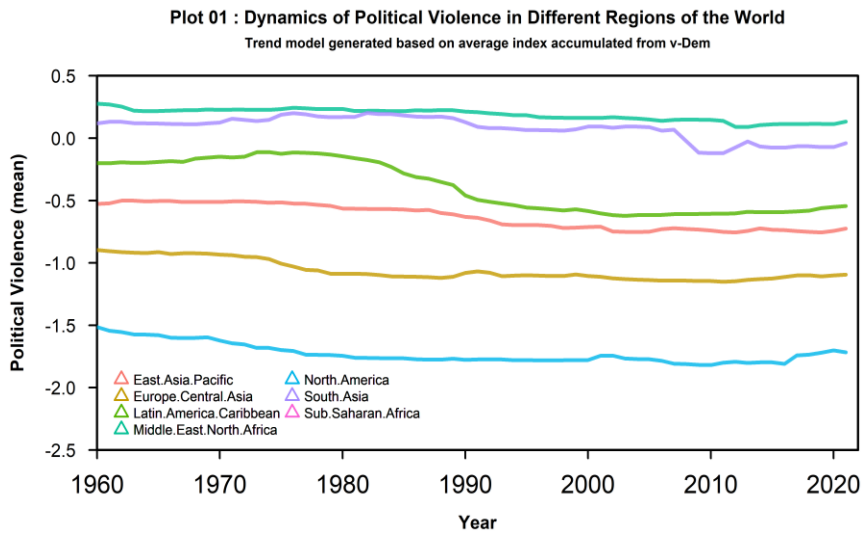
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[271] Julia Tschersich and Kristiaan P.W. Kok, "Deepening Democracy for the Governance toward Just Transitions in Agri-Food Systems," *Environmental Innovation and Societal Transitions* 43 (June 2022): 361, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.eist.2022.04.012.

[272] Frohne, "Democracy Is More Than Just Holding Elections."

[273] Khabele Matlosa and Victor Shale , *The Impact of Floor Crossing on Party Systems and Representative Democracy* (Johannesburg: KAS, 2007), 2.

[274] Nasheed, "Continued Detention of Prisoner of Conscience, Mohammed Nasheed," 2.

[275] Amnesty International, *Republic of Maldives: Repression of Peaceful Political Opposition*, 3.

By the late 1990s, democratic reform movements began in the country. Due to public pressure, the country's sixth constitution was ratified, establishing the Maldives as a multiparty democracy. By early 2000, the Maldives' multiparty democracy was a novel concept, although the country had witnessed multiple constitutions before establishing this most current democratic government. After decades of authoritarian leadership, the publication of a new democratic constitution in 2008 signaled a shift toward greater democracy in the Maldives. However, many of these reforms have stalled since a new government took power in 2013. The country is even in danger of reverting to dictatorship.[276] Thus, various occurrences since the late 1990s have revealed that there is a need for improvement in reporting balance and impartiality, as well as a lack of or misinterpreted political socialization in local communities, which has altered the recent dynamics of the country's political stability (Figure 20).

Political stability of Maldives from 2008 to 2020
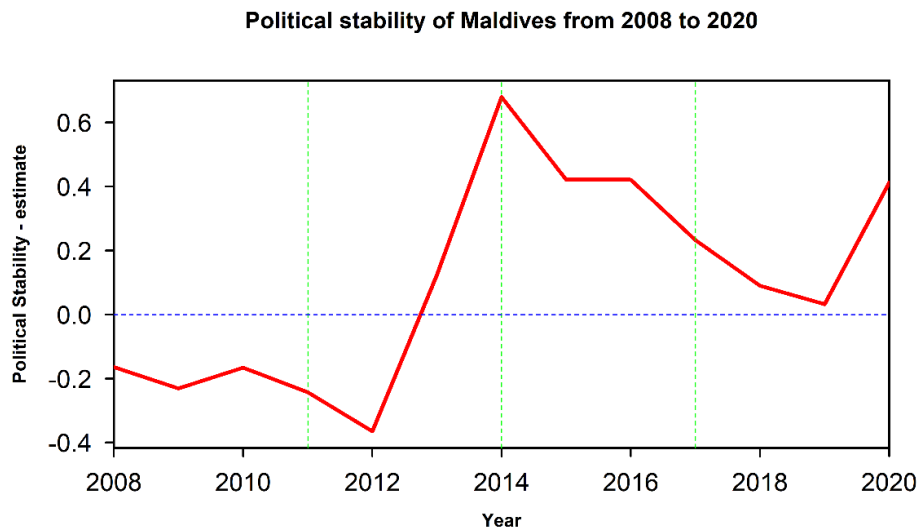
Figure 20.   The political stability of the Maldives since the
most recent constitution of 2008.[277]

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[276] International Commission of Jurists, *Justice Adrift: Rule of Law and Political Crisis in the Maldives A Fact-Finding Mission Report* (Leiden, Netherands: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2015), 1, https://doi.org/10.1163/2210-7975_HRD-0088-2015003.

[277] Adapted from "Varieties of Democracy V-Dem Project (v-Dem Full+Others) Version 12 Dataset."

B. POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS CONSTRAINTS

According to the Protection of Religious Unity Among Maldivians Act, "the government and the people are responsible for preserving religious unity. Any statement or action that violates this law is subject to criminal prosecution."[278] If a person is found guilty of violating this law, he or she could face a fine or even imprisonment. Historically, the "Maldives constitution's general commitment to human rights does not include freedom of religion or belief, which affects rights such as freedom of speech and freedom of association."[279] However, apart from Maldives Constitution Article 10 (State Religion), many democratic reforms and values were re-constructed, and issues were brought to light.

In the words of the Constitution: Article 10 (a) "The religion of the State of the Maldives is Islam. Islam shall be the one basis of all the laws of the Maldives."[280] Article 10 (a) establishes Islam as the country's state religion, although it does so in a manner that leaves much room for interpretation as to what this means in terms of the law. Article 10 (b) states that "No law contrary to any tenet of Islam shall be enacted in the Maldives."[281] Similarly, the constitution places certain constraints on the liberties enjoyed by its people as delineated in Article 16 (a), "This Constitution guarantees to all persons, in a manner that is not contrary to any tenet of Islam."[282] Even further, in paragraph (c) of Article 16, it is stated that individual liberties may also be restricted "to protect and maintain the tenets of Islam."[283] Likewise, Article 27's protection of the right to free speech is expressly restricted: "Everyone has the right to freedom of thought and the freedom to communicate opinions and expression in a manner that is not contrary to any tenet of Islam."[284]

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[278] United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, "2010 Report on International Religious Freedom - Maldives," Refworld, accessed April 10, 2022, https://www.refworld.org/docid/4cf2d082c.html.

[279] David Kaye, "Bill's Adoption Threatens Freedom of Expression in the Maldives, UN Expert Warns," OHCHR, accessed October 19, 2022, https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2016/08/bills-adoption-threatens-freedom-expression-maldives-un-expert-warns.

[280] Ministry of Legal Reform, Information and Arts, "Functional Translation of the Constitution of Maldives," 2.

[281] Ministry of Legal Reform, Information and Arts, 1.

[282] Ministry of Legal Reform, Information and Arts, 3.

[283] Ministry of Legal Reform, Information and Arts, 4.

[284] Ministry of Legal Reform, Information and Arts, 7.

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There has been no shift in the government's long-standing commitment to respecting people's freedom of religion—historically and to date. Freedom of religion is nevertheless subject to heavy restrictions under the most recent constitution. The government requires that all citizens be Muslims, and government regulations are based on the rule of Shari'a.

In the Maldives, residents are compelled by law to be Sunni Muslims. According to the Maldives' Constitution, the president's principal responsibility is to defend and promote Islamic beliefs, and the practice or propagation of any other religion is prohibited in public.[285] Consequently, the country has denied the provisions on freedom of religion or belief as outlined in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) apply to the Maldives, contrary to recommendations by the UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief. The country also violates its international obligations regarding the human rights of migrant workers.[286] The display of symbols of other religions is illegal, as is the importation of icons, religious statues, and religious literature. However, expatriate residents in the Maldives are permitted to practice their religion privately and possess a limited amount of religious literature, such as a Bible, for personal use.[287] To clarify—"foreign residents, such as teachers, laborers, and tourists, [have] remained free to worship as they wished in private, but congregating in public for non-Islamic prayer remained illegal."[288] This is a piece of evidence that the Maldives binds to normative guidance and adheres to fundamentals of human rights, such as rules of international law, diplomacy, and cooperation among nations in line with the United Nations Charter.[289] Under the charter, "States shall co-operate in the promotion of

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[285] IBP USA, *Maldives Country Study Guide - Strategic Information and Developments* (International Business Publications USA, 2012), 45, https://books.google.com/books?id=YkabBQAAQBAJ.

[286] Forum 18 News Service, "Maldives: What Do Maldivians Understand Freedom of Religion or Belief to Be?," accessed April 3, 2022, https://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=1383.

[287] Thomas Riggs, *Worldmark Encyclopedia of Religious Practices*, 2nd Edition (Thomson Gale, 2006), 4.

[288] Office of International Religious Freedom, "International Religious Freedom Report for 2019 - Maldives" (United States Department of State, 2019), 9.

[289] United Nations Nations, "Universal Declaration of Human Rights," United Nations (United Nations), accessed October 19, 2022, https://www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights.

universal respect for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, and in the elimination of all forms of racial discrimination and all forms of religious intolerance."[290]

C.   RELIGION AND POLITICAL BACKLASH

An increasing amount of research suggests that the growth in religious disaffiliation in liberal democracies is partially due to a political reaction against the Religious Right. On the other hand, "the idea of political backlash is still not well understood, which hinders our capacity to evaluate how the backlash against the Religious Right has impacted the religious and political landscape."[291]

Political endeavors in the Maldives are based on Islamic history and Islamic culture. The constitutional foundations have been institutionalized into contemporary institutional forms and codified through laws and rules, a centralized state authority, and a bureaucratized judiciary that features limitations that emerged from Western reformist fundamentals. These modifications involve the extra-institutional public political discourse of national identity. In many ways, the modern varieties of Maldives' statist political Islam, like in many other Islamic states, has conformed to liberal expectations and sensibilities consistent with Islamic modernist orientations.

1.   Before Democratization (Pre-2008)

Much research suggests that the growth in religious disaffiliation is partially due to a political reaction against the Religious Right. On the other hand, the idea of "political backlash" is still not well understood. According to Ruth Braunstein, the "Religious Right can be understood as a radical flank within the religious field for the purposes of understanding the backlash against it."[292]

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290 United Nations, "Declaration on Principles of International Law Friendly Relation and Co-Operation among States in Accordance with the Charter of the United Nations," 1971, 8, https://www.un.org/ruleoflaw/files/3dda1f104.pdf.

291 Braunstein, "A Theory of Political Backlash," 2.

292 Braunstein, 2.

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Despite the widespread state control, the religious monopoly in the Maldives did not go unscathed. In the early 1980s and the 1990s, Christian missionaries used religious materials and a radio station via Seychelles to target the Maldives population.[293] The government demonized their attempts and cracked down on potential converts, who were later imprisoned and "rehabilitated."[294] International faith-based relief NGOs were also rebuked when they attempted to spread Christianity after books with Christmas carols were discovered in their relief material in the aftermath of the 2004 tsunami.[295]

The government also made similar efforts in the Maldives to prevent the spread of extremist ideologies. The state closely regulated religious sermons and their content.[296] Religious preachers would be thoroughly investigated before being considered for the position. Individuals who displayed any traits of religious extremism would be arrested and "dealt with harshly," as was done with converts.[297] People would be picked up by security services, which would even shave their beards.[298] Some extreme, heavy-handed and humiliating tactics led to severe consequences in the run-up to democratization in the Maldives.

As the democratization process was underway, in 2007, a couple of locally radicalized individuals blew up an improvised explosive device that injured 12 tourists in the capital, Malé.[299] Because this was the first such attack in the Maldives and it targeted foreign tourists, the government's response was harsh and swift. The security forces

[293] Elizabeth Kendal, "Maldives: Hope Is Born – World Evangelical Alliance," September 3, 2007, http://web.archive.org/web/20210917103123/https://worldea.org/news/maldives-hope-is-born/.

[294] Kendal, "Maldives: Hope Is Born – World Evangelical Alliance,"

[295] Smruti Patel, "Impact of the Tsunami Response on Local and National Capacities: Maldives Country Report" (Tsunami Evaluation Coalition, April 2006), 29.

[296] United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, "Freedom in the World 2012 - Maldives," Refworld, August 31, 2012, https://www.refworld.org/docid/504494e228.html.

[297] Azra Naseem, "The Honeymoon Is Over: Maldives as a Growing Security Threat in the Indian Ocean," *Irish Studies in International Affairs* 26 (2015), 117.

[298] Praveen Swami, "The Jihad in Paradise," Outlook India, November 20, 2007, https://www.outlookindia.com/website/story/the-jihad-in-paradise/236067.

[299] Ajay Makan, "Bomb Blast Wounds 12 Tourists in Maldives Capital," Reuters, September 29, 2007, sec. Editor's Picks, https://www.reuters.com/article/us-maldives-explosion-idUSCOL8415420070929.

mercilessly cracked down on the extremist pockets that had flourished in secrecy. During one of these operations, the government clashed with a group of extremists on a small island west of the capital, Malé; a month later, 30 policemen and scores of others were injured.[300] Most individuals were apprehended, prosecuted, and sentenced to long prison terms. This created another adverse effect where extremists could preach their violent ideologies under the state's radar—within the crowded prison cells.[301]

2.   After Democratization (Post-2008)

Maldivians most significantly challenged the religious monopoly during the journey to the 2008 democratic reforms.[302] The new constitution enshrined several rights and liberties previously unknown to Maldivians. It established the rights to free expression, free speech, peaceful assembly, the right to have a lawyer, the right to form political parties, and freedom of the press.[303] The constitution still upheld one of the most fundamental democratic liberties: the freedom to practice one's religion. On the other hand, Article 10 of the constitution forbids any form of religious freedom. Several political narratives justified this as a necessary step toward "peace, tolerance, and compassion"—which could not be more wrong.[304]

The emergence of violence took some time. Gayoom's 30-year regime suppressed dissent and played a critical role in enabling Islamic non-state agents' repertoires. According to LaToya Waha, "the introduction of fundamentalist Islamic interpretations through migration, educational exchange programs, and transnational actors … laid the

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[300] Chan Tau Chou, "Maldives Faces Social Divide," Al Jazeera, November 6, 2007, https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2007/11/6/maldives-faces-social-divide.

[301] Aishath Ali Naaz, "Recruitment Trends: Crime, Mental Health and Violent Extremism: The Maldives Story" (Strong Cities Network, Strong Cities Network Summit, Melbourne, July 12, 2018), 8.

[302] Maldives Islamism Watch, "Member of Human Rights Commission Says Music Is Forbidden in Islam," March 19, 2008, https://secularmaldives.blogspot.com/2008/03/member-of-human-rights-commission-says.html.

[303] United States Department of State, "2020 Report on International Religious Freedom - Maldives," May 12, 2021, 3, https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/240282-MALDIVES-2020-INTERNATIONAL-RELIGIOUS-FREEDOM-REPORT.pdf.

[304] Office of the President of the Maldives, "Lecture by His Excellency Mr. Maumoon Abdul Gayoom, President of the Republic of Maldives, on 'ISLAM: A Religion of Peace and Tolerance' at the Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies," July 16, 2007, https://presidency.gov.mv/Press/Article/21934?term=5.

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ground for violence in the Maldives."[305] In 2012, a moderate Islamic scholar and member of parliament who was very vocal against the growth of extremism was brutally murdered.[306] He was repeatedly harassed and threatened by conservative and extremist groups due to his pacifying stance on shari'a-related preaching.[307] The same year, a journalist, Hilath Rasheed, was critically wounded as his throat was slit for expressing "irreligious" views. During his interview with BBC News, Hilath Rasheed blamed the new democratic freedoms for the new violence in society.[308]

Before 2008, as was the case with various political or religious ideologues, the extremists were kept in check, but not afterward. This may be attributed to "political repression under Gayoom [that] had driven a once reputably moderate culture of Islam to search for more extreme methods of influencing society."[309]

Exercising the new freedoms, several local secularists took to the blogosphere, both openly and anonymously, calling for a secularist society. These calls further intensified with the introduction of other social media platforms. Two of the most famous bloggers were Ahmed Rilwan and Yameen Rasheed. This fame caught the attention of a violent ideology flourishing with newfound freedom. Blogger Ahmed Rilwan disappeared in August 2014 outside of his home and was never heard of again.[310] Authorities confirmed

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[305] Waha, "Finding the Right Islam for the Maldives."

[306] "Maldives MP Stabbed to Death Outside His Home," BBC News, October 2, 2012, sec. Asia, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-19797538.

[307] Maldives Independent, "Dr Afrasheem Killed by 'Jihadi Group' Linked to al-Qaeda," November 17, 2017, https://maldivesindependent.com/crime-2/dr-afrasheem-killed-by-jihadi-group-linked-to-al-qaeda-149248.

[308] Charles Haviland, "Maldives Journalist Flees Island Fearing Safety," BBC News, July 12, 2012, sec. Asia, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-18819243.

[309] Mulberry, "The Maldives: From Dictatorship to Democracy and Back? (1978–2012)," 4.

[310] Maldives Independent, "Rilwan Was Abducted, Confirms Police," April 2, 2016, https://maldivesindependent.com/crime-2/rilwan-was-abducted-after-hostile-surveillance-police-confirm-123185.

in 2019 that he was abducted and killed by local Al-Qaeda affiliates.[311] In 2017, Yameen Rasheed was brutally stabbed and murdered outside his apartment in the capital Malé.[312]

The first democratically elected president, Mr. Mohamed Nasheed, is one of the most vocal politicians against religious extremism. Currently, the Speaker of Parliament, he frequently calls for justice for the slain bloggers. In May 2021, he escaped an improvised explosive device (IED) attack with life-threatening injuries.[313] Politicians and religious extremists frequently target him and decry his secularist ideology in the Maldives.[314] This incident has led to a government-sponsored bill being introduced to Parliament, which criminalizes labeling individuals as apostates. In response to this, Islamic scholars have protested against any impunity for apostates and secularists, whom they say, violate Islamic norms.[315] Conversely, in Islam, *Takfir* is hardly nonexistent. According to traditional Islamic law, apostasy, or *Riddah,* is punishable by death; however, Islamic scholars are now debating this concept. (Based on the Qur'an, Sunnah, and Hadith, the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community holds that there is no earthly punishment for apostates, not even death.[316]) Despite those protests, the bill was enacted into law on November 29, 2021.[317]

According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the Maldives has sent the highest per capita number of foreign terrorist fighters (FTF) to Syria

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[311] Zaheena Rasheed, "Missing Maldives Journalist Killed by Al-Qaeda Affiliate," September 2, 2019, https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/9/2/missing-maldives-journalist-killed-by-al-qaeda-affiliate.

[312] Al Jazeera, "Prominent Blogger Stabbed to Death in Maldives Capital," April 23, 2017, https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/4/23/prominent-blogger-stabbed-to-death-in-maldives-capital.

[313] Ahmed Naish and Zaheena Rasheed, "Who Tried to Kill Mohamed Nasheed?," May 8, 2021, https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/5/8/who-tried-to-kill-mohamed-nasheed.

[314] Public Service Media – Maldives, " MDP Introduced Secular Ideologies to Maldives: Religious Scholars,"

[315] Fathmath Zunaam, "Bill with Amendments to Criminalize Hate Crimes Sent to Committee," *The Times of Addu*, June 15, 2021, https://timesofaddu.com/2021/06/15/bill-with-amendments-to-criminalize-hate-crimes-sent-to-committee/.

[316] Azhar Goraya, "No Capital Punishment for Apostasy in Islam," *The Review of Religions* (blog), December 1, 2020, https://www.reviewofreligions.org/26572/no-capital-punishment-for-apostasy-in-islam/.

[317] Ibrahim Adam, "President Signs Hate Crime Bill into Law," *The Maldives Journal*, November 29, 2021, https://themaldivesjournal.com/themaldivesjournal.com/31977.

and Iraq of any country in the world.[318] A 2020 European Foundation for South Asian Studies (EFSAS) publication associates this high number of FTF concentrations from the Maldives with its Sunni Muslim majority, the presence of extremist groups in the country, easy access to social media, and other social issues in the country.[319] Even though the government criminalized this exodus in 2014, it struggled to control the recruitment.[320] Most of the recruiters actions are difficult to prove beyond a reasonable doubt in Maldivian courts.[321]

D. STATE ENFORCEMENT OF RELIGION AS A MOTIVATOR FOR VIOLENCE

The leadership of the first coalition aimed to fulfill the need to provide equitable treatment to everyone without making any distinctions based on their political membership. In 2008, the newly elected democratic government decided to create a new cabinet position, the Ministry of Islamic Affairs (MIA).[322] This was in contrast to the democratic principles it represented, though a signal to appease the conservative society and to endorse religious monopolization.

The state was liable under the constitution to enforce Islam in the Maldives. After democratization in 2008, the government continued to strictly enforce censorship on items, material, actions, content, NGOs, or websites that were removed for being unIslamic.[323] This left any extremist interests untouched.

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[318] United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime- Vienna, "Investigation, Prosecution and Adjudication of Foreign Terrorist Fighter Cases for South and South-East Asia," United Nations, 2018, 12; U.S. Department of State, "Integrated Country Strategy-Maldives," April 2, 2019, 2, https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/ICS-Maldives_UNCLASS-508.pdf.

[319] European Foundation for South Asian Studies EFSAS, "The Maldives's Foreign Fighter Phenomenon: Theories and Perspectives" (EFSAS, Amsterdam, April 20, 2020), 2–3, 5.

[320] Animesh Roul, "The Maldives Faces Dual Challenge of Terrorist Returnees and Extremist Hate Campaigns," Jamestown Foundation, March 25, 2019, https://jamestown.org/program/the-maldives-faces-dual-challenge-of-terrorist-returnees-and-extremist-hate-campaigns/.

[321] United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime- Vienna, "Investigation, Prosecution and Adjudication of Foreign Terrorist Fighter Cases for South and South-East Asia," 34.

[322] United States State Department, *Maldives: July-December 2010 International Religious Freedom Report* (Washington, DC: United States State Department, September 13, 2011), 2.

[323] United States Department of State, "2020 Report on International Religious Freedom - Maldives," 7–8.

In 2011, after furor from extremist elements in society, MIA's first radical move was to remove several monuments presented by heads of state from South Asian states due to their "contradiction to Islam."[324] The Ministry would also continue to regulate and monitor sermons, sanction unIslamic individuals and NGOs, and regulate religious content in schools.[325]

One of the most comprehensive reports on religious radicalization was published in 2015 by the Maldives Democratic Network (MDN). The report gave details of school textbooks ranging from grades one to 12, which demonized other religions, promoted domestic violence, and collectively used language to "ignite and reassert fundamentalist views."[326] It also detailed the contents of magazines, leaflets, and other printed material endorsed and circulated by the MIA, which insinuated extreme teachings such as forcing women to wear the "burqa" and "niqab," female genital mutilation, and marital rape.[327] The report also identified incitement of violence and intolerance passed on by MIA through sermons.[328] In 2019, after the report found an audience in the Maldives, the government decided to ban MDN for the "anti-Islamic" content, while its staff had to flee the country from fear of persecution and after their lives were threatened.[329]

The "2020 Maldives International Religious Freedom Report" released by the U.S. State Department clearly states that the authorities ignored online and offline harassment

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[324] Ahmed Nazeer, "Islamic Minister Asks Government to Remove Idolatrous SAARC Monuments," Minivan News – Archive, November 17, 2011, https://minivannewsarchive.com/politics/islamic-minister-asks-government-to-remove-saarc-monuments-28317.

[325] United States Department of State, "2020 Report on International Religious Freedom - Maldives," 1, 5, 7.

[326] Maldives Democracy Network, "Preliminary Assessment on Radicalisation in the Maldives 2015," November 19, 2021, 9–31, https://mvdemocracy.org/preliminary-assessment-on-radicalisation-in-the-maldives-2015/.

[327] Maldives Democracy Network, 37–38.

[328] Maldives Democracy Network, 32–33.

[329] Amnesty International, "Maldives: NGO Closure Shows Repression Hasn't Gone Away," November 5, 2019, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/press-release/2019/11/maldives-ngo-closure-shows-repression-hasnt-gone-away/.

of individuals who expressed moderate and secular views.[330] The report also criticized the Maldives government as the latter cracked down on individuals who criticized Islam. At the same time, little was done to curb vigilante-type attacks on the individuals by religious extremists. The state's actions did not alleviate targeted threats and violent attacks.

E. RELIGIOUS FREEDOM AND SECULARIZATION—THE LIMITATIONS ON POLITICAL SOCIALIZATION

The empirical evidence shows that the government of Maldives, due to its actions or inactions, has been a vital enabler of religious persecution in the country. Many of these actions (or inactions) are fueling or motivating the population against religious freedom or secularization. According to Brian Grim and Roger Finke, this seems to be a similar trend in some other Muslim states, like Pakistan, where the government is "reluctant to intervene and risk violent conflict."[331] The Maldives government is also seen as hesitant to disturb the current order of things. Reflecting on this, Sean Everton presents Gill's analysis that such countries will have political leaders who embrace and advocate a faith when it is "in their interest to institutionalize such faith."[332] This may create further political resistance to any changes to religious monopoly or the laws that define it.

Before democratization, Maldives may have been insulated by social consensus and support, which is defined by Peter Berger in his Sacred Canopy Theory. However, the modernization after 2008 may have caused "a plausibility crisis."[333] If Berger's argument is applied to the case of Maldives, the religious monopoly would not survive after the creation of an "open society" or democratization. It was the modernization from the

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[330] United States Department of State, "International Religious Freedom Report for 2021 - Maldives," June 2, 2022, 7, https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/MALDIVES-2021-INTERNATIONAL-RELIGIOUS-FREEDOM-REPORT.pdf.

[331] Brian J Grim and Roger Finke, *The Price of Freedom Denied: Religious Persecution and Conflict in the Twenty-First Century*, Cambridge Studies in Social Theory (United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2010): 161, https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511762345.007.

[332] Sean F. Everton, *Networks and Religion: Ties That Bind, Loose, Build-up, and Tear Down.* (United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 33.

[333] Everton, 35–36.

democratization that had brought about the challenges to the traditional Islamic monopoly in the country through secularization.[334]

Furthermore, if the principle of homophily is applied to the Maldives, it is assessed as densely populated with a close-knit society; hence, the religious monopoly and strong social ties may have also resulted in extremism.[335] Social norms constructed on Islam by the state created a favorable environment for dark networks to form and thrive through these dense social connections. The government may have been careful not to create social tensions, which could create network closures that lead up to further radicalization.[336] Despite the state efforts, increased violent actions against secularized individuals (as a result of modernization) may have been due to the belief that taking arms against them was "divinely sanctioned."[337]

It may be that the Maldives needs to facilitate a religious economy to make way for other religious movements to thrive and the state may need to refrain from controlling religion to safeguard other minorities. In that case, the transformation into a secular or pluralist society could become bloody if the current situation is considered. As Grim and Finke observe, when religious freedom is maintained, society will have less vigilante violence.[338] However, if the nation intends to foster liberal fundamentals, the government needs to exemplify other beliefs, refine constitutional bindings, and remove any religious monopoly within civil society. The process must be carefully planned, harmonized, and gradually implemented over a specific period and must consider *generation gaps*. It should progress as society adapts to change in terms of its views—*ideology*—and adopts a cohesive framework—*political socialization*.

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[334] Everton, 12–13.

[335] Everton, 116.

[336] Everton, 290–91.

[337] Everton, 294.

[338] Grim and Finke, *The Price of Freedom Denied: Religious Persecution and Conflict in the Twenty-First Century*, 72.

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VIII. CONCLUSION

Recent democratic waves have undeniably swept across the vast majority of Asian nations, with reverberations reaching the South Asian Island nation of the Maldives.

As a term coined in Europe in the early 19th century to describe and advocate a worldview and political action to determine who owns what and how people with rights should be governed, liberalism was, from the outset, an expansionist imperial project that had far-reaching effects in Asia.[339] Like the term liberalism, religious extremism, a hotly debated topic at present, is frequently reduced to a one-dimensional concept, one that is associated with religious violence. Considering the findings from the cross-regional comparison of the occurrence of political violence and the promotion of Western liberal values within Asia and the sub-continent, I believe both of these issues align with the aforementioned analysis-proclaimed findings–*political socialization and political ideology*.

What, if any, links exist between political Islam and political violence?

Like any other religion, "Islam and its history do not establish it as a pacifist religion nor do [they] construct it as a violent one."[340] However, "[s]ome Islamic movement followers use and believe in violence as a legitimate means of achieving political goals, while others do not."[341] Moreover, in political situations involving high

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[339] John Kena, "Why Liberalism Has Few Friends in Asia," *The Interpreter*, accessed June 23, 2022, https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpreter/why-liberalism-has-few-friends-asia.

[340] Mushtaq Ul Haq Ahmad Sikander, "The Alternative to Violent Political Islam Is Pacifist Sufism That Brings Out and Implements the Real Values of Islam," February 3, 2020, https://www.newageislam.com/islamic-ideology/mushtaq-ul-haq-ahmad-sikander-new-age-islam/the-alternative-violent-political-islam-pacifist-sufism-that-brings-implements-real-values-islam/d/120964; Andrew Mack, "Islam Isn't Inherently Violent or Peaceful," Slate, January 21, 2016, https://slate.com/news-and-politics/2016/01/islam-isnt-inherently-violent-or-peaceful.html.

[341] Shmuel Bar, "The Religious Sources Of Islamic Terrorism," *Policy Review*, July 2004, 35.

levels of instability, "It [political violence] could only occur in the context of repression and dictatorship, combined with the use of coercion."[342]

Political and socio-economic factors determine the use or avoidance of violence.[343] Similarly, strong institutional checks on a government's authority are a necessary component of any stable democracy.[344] Therefore, "The primary institutional check on power in liberal states is free and fair elections via which the people can remove their rulers from power, providing a fundamental check on the behavior of the government."[345]

Liberal democracy promises and guarantees nonviolent action, as "contentious politics approach and emphasize the interactive and relational aspects of nonviolent action, including the relationship between nonviolent challengers, local opponents, government officials, the media and external actors."[346]

The Maldives faces various legislative, constitutional, social, and religious challenges as it evolves into a future liberal democratic, religiously moderate, and modern state. It is a fact that during the brief time of the Maldives' democratic consolidation, the government and society have lost sight of the essential notions of political socialization and the social contract, and this has led to discrepancies within the political sphere of the Maldives since 2008. Therefore, the government's ability to determine what society wants and to promote those values is of paramount importance. Crucial to this are the link between the government and society; constitutional rights to

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[342] Anja Neundorf and Grigore Pop-Eleches, "Dictators and Their Subjects: Authoritarian Attitudinal Effects and Legacies," *Comparative Political Studies* 53, no. 12 (October 2020): 1848–50, https://doi.org/10.1177/0010414020926203.

[343] American Psychological Association, "Violence & Socioeconomic Status," accessed November 2, 2022, https://www.apa.org/pi/ses/resources/publications/violence.

[344] Thorbjørn Jagland, "An Analysis of Democracy, Human Rights and the Rule of Law in Europe, Based on the Findings of the Council of Europe Monitoring Mechanisms and Bodies," Council of Europe, 2018, 65.

[345] Jeffrey W Meiser, "Introducing Liberalism in International Relations Theory," *International Relations*, February 18, 2018, 4.

[346] Stephen Zunes, "People-Powered and Non-Violent Social Movements: Forcing Gradualist Democratic Reforms in Authoritarian Societies," *Frontiers in Political Science* 3 (February 4, 2022): 3, https://doi.org/10.3389/fpos.2021.721055.

safeguard and provide power; and individual rights to address use or abuse of power. These are the elements of social contract theory, which is a conception of rights that society has a responsibility to uphold. This accounts for individuals' "moral and political obligations relying on a contract or agreement between them to establish the society in which they live."[347]

Unbeknownst to many outside of the island nation, the Maldives has a stricter religious monopoly over its population than most other countries. It is a Muslim country by design, as evidenced by its Constitution, state institutions, and civil society. This has been the case since the 12th century when the Maldives converted to Islam en masse. No known history or literature exists on whether or when the Maldives was a pluralist society. As per the historical evidence presented in this thesis, the Maldives does not tolerate any citizen or visitor displaying or expressing his or her faith, other than Islam, while in the country. In fact, the country not only limits religious freedom but also outlaws and persecutes it.

As Bernard Lewis has observed, there is "the idea that Western cultures are inherently superior to other cultures."[348] This view, in part, is framed by liberal democratic ideals of religious tolerance. Yet many citizens within the nation-states of South Asia believe their respective cultures are not, in fact, inferior—and value ethnic and religious homogeneity in society, along with group solidarity—are often less ready to accept religious and ethnic minorities as family, neighbors, and or fellow citizens, which can then lead to political violence during the transition to democracy.[349] In a similar vein, it is common to see such cultures facing an existential crisis inside their own ranks in order to maintain their position of social dominance. Despite the fact that the Maldives is unique in having no multi-ethnic or significant cultural differences, its

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[347] Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy, "Social Contract Theory," accessed August 12, 2022, https://iep.utm.edu/soc-cont/.

[348] Michael Gibson, "Treacherous Friends: The Uncomfortable Legacy of Bernard Lewis," *Daily Sabah*, May 31, 2018, https://www.dailysabah.com/books/2018/05/31/treacherous-friends-the-uncomfortable-legacy-of-bernard-lewis.

[349] Alan Cooperman, Neha Sahgal, and Anna Schiller, "National and Religious Identities Converge in a Region Once Dominated by Atheist Regimes," Pew Research Center, May 10, 2017, 45.

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society has room for different points of view and opinions. Hence, the notion of liberal democracy can and should be molded in a manner that uniquely suits the Maldives. As the cornerstone of democracy, recognizing minority rights and pluralism must be seen as an effort to protect all Maldivians' rights to non-discrimination and equality in light of the shifting worldwide trend. Along with Maldives' rapid growth, adaptation to modernity, and political efforts, minorities should be protected by the same idea of guaranteed rights, political affiliation, and the freedom to have different ideas.

Political scientists have determined that political attitudes and conduct are not only passed genetically but also shaped by environmental factors.[350] Nevertheless, overall sentiments about social hierarchy correlate strongly with political ideologies.[351] Through political socialization, people decide throughout their lives where they belong and how they contribute to their nation's political ideals and goals.[352] Through this process, the values, norms, and political behaviors (either positive or negative, peaceful or violent) that contribute to the operating political system are transmitted from one generation to the next. Perhaps most obviously, it is how individuals establish their political orientation, such as conservatism or liberalism.

This paper provides evidence that the Maldives is on a path to further political violence, owing primarily to the government's monopolization of Islam to secure the political leadership's legitimacy and authority. Due to the risks involved, a further comprehensive study on this topic cannot be conducted in the Maldives. The research also claims that the Maldives government's role in Islamization and its "bare minimum" approach to combating secularism and religious extremist ideology contribute to increased religious persecution and violent vigilante attacks on secularists. Because of

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[350] John R. Alford, Carolyn L. Funk, and John R. Hibbing, "Are Political Orientations Genetically Transmitted?," *The American Political Science Review* 99, no. 2 (2005): 153, https://www.jstor.org/stable/30038929.

[351] Thomas Haarklau Kleppestø et al., "Correlations between Social Dominance Orientation and Political Attitudes Reflect Common Genetic Underpinnings," in *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America* 116, no. 36 (August 2019): 1774, https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1818711116.

[352] Robert Longley, "What Is Political Socialization? Definition and Examples," ThoughtCo, accessed August 13, 2022, https://www.thoughtco.com/political-socialization-5104843.
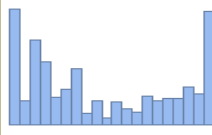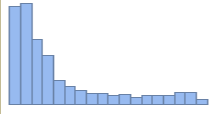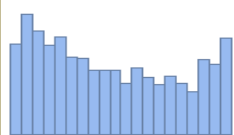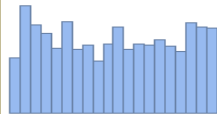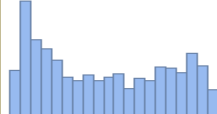
the prevalence of both actors (extremists and secularists) in the Maldives, the post-2008 democratization process has been hampered by heightened the violence. The government must play an essential role in reversing this disastrous trend. Unfortunately, the outlook is bleak for the time being.

There can be a significant amount of pushback against change within political societies. Consequently, during the democratization process, political institutionalization, the peaceful transition of regimes, and social acceptance of change should work together to foster notions of citizenship, political socialization, and institutions while safeguarding indigenous beliefs and identity and reducing the likelihood of political violence.
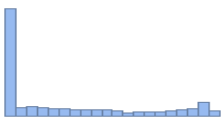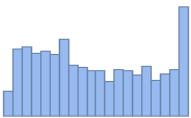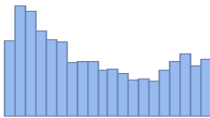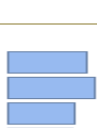
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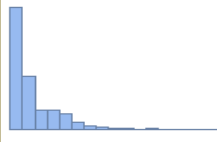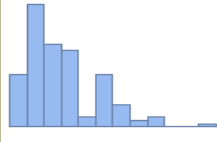
APPENDIX A. DATA SUMMARY OF ACCUMULATED DATASETS

The following presents a data summary of the accumulated datasets used in this thesis.[353] The table is generated utilizing RStudio with statistics library 'summarytools' 1.0.1 on R version 4.2.1.

No	Variable	Stats / Values	Freqs (% of Valid)	Graph	Valid	Missing
1	Polity score [numeric]	Mean (sd) : -0.5 (7.1) min ≤ med ≤ max: -10 ≤ -3 ≤ 10 IQR (CV) : 14 (-14.2)	21 distinct values		16644 (55.3%)	13435 (44.7%)
2	Political violence [numeric]	Mean (sd) : 1.6 (1.1) min ≤ med ≤ max: 0 ≤ 1 ≤ 4 IQR (CV) : 1 (0.7)	0 : 2910 (15.9%) 1 : 7341 (40.1%) 2 : 4211 (23.0%) 3 : 2535 (13.8%) 4 : 1318 (7.2%)		18315 (60.9%)	11764 (39.1%)
3	Liberal democracy index [numeric]	Mean (sd) : 0.2 (0.2) min ≤ med ≤ max: 0 ≤ 0.1 ≤ 0.9 IQR (CV) : 0.2 (1)	888 distinct values		24162 (80.3%)	5917 (19.7%)
4	Election free and fair [numeric]	Mean (sd) : 2.6 (1.3) min ≤ med ≤ max: 0 ≤ 3 ≤ 4 IQR (CV) : 3 (0.5)	0 : 394 (8.3%) 1 : 819 (17.2%) 2 : 820 (17.2%) 3 : 1078 (22.6%) 4 : 1661 (34.8%)		4772 (15.9%)	25307 (84.1%)
5	Equality before the law and individual liberty index [numeric]	Mean (sd) : 0.5 (0.3) min ≤ med ≤ max: 0 ≤ 0.4 ≤ 1 IQR (CV) : 0.6 (0.7)	991 distinct values		26268 (87.3%)	3811 (12.7%)
6	Judicial constraints on the executive index [numeric]	Mean (sd) : 0.5 (0.3) min ≤ med ≤ max: 0 ≤ 0.5 ≤ 1 IQR (CV) : 0.5 (0.6)	973 distinct values		24927 (82.9%)	5152 (17.1%)
7	Legislative constraints on the executive	Mean (sd) : 0.4 (0.3) min ≤ med ≤ max: 0 ≤ 0.4 ≤ 1 IQR (CV) : 0.6 (0.7)	935 distinct values		20616 (68.5%)	9463 (31.5%)

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[353] Adapted from "Varieties of Democracy V-Dem Project (v-Dem Full+Others) Version 12 Dataset"; "Age of Democracy Dataset (1800 – 2020)"; "World Development Indicators (1990-2022)."

No	Variable	Stats / Values	Freqs (% of Valid)	Graph	Valid	Missing
	index [numeric]					
8	Clean elections index [numeric]	Mean (sd) : 0.3 (0.3) min ≤ med ≤ max: 0 ≤ 0.1 ≤ 1 IQR (CV) : 0.5 (1.2)	986 distinct values		26302 (87.4%)	3777 (12.6%)
9	Ideology [numeric]	Mean (sd) : 2 (1.3) min ≤ med ≤ max: 0 ≤ 2 ≤ 4 IQR (CV) : 2 (0.6)	0 : 2071 (11.3%) 1 : 5436 (29.7%) 2 : 3467 (19.0%) 3 : 4557 (24.9%) 4 : 2744 (15.0%)		18275 (60.8%)	11804 (39.2%)
10	Rule of law index [numeric]	Mean (sd) : 0.5 (0.3) min ≤ med ≤ max: 0 ≤ 0.5 ≤ 1 IQR (CV) : 0.5 (0.6)	987 distinct values		26084 (86.7%)	3995 (13.3%)
11	Freedom of expression index [numeric]	Mean (sd) : 0.4 (0.3) min ≤ med ≤ max: 0 ≤ 0.4 ≤ 1 IQR (CV) : 0.6 (0.7)	978 distinct values		25855 (86.0%)	4224 (14.0%)
12	Freedom of peaceful assembly [numeric]	Mean (sd) : 2 (1.3) min ≤ med ≤ max: 0 ≤ 2 ≤ 4 IQR (CV) : 2 (0.7)	0 : 2904 (15.9%) 1 : 4602 (25.1%) 2 : 3602 (19.7%) 3 : 4106 (22.4%) 4 : 3100 (16.9%)		18314 (60.9%)	11765 (39.1%)
13	Freedom of religion [numeric]	Mean (sd) : 2.7 (1.2) min ≤ med ≤ max: 0 ≤ 3 ≤ 4 IQR (CV) : 2 (0.4)	0 : 1396 (5.3%) 1 : 3647 (13.9%) 2 : 5368 (20.5%) 3 : 7908 (30.2%) 4 : 7907 (30.1%)		26226 (87.2%)	3853 (12.8%)
14	Political polarization [numeric]	Mean (sd) : 2.1 (1.2) min ≤ med ≤ max: 0 ≤ 2 ≤ 4 IQR (CV) : 2 (0.6)	0 : 1595 (8.7%) 1 : 4660 (25.5%) 2 : 4261 (23.3%) 3 : 5368 (29.3%) 4 : 2411 (13.2%)		18295 (60.8%)	11784 (39.2%)
15	Executive respects constitution [numeric]	Mean (sd) : 2 (1.2) min ≤ med ≤ max: 0 ≤ 2 ≤ 4 IQR (CV) : 2 (0.6)	0 : 3768 (15.1%) 1 : 4434 (17.8%) 2 : 6868 (27.6%) 3 : 8509 (34.2%) 4 : 1337 (5.4%)		24916 (82.8%)	5163 (17.2%)
16	Polarization of society [numeric]	Mean (sd) : 1.4 (1.1) min ≤ med ≤ max: 0 ≤ 1 ≤ 4 IQR (CV) : 2 (0.8)	0 : 969 (26.1%) 1 : 1060 (28.6%) 2 : 827 (22.3%) 3 : 801 (21.6%) 4 : 49 (1.3%)		3706 (12.3%)	26373 (87.7%)

No	Variable	Stats / Values	Freqs (% of Valid)	Graph	Valid	Missing
17	Population [numeric]	Mean (sd) : 24418888 (102677085) min ≤ med ≤ max: 2833 ≤ 4154606 ≤ 1410929362 IQR (CV) : 12790200 (4.2)	13165 distinct values		13195 (43.9%)	16884 (56.1%)
18	GDP per Capita [numeric]	Mean (sd) : 18011.2 (20472.2) min ≤ med ≤ max: 436.7 ≤ 10306.1 ≤ 161971.5 IQR (CV) : 22338.4 (1.1)	5701 distinct values		5701 (19.0%)	24378 (81.0%)
19	Age of democracy [numeric]	Mean (sd) : 59.7 (40.6) min ≤ med ≤ max: 3 ≤ 49 ≤ 222 IQR (CV) : 46 (0.7)	73 distinct values		8810 (29.3%)	21269 (70.7%)

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APPENDIX B. INDICES OF POLITICAL VIOLENCE AND LIBERAL DEMOCRACIES

The following presents political violence and liberal democracy indices, ranked by the top 30 countries.[354] The computation is achieved by calculating the average political violence and the average liberal democracy indices and grouping countries by region. The duration accumulated for this calculation is from 1800 to 2020.

#	ISO3	POLITICAL VIOLENCE INDEX	CONTINENT	REGION	COUNTRY NAME
1	AFG	3.867	Asia	South Asia	Afghanistan
2	BRA	3.451	Americas	South America	Brazil
3	BGD	3.431	Asia	South Asia	Bangladesh
4	IRQ	3.363	Asia	South West Asia	Iraq
5	HTI	3.352	Americas	West Indies	Haiti
6	ZAF	3.107	Africa	Southern Africa	South Africa
7	COL	3.025	Americas	South America	Colombia
8	SOM	2.992	Africa	Eastern Africa	Somalia
9	PRY	2.869	Americas	South America	Paraguay
10	BOL	2.828	Americas	South America	Bolivia
11	IDN	2.795	Asia	South East Asia	Indonesia
12	COG	2.773	Africa	Central Africa	Congo, Republic of the
13	COM	2.756	Africa	Indian Ocean	Comoros
14	MMR	2.705	Asia	South East Asia	Myanmar (Burma)
15	SLV	2.705	Americas	Central America	El Salvador
16	ERI	2.664	Africa	Eastern Africa	Eritrea
17	THA	2.648	Asia	South East Asia	Thailand
18	SYR	2.627	Asia	South West Asia	Syria
19	DOM	2.607	Americas	West Indies	Dominican Republic
20	AGO	2.557	Africa	Southern Africa	Angola
21	CUB	2.550	Americas	West Indies	Cuba
22	LBN	2.548	Asia	South West Asia	Lebanon
23	NGA	2.546	Africa	Western Africa	Nigeria
24	ALB	2.527	Europe	South East Europe	Albania
25	DZA	2.525	Africa	Northern Africa	Algeria
26	TUR	2.525	Asia	South West Asia	Turkey
27	KOR	2.508	Asia	East Asia	Korea, South
28	GTM	2.500	Americas	Central America	Guatemala
29	IRN	2.500	Asia	South West Asia	Iran
30	GRC	2.492	Europe	South East Europe	Greece

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[354] Adapted from "Varieties of Democracy V-Dem Project (v-Dem Full+Others) Version 12 Dataset"; "Age of Democracy Dataset (1800 – 2020)."

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#	ISO3	LIBERAL DEMOCRACY INDEX	CONTINENT	REGION	COUNTRY NAME
1	ISR	0.056	Asia	South West Asia	Israel
2	IRL	0.054	Europe	Western Europe	Ireland
3	SVK	0.054	Europe	Central Europe	Slovakia
4	LUX	0.052	Europe	Western Europe	Luxembourg
5	LVA	0.052	Europe	Eastern Europe	Latvia
6	MDA	0.052	Europe	Eastern Europe	Moldova
7	ISL	0.051	Europe	Northern Europe	Iceland
8	SVN	0.050	Europe	South East Europe	Slovenia
9	NZL	0.049	Oceania	Pacific	New Zealand
10	BIH	0.048	Europe	South East Europe	Bosnia and Herzegovina
11	EST	0.047	Europe	Eastern Europe	Estonia
12	HRV	0.046	Europe	South East Europe	Croatia
13	MKD	0.045	Europe	South East Europe	Macedonia
14	CAN	0.044	Americas	North America	Canada
15	GEO	0.044	Asia	South West Asia	Georgia
16	MLT	0.044	Europe	Southern Europe	Malta
17	UKR	0.043	Europe	Eastern Europe	Ukraine
18	BRB	0.042	Americas	West Indies	Barbados
19	FIN	0.042	Europe	Northern Europe	Finland
20	JAM	0.042	Americas	West Indies	Jamaica
21	LTU	0.042	Europe	Eastern Europe	Lithuania
22	LKA	0.040	Asia	South Asia	Sri Lanka
23	TTO	0.039	Americas	West Indies	Trinidad and Tobago
24	USA	0.039	Americas	North America	United States
25	AUS	0.038	Oceania	Pacific	Australia
26	FRA	0.038	Europe	Western Europe	France
27	GBR	0.038	Europe	Western Europe	United Kingdom
28	ARG	0.037	Americas	South America	Argentina
29	ARM	0.037	Asia	South West Asia	Armenia
30	ITA	0.037	Europe	Southern Europe	Italy

APPENDIX C. AGE OF DEMOCRACIES

The following table lists calculated age of democracy, segmented into 0 to 50 years, 51 to 100, 101 to 150 years.[355] The duration accumulated for this calculation is from 1800 to 2020.

#	ISO3	Average political Violence	Average Liberal Democracy	Continent	Region	Country Name	Age of Democracy
		GROUP 01 – 00 TO 50 YEARS					
1	NAM	1.156	0.026	Africa	Southern Africa	Namibia	3
2	ARM	1.125	0.037	Asia	South West Asia	Armenia	4
3	BFA	2.170	0.031	Africa	Western Africa	Burkina Faso	6
4	SYC	1.000	0.025	Africa	Indian Ocean	Seychelles	6
5	TUN	1.762	0.016	Africa	Northern Africa	Tunisia	7
6	MDV	1.115	0.016	Asia	South Asia	Maldives	13
7	COM	2.756	0.022	Africa	Indian Ocean	Comoros	16
8	LBR	2.124	0.026	Africa	Western Africa	Liberia	16
9	BDI	1.660	0.017	Africa	Central Africa	Burundi	17
10	GEO	1.375	0.044	Asia	South West Asia	Georgia	18
11	PRY	2.869	0.019	Americas	South America	Paraguay	19
12	KEN	1.926	0.021	Africa	Eastern Africa	Kenya	20
13	LSO	1.951	0.022	Africa	Southern Africa	Lesotho	20
14	HRV	1.400	0.046	Europe	South East Europe	Croatia	22
15	MEX	2.352	0.023	Americas	Central America	Mexico	22
16	SEN	1.093	0.035	Africa	Western Africa	Senegal	22
17	BIH	1.600	0.048	Europe	South East Europe	Bosnia and Herzegovina	26
18	TWN	1.459	0.023	Asia	East Asia	Taiwan	26
19	GNB	2.295	0.016	Africa	Western Africa	Guinea-Bissau	28
20	MOZ	2.205	0.018	Africa	Southern Africa	Mozambique	28
21	MWI	1.057	0.023	Africa	Southern Africa	Malawi	28
22	ZAF	3.107	0.030	Africa	Southern Africa	South Africa	28
23	CAF	2.431	0.020	Africa	Central Africa	Central African Republic	29
24	MDG	1.533	0.016	Africa	Indian Ocean	Madagascar	29
25	NER	1.020	0.026	Africa	Western Africa	Niger	29
26	ALB	2.527	0.025	Europe	South East Europe	Albania	30
27	GUY	0.967	0.028	Americas	South America	Guyana	30
28	MLI	1.402	0.024	Africa	Western Africa	Mali	30
29	RUS	1.607	0.013	Asia	Northern Asia	Russia	30
30	BEN	0.869	0.028	Africa	Western Africa	Benin	31
31	BGD	3.431	0.029	Asia	South Asia	Bangladesh	31
32	BLR	0.188	0.022	Europe	Eastern Europe	Belarus	31
33	CPV	1.434	0.025	Africa	Western Africa	Cape Verde	31
34	MDA	0.656	0.052	Europe	Eastern Europe	Moldova	31
35	MKD	0.903	0.045	Europe	South East Europe	Macedonia	31
36	NPL	1.262	0.020	Asia	South Asia	Nepal	31
37	STP	1.000	0.026	Africa	Western Africa	Sao Tome and Principe	31
38	SVN	0.212	0.050	Europe	South East Europe	Slovenia	31
39	UKR	1.500	0.043	Europe	Eastern Europe	Ukraine	31
40	BGR	0.730	0.028	Europe	South East Europe	Bulgaria	32

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[355] Adapted from "Varieties of Democracy V-Dem Project (v-Dem Full+Others) Version 12 Dataset"; "Age of Democracy Dataset (1800 – 2020)."

#	ISO3	Average political Violence	Average Liberal Democracy	Continent	Region	Country Name	Age of Democracy
41	HUN	0.548	0.025	Europe	Central Europe	Hungary	32
42	MNG	0.459	0.025	Asia	Northern Asia	Mongolia	32
43	NIC	2.336	0.020	Americas	Central America	Nicaragua	38
44	SLV	2.705	0.023	Americas	Central America	El Salvador	38
45	UGA	2.279	0.021	Africa	Eastern Africa	Uganda	42
46	VUT	0.664	0.031	Oceania	Pacific	Vanuatu	42
47	BOL	2.828	0.024	Americas	South America	Bolivia	43
48	SLB	0.107	0.030	Oceania	Pacific	Solomon Islands	44
49	CYP	1.459	0.034	Asia	South West Asia	Cyprus	46
50	PNG	0.380	0.031	Oceania	Pacific	Papua New Guinea	47
51	SUR	2.123	0.033	Americas	South America	Suriname	47
52	THA	2.648	0.023	Asia	South East Asia	Thailand	47
53	GMB	0.361	0.025	Africa	Western Africa	Gambia, The	50
		GROUP 02 – 51 TO 100 YEARS					
1	LBN	2.548	0.030	Asia	South West Asia	Lebanon	51
2	FJI	0.885	0.033	Oceania	Pacific	Fiji	52
3	GHA	2.167	0.028	Africa	Western Africa	Ghana	52
4	MUS	1.000	0.034	Africa	Indian Ocean	Mauritius	54
5	BRB	0.033	0.042	Americas	West Indies	Barbados	56
6	BWA	0.582	0.031	Africa	Southern Africa	Botswana	56
7	DOM	2.607	0.022	Americas	West Indies	Dominican Republic	56
8	MLT	0.861	0.044	Europe	Southern Europe	Malta	58
9	JAM	2.189	0.042	Americas	West Indies	Jamaica	60
10	TTO	0.197	0.039	Americas	West Indies	Trinidad and Tobago	60
11	SLE	2.344	0.023	Africa	Western Africa	Sierra Leone	61
12	TUR	2.525	0.023	Asia	South West Asia	Turkey	61
13	COG	2.773	0.017	Africa	Central Africa	Congo, Republic of the	62
14	KOR	2.508	0.018	Asia	East Asia	Korea, South	62
15	NGA	2.546	0.026	Africa	Western Africa	Nigeria	62
16	SOM	2.992	0.016	Africa	Eastern Africa	Somalia	62
17	VEN	1.402	0.024	Americas	South America	Venezuela	63
18	HND	0.770	0.023	Americas	Central America	Honduras	65
19	PAN	1.034	0.035	Americas	Central America	Panama	66
20	PER	1.402	0.028	Americas	South America	Peru	66
21	SDN	2.426	0.015	Africa	Northern Africa	Sudan	66
22	IDN	2.795	0.015	Asia	South East Asia	Indonesia	67
23	LAO	1.975	0.017	Asia	South East Asia	Laos	68
24	JPN	0.557	0.026	Asia	East Asia	Japan	70
25	IND	1.902	0.029	Asia	South Asia	India	72
26	PAK	1.707	0.026	Asia	South Asia	Pakistan	72
27	CRI	0.877	0.036	Americas	Central America	Costa Rica	73
28	ECU	1.098	0.028	Americas	South America	Ecuador	74
29	ISR	2.081	0.056	Asia	South West Asia	Israel	74
30	LKA	1.369	0.040	Asia	South Asia	Sri Lanka	74
31	MMR	2.705	0.015	Asia	South East Asia	Myanmar (Burma)	74
32	BRA	3.451	0.026	Americas	South America	Brazil	76
33	PHL	2.139	0.031	Asia	South East Asia	Philippines	76
34	GTM	2.500	0.022	Americas	Central America	Guatemala	77
35	COL	3.025	0.030	Americas	South America	Colombia	85
36	ESP	2.082	0.026	Europe	South West Europe	Spain	91
37	IRL	0.728	0.054	Europe	Western Europe	Ireland	100
		GROUP 03 – 101 TO 150 YEARS					
1	AUT	0.948	0.034	Europe	Central Europe	Austria	102
2	LTU	0.500	0.042	Europe	Eastern Europe	Lithuania	102
3	LVA	0.481	0.052	Europe	Eastern Europe	Latvia	102
4	DEU	1.508	0.029	Europe	Western Europe	Germany	103

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#	ISO3	Average political Violence	Average Liberal Democracy	Continent	Region	Country Name	Age of Democracy
5	EST	0.537	0.047	Europe	Eastern Europe	Estonia	103
6	ITA	1.385	0.037	Europe	Southern Europe	Italy	103
7	URY	1.180	0.035	Americas	South America	Uruguay	103
8	CZE	0.769	0.032	Europe	Central Europe	Czech Republic	104
9	ISL	0.452	0.051	Europe	Northern Europe	Iceland	104
10	POL	1.010	0.025	Europe	Eastern Europe	Poland	104
11	SVK	0.714	0.054	Europe	Central Europe	Slovakia	104
12	FIN	1.270	0.042	Europe	Northern Europe	Finland	105
13	ARG	2.164	0.037	Americas	South America	Argentina	110
14	PRT	1.115	0.026	Europe	South West Europe	Portugal	111
15	SWE	0.410	0.027	Europe	Northern Europe	Sweden	111
16	CHL	1.918	0.028	Americas	South America	Chile	113
17	CUB	2.550	0.019	Americas	West Indies	Cuba	113
18	AUS	1.000	0.038	Oceania	Pacific	Australia	121
19	DNK	0.590	0.028	Europe	Northern Europe	Denmark	121
20	NOR	1.139	0.035	Europe	Northern Europe	Norway	122
21	NLD	0.820	0.035	Europe	Western Europe	Netherlands	125
22	BEL	1.057	0.033	Europe	Western Europe	Belgium	128
23	LUX	0.377	0.052	Europe	Western Europe	Luxembourg	132
24	GBR	1.189	0.038	Europe	Western Europe	United Kingdom	137

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