

# Political Ideology and the Role of Alliances in Shaping Public Policy Objectives

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## ABSTRACT

*This research explores the determinants and repercussions of political ideology while looking at the foundational role of alliances in shaping public policy objectives. Political alliances refer to collaborations or associations formed among individuals or groups who share common traits, identities, or interests. The research also explores the impact of identity politics, which often leads to forming political alliances based on shared characteristics such as religion, race, class, or culture. In international politics, liberal theorists offer distinct perspectives shaped by individual freedom, equality, democracy, and the rule of law. They argue that these principles should govern interactions among states, promoting cooperation, interdependence, and peace. Liberal theories maintain that democracies are less likely to go to war with each other due to their governance structures and shared values. However, conflicts between democracies and autocracies challenge this notion. These conflicts highlight the complexities of interstate relations, with significant implications for global stability, regional order, and the promotion of democratic values. Autocratic regimes may pursue aggressive foreign policies, while democracies respond through diplomatic means, economic sanctions, or support for democratic movements. Nationalist appeals are common among democratic and authoritarian rulers, but autocratic regimes may use nationalism to bolster their legitimacy and constrain state behavior. The research maintains that with global trends such as the rise of social media and challenges to the liberal international order, the future of liberal democracy faces uncertainties. Social media platforms influence the public agenda significantly, reshaping political communication and facilitating collective action. However, concerns about misinformation, corruption, and media bias demonstrate the complexities of free speech in the digital age. Consequently, transparency and accountability are essential for maintaining trust in democratic institutions, although populist narratives and political discourse challenge informed decision-making.*

**Keywords:** Alliances, Ideology, Identity, Politics, Populist

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## INTRODUCTION

In political science, the study of political ideology and its multifaceted influences has long been a focal point of scholarly inquiry. Scholars have explored the underpinnings of ideological inclinations, highlighting the complex alliances between individuals, policy-makers, and states. Examining the determinants and consequences of political partnerships is crucial for comprehending the dynamics of governance, policy-making, and societal change. Ideology serves as the foundational framework upon which political parties organize their activities and articulate their policy goals. It allows the formation of political alliances based on shared characteristics such as religion, race, class, or culture. It underscores the role of identity politics in shaping ideological affiliations within societies. This study provides an overview of key themes and debates surrounding political ideology, ranging from its conceptualization to its impact on domestic and international politics.

In the international arena, liberal theorists argue that the traditional focus on power dynamics overlooks countervailing forces that moderate the behavior of rising powers. These forces include the long-term trend towards liberal or democratic governance, the increasing role of international institutions, and the

constraining effects of economic interdependence. However, challenges to global stability arise from emerging powers players and authoritarian regimes, which may exploit nationalist appeals to bolster their legitimacy and pursue assertive foreign policies.

The evolving landscape of global politics presents complex challenges for policymakers and scholars alike. The spread of democracy has encountered obstacles, with competitive authoritarianism emerging as a resilient form of governance. Various political dynamics, including military influence, executive discretion, and the politics of nationalism, characterize conflicts between democracies and autocracies. Moreover, failed states represent a distinct challenge, marked by the fragmentation of authority and the absence of effective governance structures.

In the digital age, social media platforms' influence on political communication and public discourse has become increasingly pronounced. Social media platforms democratize access to information sources and facilitate the rapid dissemination of information, reshaping traditional political communication channels. However, concerns have been raised about the role of social media in shaping public opinion and its potential impact on democratic processes. Issues such as misinformation, media bias, and the spread of fake news have sparked debates about the implications of digital media for freedom of speech and the functioning of democratic societies.

This study of political ideology is based on a broad range of themes and debates, from individual predispositions to global power dynamics. It concentrates on the determinants and consequences of political ideology that are essential for navigating the complexities of contemporary politics and governance. The research argues that as societies experience the challenges of alliances in democracy, nationalism, and digital media, scholars will continue to explore new avenues of research to deepen our understanding of these critical issues.

## **LIBERAL ALLIANCES**

Research into the determinants and repercussions of political ideology focuses on exploring influences on ideological concepts. Political parties are typically founded upon ideology, serving as the bedrock upon which they conduct their activities and pursue policy objectives, thus distinguishing them from one another (Feldman and Johnston, 2014). However, political ideology has remained a perplexing subject for social analysts due to its role in shaping individual and communal decision-making processes. Bhambra and Margree (2010) argue that identity politics often leads to the formation of exclusive political alliances based on shared characteristics such as religion, race, class, or culture. Ideological values are usually depicted as a blueprint for an envisioned future and a better society (Heywood, 2007).

Liberal theorists of international politics argue that the focus on power overlooks countervailing forces in world politics that tend to moderate the behavior of rising powers. These include the long-run tendency towards more liberal democratic rule, the growing role of international institutions, and the constraining effects of economic interdependence. Influenced by the principles of liberalism, liberal theorists offer distinct perspectives on the nature of global politics, the dynamics of state interactions, and the prospects for international cooperation and peace.

Liberalism is characterized by its emphasis on individual freedom, equality, democracy, and the rule of law. Liberal theorists argue that these principles should not only govern domestic politics but also shape interactions among states in the international arena. One of the central propositions of liberal theories is the democratic peace theory, which found that democracies are less likely to go to war with one another. This idea suggests that democratic governance structures, characterized by accountable institutions, civil liberties, and peaceful dispute-resolution mechanisms, create conditions conducive to calm state relations. Proponents of this theory point to empirical evidence showing a correlation between democracy and peace, although debates persist about causality and exceptions to this trend. The concept of the democratic peace theory suggests that democracies are less likely to engage in conflicts with one another due to their shared democratic values. However, disputes between democracies and autocracies challenge this notion and highlight the complexities of interstate relations. Although scholars claim that the empirical evidence for the low instances of interstate war between democracies is well established, these theoretical explanations remain unresolved (Goldsmith, Semenovich, Sowmya, and Grgic, 2017).

On the contrary, Haggard (2014) argues that these models misjudge the source of foreign policy risk since the political alliances include a substantial number of authoritarian and semi-authoritarian regimes,

and the dangers of conflict between democratic and authoritarian regimes are coming from foreign policies of autocrats. Weeks (2012) argues that personalist leaders and authoritarian regimes headed by military leaders are particularly conflict-prone because they are unchecked and bring military views of the world to the table. Despite the conventional focus on differences between democracies and non-democracies, substantial variation in conflict initiation occurs among authoritarian regimes. She argues that civilian regimes with influential elite audiences are no more belligerent than democracies. Therefore, a deeper understanding of the conflict behavior of autocracies is required, with important implications for scholars and policy-makers.

Conflicts between democracies and autocratic alliances have significant implications for the global order, regional stability, and the promotion of democratic values (Drumond and Rebelo, 2024). Autocratic regimes pursue aggressive foreign policies to assert dominance, expand influence, or suppress domestic dissent. This aggression can manifest through military interventions, territorial expansion, support for proxy militias, or cyberattacks aimed at democratic states. Democracies typically respond to autocratic aggression through diplomatic means, economic sanctions, military deterrence, or support for democratic movements within autocratic states. Democratic and authoritarian alliances use nationalist appeals to political effect, but authoritarian regimes may be particularly prone to augment purely instrumental, material bases of legitimacy with nationalist appeals. These political forces ultimately pose dilemmas for democratic leadership in the conduct of alliances in foreign policy-making.

Conflicts between democracies and autocratic alliances involve political dynamics on both sides. Still, several features of these systems, including the greater weight of the military, high executive discretion in foreign affairs, and the complex politics of nationalism, are likely to pose ongoing foreign policy alliances. Mansfield and Snyder (2008) suggest that liberalizing policies and democracies may also share these vulnerabilities because of the fragmentation of authority among competing centers of power, such as a weak central government or global or local political competition. Arguments for peace are highly plausible since the advanced industrial states remain substantial and united by democratic alliances, while the emerging markets still depend heavily on a world economy. These commercial ties provide the foundation for influence and weaken the capacity of the advanced industrial states to sanction and constrain international trade.

## **ALLIANCES WITH SHARED CHARACTERISTICS**

The tension between ideology's steadfastness and practical politics' adaptability is a recurring theme in political theory. Gjørshoski (2016) observes that while ideologies often position themselves along the political spectrum, they may clash with other significant issues within their political sphere, hindering the implementation of practical policies. The rise of new politics, propelled by social media and assertive leadership, has criticized traditional identity-based politics founded on the solidarity of alliances with shared characteristics. While critics argue that identity politics can be one-sided, political alliances emphasize the interests of specific groups over the broader population (Rectenwald, 2018).

Political ideology has posed challenges for social analysts, given its role as guiding beliefs influencing individual and communal decisions. Cukierman (2010) argues that while ideology sets broad long-term objectives for policymakers, political alliances deviate from ideological principles, leading to ongoing debates among political theorists about the boundaries between the two. Pettit (2018) advocates for a more realistic approach to political theory, emphasizing the distinctive nature of political rule and providing contextualist guidelines for political action. Political alliances refer to collaborations or associations formed among individuals or groups who share common traits, identities, or interests. These alliances are often formed to advance shared objectives, such as influencing policymaking, promoting specific agendas, or gaining political power. By aligning with others with similar characteristics or goals, individuals or groups can pool their resources, leverage their collective influence, and increase their chances of achieving their desired outcomes within the political sphere.

Alliances can take various forms, ranging from informal coalitions to formal political parties or interest groups, and play a crucial role in shaping political dynamics by bringing together like-minded individuals or organizations to advocate for common causes, address shared concerns, and pursue mutual interests within the political arena. Bhambra and Margree (2010) argue that ideology leads to the formation of exclusive political alliances based on shared characteristics like religion, race, class, gender, culture, sexual orientation, or disability. They argue that ideology plays a significant role in shaping political

alliances, often leading to the formation of exclusive groups based on shared characteristics such as religion, race, class, gender, culture, sexual orientation, or disability.

This phenomenon occurs because individuals associate themselves with others with shared beliefs and identities, creating cohesive political groups. Bhambra and Margree's argument highlights the complex interplay between ideology and identity in shaping political alliances. It underscores the importance of recognizing and addressing the exclusionary dynamics that may arise within political discourse and organization. These exclusive political alliances can have both positive and negative implications. On the one hand, they provide members with a sense of solidarity and collective identity, enabling them to work together effectively to advance their shared interests and goals. On the other hand, such alliances can also lead to the exclusion and marginalization of individuals or groups who do not fit the dominant ideological framework or hold different perspectives.

This approach is reinforced by Laura Olson (2011), who explains that scholars from various disciplines have discussed extensively the crucial role of culture in understanding the intricate relationship between ideology and politics. She argues that culture is central in shaping individuals' beliefs, values, behaviors, and identities, including their religious and political orientations. Cultural factors such as language, symbols, rituals, myths, norms, and collective memories shape the social context within which religious and political actors operate.

According to Olson, religion is deeply embedded within cultural contexts, reflecting and reinforcing cultural norms and traditions, and by examining the cultural dimensions of religion and politics, scholars can gain deeper insights into how these domains influence each other and examine political processes, ideologies, and movements within diverse cultural contexts. Olson examined culture's significant role in comprehending the intricate relationship between religion and politics. She notes that scholars across different academic disciplines have extensively studied this relationship, emphasizing the centrality of cultural factors in shaping individuals' beliefs, values, behaviors, and identities, including their religious and political orientations. She argued that cultural elements such as language, symbols, rituals, myths, norms, and collective memories are integral to society, influencing the social context within which religious and political actors operate.

By examining the cultural dimensions of religion and politics, scholars can gain deeper insights into how these domains intersect and influence each other. Religion, in particular, is deeply embedded within cultural contexts, reflecting and reinforcing cultural norms and traditions. Political beliefs and practices are often intimately intertwined with cultural identities, shaping individuals' worldviews and guiding their actions. Moreover, cultural factors can influence the interpretation and expression of religious beliefs, leading to diverse spiritual practices and understandings within a society.

According to Olson, understanding the cultural dimensions of religion and politics is crucial for comprehending religious influence on political behavior, governance structures, and societal dynamics. Cultural factors shape individuals' political affiliations, influencing their perceptions of social issues, support for particular policies or candidates, and participation in political activities. By recognizing the role of culture in shaping the relationship between religion and politics, scholars can develop more nuanced analyses of how religious beliefs and institutions interact with political processes, ideologies, and movements within diverse cultural contexts. This interdisciplinary approach allows for a deeper understanding of the complexities and dynamics of the relationship between religion and politics, informing discussions on secularism, religious pluralism, and the separation of church and state.

## **ALLIANCES WITH SHARED VALUES**

The role of shared ideological values is also addressed according to global aspects of ideology and alliances. Maynard (2015) found that a narrative in international relations scholarship suggests that a fundamental shift in the dynamics of the global political arena involves a decline in ideological conflicts. Moravcsik (2003) argues that the Liberal International Relations theory is based on states' relationship to the domestic and transnational social context in which they are embedded. The impact on state behavior in world politics includes societal ideas, interests, and institutions that shape state preferences. Ideological differences can be bridged through consensus-building mechanisms, where parties work together to find common ground on key issues. This promotes stability by fostering cooperation and preventing ideological polarization from paralyzing decision-making processes. Nevertheless, the

boundaries between them reflect the dynamic nature of politics, where principles and interests intersect, and ideological commitments are negotiated and contested amidst the realities of governance and power.

A central question regarding the validity of ideology in any political system revolves around its potential conflict with practical politics and global alliances. The Liberal International Relations Theory offers an optimistic perspective about the potential for cooperation and progress in the international system. It highlights the importance of institutions, norms, and shared values in promoting peace, stability, and prosperity among states. Moravcsik's approach emphasizes the importance of state sovereignty and domestic politics in shaping international cooperation and alliances. He explains that integration progresses through negotiations among member states, where they seek to maximize their interests and preferences within the constraints of international agreements. Moravcsik further contends (2012) that the theory focuses on the demands of individuals and social groups and their relative power in society as fundamental forces driving state policy and world order. Accordingly, he argues that the theory is among the most rapidly expanding areas of positive and normative analysis of international law.

There is, however, a debate on the relevance of the theory to ideology. John (2009) shows that Andrew Moravcsik's Liberal Theory of International Relations is ideological regarding a broader conception of ideology since it shares this feature with all political knowledge. In contrast, Reus-Smit (2001) argues that the Liberal International Relations Theory has undermined its status as a political theory since attempts to use such a theory as the basis of a liberal international legal theory undermine its proponents' capacity to reason normatively about global change in politics. This view is supported by Ikenberry (2018), who claims that liberal internationalism has lost its connection to the pursuit of social and economic advancement within Western countries. Bennet (2021) found that the decline of the theory is because ideologies have returned to local issues, while global ideology works to limit the involvement of states and regional organizations. Thus, he concludes that Western states have provided a role for shared ideologies to maintain the concept of global policy.

Although the structural global political economy trends remain strong, Kutlay and Öniş (2022) maintain that the future of liberal democracy appears to be uncertain. Hearson, Christensen, and Tovony (2022) found that socio-technical resources allow individuals from lower-income countries to achieve narrow yet significant successes, punching above their weight in global governance. As a result, the main pillars of the liberal international order are under growing pressure. According to Aydin and Notes (2021), these concepts include an open trading regime, human rights, democratic governance, and co-management of global problems.

With the future of liberal internationalism in question, liberal theorists of international politics found that an exclusive focus on power dynamics overlooks various countervailing factors in global politics that tend to moderate the behavior of emerging powers. These factors include the gradual shift toward more liberal, if not fully democratic, governance structures over time, international institutions' increasing influence, and economic interdependence's constraining effects. However, a government can unintentionally shape the environment in ways that affect the survival of the domestic regime. It can also act in error, intending to shape the environment to perpetuate its regime but effectively undermining it. Making the world select a regime type is more complicated than it sounds (Owen and Notes, 2021).

Contrary to the belief that transforming nations to democracy is inevitable, the geopolitical landscape remains politically diverse, with many authoritarian or semi-authoritarian regimes. Challenges to global policy stem not solely from alliances of emerging significant powers but also from alliances of medium-sized and smaller authoritarian regimes. However, conflicts between democratic and authoritarian alliances are not exclusively due to rising powers since they are fueled by foreign policies of democratic and autocratic leaders (Weiss and Wallace, 2021).

Both democratic and authoritarian rulers utilize nationalist appeals for political gain, but authoritarian regimes may be more inclined to bolster their legitimacy with nationalist rhetoric. These nationalist sentiments can present dilemmas for leadership, particularly in foreign policy decisions, as they may demonstrate resolve and create destabilizing constraints on state behavior (Friedberg, 2012). Consequently, the spread of democracy has slowed, revealing the endurance of competitive authoritarianism and suggesting that remaining autocracies may be the most durable. Conflicts between democracies and autocracies involve complex political dynamics, with challenges posed by factors such as military influence, executive discretion in foreign affairs, and the politics of nationalism. Failed states represent another end of the spectrum, characterized by the fragmentation of authority among competing centers of power rather than strong central governance. Arguments for commercial peace, while plausible, present both opportunities and challenges. While advanced industrial states remain significant

sources of demand in the global economy, the emergence of new commercial alliances among emerging markets weakens the ability of these states to sanction or engage adversaries operating within separate economic spheres.

## **SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ALLIANCES**

Democracy means the rule of the people, acting through their representatives in the legislature and through social and political alliances. Therefore, it is essential to democracy that free elections are held periodically for the election of representatives based on a political program proposed by them. These representatives must be accountable to the people, who can periodically replace them. This alliance allows the connection between democracy and legislative supremacy, although, as Chenoweth (2013) explained, democracy is not sustainable due to growing global conflicts.

Democracy has its internal morality based on the dignity and equality of all human beings. Thus, substantive requirements must also be present in addition to formal requirements. These are reflected in the supremacy of underlying values and principles based on human dignity, equality, and tolerance. Although democracy can withstand the challenge of populism, there is no real democracy without recognizing values and principles such as morality and justice (Rendtorff, 2023).

Accordingly, democracy cannot exist without protecting individual human rights, which the majority cannot take away by the force of its numerical superiority. Democracy is a multidimensional concept that requires recognition of the power of the majority and limitations on the power of the majority based on the supremacy of values, principles, and human rights. Rendtorff explains that when there is internal conflict, the formal and substantive elements of democracy must be balanced to protect the essence of each aspect of democracy. In this balance, limitations are placed on legislative supremacy and the supremacy of human rights.

With the exponential increase in information sources and fragmentation, social media platforms with large followings now wield significant influence over the public agenda. Social media platforms are reshaping traditional political communication by democratizing access to media outlets and accelerating the dissemination of information, thereby facilitating and amplifying collective action and the rule of social and political alliances. However, even though people increasingly turn to social media for daily news updates, Karlsen and Aalberg (2021) found that sharing social media news can contribute to a long-term decrease in trust in news. They argue that the effect is most potent when politicians are intermediary-senders. To some extent, it depends on the party affiliation of the intermediary sender and the social media audience. They further argue that in the context of fake news, people are less trusting of the news they consume through social media. Amsalem and Zoizner (2023) explain that although citizens increasingly rely on social media as a source of political information, it remains uncertain whether this usage leads to more excellent political knowledge. While some scholars argue that social media are pivotal for acquiring political information in today's media landscape, others suggest that the platforms often fail to realize their potential as educational tools for political learning fully.

With the growing impact of social media on social and political alliances, the debate on freedom of speech and the role of social media has spiked in recent years. Farkas and Schou (2019) represent a common argument made by researchers and politicians that the dominant narrative of our time is that democracy is in a state of emergency caused by social media, changes to journalism, and misinformed masses. Contrary to this argument, Laor (2021) claims that digital media provide a media-free platform where people can express themselves freely without 'gatekeepers.' Ball (2018) argues that post-truth politics is more significant than fake news and more prominent than social media, allowing political, media, and online infrastructure that has devalued truth. This can be attributed to campaigns that attack the traditional media as biased and transmitting fake news. Bakshy, Messing, and Adamic (2015) confirm this conclusion, claiming that people tend to read news stories that align with their views and alliances.

Examining free speech in the age of social media is problematic because it does not isolate post-truth clearly from the dirty tricks that have characterized politics. Political campaigns appeal to the emotions of populists and characterize their followers as members of social and political alliances who are more rational or attentive to evidence than the rest of the population. Accordingly, transparency has become the watchword of liberal democracies, which is required to bridge between alliances with different political views and belonging to various social groups dominated by political identity (Moore (2017).

## CONCLUSION

The study of political ideology, its determinants, and its consequences encompasses various perspectives and dimensions and is closely related to forming social, political, and ideological alliances. Scholars have explored the genetic influences on ideological inclinations and how political alliances are founded upon ideology, shaping their activities and policy objectives. Identity politics often leads to the formation of exclusive political alliances based on shared characteristics such as religion, race, class, or culture, influencing decision-making processes at individual and communal levels. Ideological values are a blueprint for envisioning a better society and guiding political actions.

Liberal theorists of international politics offer distinct perspectives shaped by liberalism's principles, emphasizing individual freedom, equality, democracy, and the rule of law. They argue that these principles should govern interactions among states, promoting cooperation, interdependence, and peace. The democratic peace theory posits that democracies are less likely to go to war with each other due to their governance structures and shared values. However, conflicts between democracies and autocracies challenge this notion.

Conflicts between democracies and autocratic alliances have significant implications for global stability, regional order, and the promotion of democratic values. Authoritarian regimes may pursue aggressive foreign policies, while democracies respond through diplomatic means, economic sanctions, or support for democratic movements. Nationalist appeals are common among democratic and authoritarian rulers, but autocratic regimes may use nationalism to bolster their legitimacy and constrain state behavior.

This study concludes that the future of liberal democracy faces uncertainties amid global trends, including the rise of social media and challenges to the liberal international order. Social media platforms influence the public agenda significantly, reshaping political communication and facilitating collective action. However, concerns about misinformation, corruption, and media bias highlight the complexities of free speech in the digital age. The conclusion is, therefore, that transparency and accountability are essential for maintaining trust in democratic institutions, although populist narratives and simplified political discourse pose challenges to informed decision-making.

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