

## **ABSTRACT**

The Impact Of Historical Knowledge On The Progress And Integrity Of Democracy And Civil Society: Past, Present, And Future In The Struggle Against Fascism And Authoritarianism.

By

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This study examines the connection of history in understanding historical and contemporary fascist and authoritarian movements, using a joint constructivist and Interaction Ritual Chains approach as well as its implications towards neoliberalism as connected to the modern institutionalization of human rights and liberal democracy.

By the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Western-style liberal democracy and neoliberal economics became the de-facto world order after the defeat of organized fascist nations in World War II, and the dissolution of most communist states in the late 80s. In the decades since however, new fascist and authoritarian began to appear in the political mainstream; fascist ideologies arguably was never destroyed and continue to work beneath mainstream attention to achieve this resurgence. Growing inequality and disaffection in the neoliberal system delegitimizes the position of Western liberal democracy and human rights as well as their institutions, who offer no effective response to either the material situation of neoliberalism or the resurgence of fascist ideology.

The author proposes and finds that dissatisfaction and inequality under neoliberal world economics drove new adherents to far-right and nationalist movements that oppose the new gains in civil and human rights in recent years; these new fascists and authoritarians utilize socially-constructed imageries and rhetoric within the loop of ritual interaction to garner and intensify emotional reaction and popular support. In the end, grassroots and intersectional democratic organization, as well as advocating a more robust understanding of democracy and human rights is suggested as paths for future action.