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## **Why Asians Support Democracy and Why Not?**

Session I. Forces of Modernization

Does Modernization Promote or Retard Development of  
Democracy in Asia?

*By*

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## **Does Modernization Promote or Retard Development of Democracy in Asia?**

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*Abstract: This paper examines relative impacts of modernization on support for democracy and trust in government across six Asian nations based upon surveys of populations in these countries. Results show that cultural socialization has more impact than Mishler and Rose observed in a study of institutional trust in Central Europe, but interactions with government are similarly dominant in producing these outcomes. Inclusion of individually-based variables and cross-national indicators offer substitutes for dummy variables indicating country contexts.*

Modernization theory suggests that support for democracy is associated with socioeconomic development across nations. Indicators of this development include measures of education, income in the form of GDP, and other macro-level measures that characterize whole societies. In these cases, the measures of democratization may come from aggregations of opinion polls or from elite evaluations of societies, such as the Freedom House Index.

Linz and Stepan, however, indicate that perhaps the most significant measure of democratic consolidation is the level of public opinion holding the belief that democracy is the most appropriate system for governing collective life (2001). This perspective focuses attention to an individual-level analysis, that is, “within-nation” analysis as the basis for estimating pro-democracy sentiments that characterize a nation. The advent of data collection on individual attitudes and opinions related to democracy shifts the focus from macro to micro levels of analysis where sources of support for democracy may be quite different from aggregated data that are subject to spurious causal relationships as a result of ecological fallacies.

Traditional frameworks of comparative analysis thus are not always the most productive for understanding correlates of modernizing societies, especially pro-democracy support. Despite the large Ns of national surveys (including the NES), examination of important dimensions of democratic development, such as support for democracy and trust in government, that enable democratic governments to sustain themselves and consolidate over time, is still shaped largely by idiographic studies that assume unique national histories, cultures, and ideologies. Although social and economic supports for governments have been addressed at an aggregate level in comparative, cross-national analysis, Linz and Stepan suggest that support is rooted primarily in beliefs about government and procedures and the general acceptance of laws, procedures, and institutions created for the purpose of governing (2001, 95). Positing such sources of support, a conceptualization of support for democracy appears amenable to relative effects of cultural socialization and interactions with government along the lines of Mishler and Rose's (2001) study of institutional trust.

Furthermore, having amassed quantities of data at the individual level, it is puzzling as to why scholars aggregate the data for comparison with other nations, given the substantial variation within societies that, to use an ANOVA analogy, is often greater than variance between nations. If within-nation variance is greater, analysis should be guided by Prezyworski and Teune's admonition from decades ago that the goal of comparative study should be to "substitute the names of variables for the names of social systems" (1971). If supports for government are rooted in individual variations, more than national ones, aggregating data from large surveys of national populations for purposes of comparing across nations discards opportunities for general theoretical

knowledge as to why governments succeed or why citizens fail to support governments, controlling for specific national contexts.

In addition to aggregate analysis of socioeconomic determinants that characterize modernization theory, there is a long tradition in psychology, sociology, and political science that links early-life socialization and cultural norms (Erikson, 1959; Easton and Dennis, 1969) to individuals' affective relationships with government. Hart (1978) argues that socialization to cultural norms accounts for different levels of trust in politicians in Great Britain and the United States, for example. More recently, Inglehart, et al. (1998) and Inglehart (1997) link political norms and attitudes to inter-generational social and value attitudes.

By contrast, many skeptics of cultural and socialization theories suggest that institutional characteristics and government performance are more likely causes of varying degrees of distrust in governments. Klingemann (1999) found that nations engaged in the process of democratization tend toward lower levels of political trust. Mishler and Rose (2001), in a 10-country analysis, showed that citizen experiences with institutional factors, rather than culture or socialization, are the keys to explaining political trust in Eastern and Central European nations.

In order to investigate the relative merits of alternative explanations of pro-democracy orientations, this study utilizes data from seven of the nations that make up the data set on "Democratization and Value Change in East Asia." These nations have sufficient data on questions expressing various forms of support for government as well as coding that lends itself to generation of indicators on a variety of societal cleavages. The data were obtained by probability sampling from the seven national populations.

From the roughly 11,000 respondents, we were able to obtain over 7500 respondents on all indicators relevant to the study.

Most of the scholarship in this area implies that such relationships can be identified on a cross-national basis. Eichenberg and Dalton (1993), for example, attribute effects of dummy variables representing unique country-effects to national cultures or traditions regarding European integration. In a later analysis, however, Palmer and Gabel (1995) argue for a more fully specified model in which dummy variables have fewer important effects in explaining national-level public support for European unification.

One way of avoiding reliance on dummy variables (so-called because no one knows what they actually represent) is to identify contextual variables that have substantive meaning on a cross-national basis. In this analysis, we utilize two cross-national variables of substantive significance: GDP per capita (in \$), controlled for purchasing power parity, and a measure of income inequality (Gini Coefficients).

### **Anomalies in Applications of Modernization Theory**

Contrary to findings in other research, we have found that higher levels of education and income are associated with lower levels of support for democracy (Albritton and Bureekul, 2002). This finding is counter to most modernization theory conclusions that education and income, for example, are related to pro-democracy attitudes, coinciding with the widely held view that the urban middle class is the engine of support for democracy (Dalton and van Sickle, 1994; Rohrschneider, 1999; Rose, Haerpfer, and Mishler, 1998; Zimmerman, 2002). The hypothesis we offer here is one noted from previous studies of Thailand – that education and income are primarily indicators of socioeconomic status, rather than more extensive knowledge. The middle

class is thus highly suspicious, if not fearful, of popular democratic governments, especially in the absence of pluralist institutions that protect them from what Tocqueville and members of the American constitutional convention called the "excesses of democracy," and, therefore, less likely to trust governmental institutions.

The class and status variables – education, income, and a measure of “subjective social status” are consistent with what Mishler and Rose call “socialization” factors. Welzel and Inglehart (2007) make a case for generational shifts toward “emancipative” values, including democracy, and thus “age” will be tested as a source of support for democracy. The model will examine differences in support for democracy, as well as institutional trust, related to gender.

The data also permit testing of two social forces representing cultural socialization not generally available. The first is a measure of traditionalism-modernism constructed from eight questions indicated in Appendix 1. The second is the role of “urban culture” in shaping attitudes toward democracy and government. Although the expectation might be that traditional society would be less amenable to democratic forms of government, more recent evidence suggests that social values associated with modernism – such as globalization, neo-liberalism, and individualism – produce suspicions of mass democracy among elites who view democracy as a threat to social and economic control and, therefore, to social stability.

This perspective becomes particularly salient when considering another variable related to modernization theory, the highly significant cleavages between urban and rural societies – urban and rural cultures, if you will – specifically in the Asian context. Dalton and Shin (2007) suggest that urban life should encourage support for democracy. Their

findings, however, provide only weak support for this thesis, and, in fact, Albritton and Bureekul (2002) found that people in urban locations tend to be less supportive of democracy than those from rural and more traditionalistic backgrounds (Laothamatas, 1996). We suggest that this perspective is generalizable across Asian nations. The ability of rural constituencies to acquire substantial power in democratic societies leads to doubts among the middle class, the mass media, and even academics as to the efficacy of the democratic process. For these groups, “democracy turns out to be the rule of the corrupt and incompetent” (Laothamatas, 1996, 208). This creates a significant dilemma for urban elites. Although the middle class opposes authoritarian rule, in principle, they hold government by rural constituencies in contempt, regarding them as “parochial in outlook, boorish in manner, and too uneducated to be competent lawmakers or cabinet members” (Laothamatas, 1996, 208).

The problem is exacerbated by the fact that urban, educated, cosmopolitan elites, who are skilled policy experts, are often held in equal contempt by villagers. They are often regarded as being alien to rural electorates in terms of taste, culture, and outlook, who “fail to stay close to the voters in both a physical and cultural sense” (Laothamatas, 1996, 208). Veiled contempt for rural-dwellers by sophisticated elites poses no problems under authoritarian regimes. Once democratic elections tip the balance in favor of rural areas, however, significant gaps in perceptions of government develop.

The major threat posed by this cleavage lies in a relative lack of enthusiasm for government in the more influential urban areas. There is growing evidence that, while the urban middle class opposes authoritarian forms of government that restrict individual freedoms and exercise a heavy hand over commerce, the uncertainty of changes in

government, even by democratic processes, can be viewed as destabilizing economic environments on which entrepreneurs depend. The possibility that government may be seized by politicians with “populist” agendas poses an even more direct threat to the interests of a class that stands significantly above the average voter in democratic elections. The traditional emphasis on the middle-class as an engine of democracy thus should be declining in favor of a view that middle-class support for democracy exists primarily when it coincides with class interests in curbing the power of government.

What are the sources of this difference between urban and rural society that have an impact on attitudes toward trust in government? People living in rural areas have a significantly greater dependence upon social networks for “getting by” in life and, as in almost any society, rural dwellers are significantly more communal, as well as being interested in the welfare of their neighbors (which can be either positive or negative, from some perspectives). Urban dwellers live in an environment in which they are more autonomous, isolated, and individualistic, relishing the anonymity presented by urban life. For these urbanites, individual independence from society and government leads to a greater interest in protections from government interference that we often associate with what are generally described as “civil liberties.” These divergences between urban and rural populations appear to have significant impacts on how government is viewed by individuals living in these two contexts, rural dwellers opting for community and urban dwellers for freedom. Our expectation is that rural residents will, thus, have a greater trust in and dependency upon government as a mitigating factor in their uncertain environment.



A fundamental assumption of this study is that, whatever its content, the rural-urban cleavage is a significant factor in support for government in a variety of national contexts. In addition, we assume that some proportion of the variance in support for governments across nations is a result of differential experiences of the urban culture and that these experiences may be mistaken for unique characteristics of nations and cultures, rather than more generalized, common factors that happen to coincide with national differences. We anticipate that these relationships will be sustained across the other Asian nations.

As noted above, typically, analysis of cross-national data relies on national “dummy” variables to account for unspecified idiosyncratic effects. We follow the lead of Prezyworski and Teune (1971) in attempting to substitute variable names for national social systems from the project on “Democratization and Value Change in East Asia.”<sup>1</sup> The findings hint that variations among nations in support for governments are often more a function of variables that transcend national boundaries and of similarities in these respective cultures associated with these variables, regardless of country, than they are of peculiarities of national cultures or other social or economic configurations represented as geographic entities. We include dummy variables in the equations (to the extent that they survive) in order to boost model specification, which we imply with values of R-square.

### **Data Analysis**

Factor analysis of indicators of institutional trust and support for democracy produce independent factors representing each of the two concepts. This analysis explores models determining each of these in tests of effects of factors associated with modernizing

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<sup>1</sup> Otherwise referred to as the East Asia Barometer.

societies on these two dimensions. In order to preserve cases in the analysis, however, the indicator of institutional trust and support for democracy are measured as average Z-scores of the questions providing the two dimensions noted above.

### *Support for Democracy*

Following Mishler and Rose, we examine impacts of cultural socialization and interactions with government on a minimalist indicator of democracy. Our measure of “support for democracy” is constructed from responses to five questions noted in Appendix 1. Although there is some difference of views as to whether “satisfaction with democracy” represents attitudes towards democracy or satisfaction with government performance (Norris, 1999), the indicator loads in excess of 0.5 on a single natural factor of the five questions (Appendix 2). In the absence of empirical evidence to the contrary, we accept all five indicators as both face-valid and construct-valid measures of respondents’ attitudes toward democracy.

Table 1 shows impacts of the demographic variables on the indicator of support for democracy in a single-equation model. As noted above, indicators of socioeconomic status are so collinear that we use a combined index of socioeconomic status.<sup>2</sup> When social and cultural measures are added to the equation, gender and trust in other people do not attain the selected criterion of significance at  $p < .01$  (Equation 1). As it stands, the equation shows that modernized attitudes and urban location (or culture) have negative impacts on attitudes toward support for democracy. SES and age work in a positive direction, providing initial support for democratic attitudes based in the middle class.

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<sup>2</sup> Years of education and subjective social status are negatively associated with support for democracy, while income quintile is in a positive direction.

When indicators of citizen interactions with government are added to the equation, trust in other people and gender still fail to contribute to the equation. The burden of explanatory power shifts to experiences of citizens with government, including positive evaluations of economic performance, and negative perceptions or experiences with government corruption. Finally, however, overall trust in government institutions assumes a major role in creating support for democracy (Equation 2).

When contextual variables are added to the model, specifically GDP per capita, the Gini index of income inequality, and dummy variables representing each of the six nations of the study, the overall equation changes in only minor respects. Trusting other people, however, re-enters the equation as a highly significant contributor of support for democracy. Both contextual variables, the Gini index and GDP per capita fail to survive the analysis. In addition, dummy variables for Hong Kong and the Philippines are non-significant, and Korea is omitted from the equation (Equation 3). When non-significant variables are eliminated from the equation, the sources of support for democracy stand as in Equation 4.

These final results are consistent with the Mishler-Rose assumption that interactions with government provide the strongest basis of support for democracy in the six Asian nations. Positive evaluations of the economy and trust in governmental institutions offer the major sources of support. Still, experiences of governmental corruption provide significant negative effects on overall estimations of democratic government by respondents in this study. The overall picture suggests that perceptions of economic development and development of political institutions go a long way in support of democratic consolidation, a finding consistent with a positive impact of modernization

in these areas. On the other hand, “modernistic” cultural values appear to work against support for democracy.

One further factor bears mentioning. Note that when appropriate substantive variables are added to the equation, country dummy variables often drop out of the equation or are not significant at the chosen criterion of  $p < .01$ . In this analysis, the indicator of income dispersion, by country, substitutes for several of the country dummies, eventually leaving only three dummies (three plus the omitted category). The ability to eliminate country dummies by a fuller specification of the equation implies that what are often observed as idiographic characteristics of nations, are, in fact, simply different distributions of individual characteristics. When such characteristics are identified, we are able to substitute variable names for country designations, as Prezyworski and Teune urge.

As noted in the progression from one equation to another, modernization factors, including SES and modern versus traditional values, while initially important to the explanation, fade in the face of more direct interactions with government. But Mishler and Rose were actually examining sources of trust in government, the variable that we determined was by far the most important determinant of support for democracy. Now we ask about factors that operate to produce governmental trust and it is to this analysis that we now turn.

### *Trust in Government*

Trust in governmental institutions turns out to be the most significant determinant of support for democracy, so the determinants of this factor have a bearing on the ultimate ability of nations to consolidate democracies. An analysis of sources of trust in

government is more straightforward than the data in Table 1. Mishler and Rose also purport to negotiate competing perspectives of both cultural traditions and institutional theories as explanations of trust in government using individual-level data. Their strategy, like ours, is to incorporate both perspectives in an explanatory model and, given the indicators they employ, argue that institutional perspectives trump social and cultural factors in impacts on the level of trust individuals place in governments. Their analysis, however, posits several conclusions that may be peculiar to Eastern Europe. In this paper, among other purposes, we replicate their study across the six Asian nations and produce somewhat different findings.

Unlike the group of Eastern European nations, the East Asian Barometer survey covers an extremely diverse region. The six societies examined here come in all sizes, ranging from the Pacific islands of Hong Kong, Taiwan, the Philippines, and Japan to the Korean peninsula and Thailand. Their socio-economic conditions also diverge widely. While Japan boasts the second largest economy in the world and Hong Kong's GDP per capita surpasses most of the OECD countries; millions of people in the Philippines and Thailand make do with only about 1/3 as much. What is more, the political systems that East Asians have experienced in recent decades run the spectrum from military dictatorship to multiparty democracy.

The first difference we discover between the Mishler and Rose sample and our own is that, contrary to their study, we find high levels of trust in government institutions. Table 2 compares evaluations of trust in institutions between the Eastern European and Asian cases. In every area, Asian nations have much more confidence in government than their counterparts in Eastern and Central Europe. Although Mishler and Rose explain the

levels of trust in their sample persuasively as socialization to the legacy of authoritarian rule, most of the Asian nations also have histories of authoritarian dominance comparable to that of Eastern and Central Europe.

One finding in Table 2 represents a further anomaly. While trust in institutions is comparatively high, trust in other people for Asian nations is considerably lower. This does not mean, however, that trust in individuals does not produce institutional trust in the Asian context. To make such a generalization would involve the ecological fallacy. We are able, then, to test the finding of Mishler and Rose that trust in individuals has little significant impact on institutional trust in a regression analysis that includes individual trust as an explanatory variable in the Asian context.

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**Table 2: Levels of Trust in Governmental Institutions and People in Asian versus Eastern European Nations (In Percent)<sup>3</sup>**

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	Trusting (%)		<u>Difference</u>
	<u>Asian Nations</u>	<u>Mishler and Rose</u>	
<b>Parties</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>-35</b>
<b>Parliament</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>-33</b>
<b>Police</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>-31</b>
<b>Courts</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>-37</b>
<b>Press</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>-27</b>
<b>TV</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>-34</b>
<b>Military</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>-58</b>
<b>Most People</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>+18</b>

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**Source: Mishler and Rose (2001) and data from the East Asian Barometer.**

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The Asian data seem to contradict findings posited by Mishler and Rose in two respects. Their study concludes with a macro-cultural theory asserting that experience

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<sup>3</sup> Mishler and Rose use a “neutral” category that we have omitted from the questionnaires. The Asian data are based solely on percentages of respondents indicating either a “great deal of trust” or “quite a lot of trust.”

with authoritarian values breeds political mistrust, so that, from an institutional perspective, initial political trust in new democracies will be low. Most of the Asian nations examined in our study have traditions of authoritarian rule, yet the trust of citizens in their institutions is quite high by comparison. The difference may arise from the fact that Eastern European nations were treated as occupied territories by a foreign power, whereas, authoritarian governments in most Asian nations of this study were indigenous and related to traditional cultural and social values within those nations.

The very low level of trust in “others” among Asian respondents is a bit more puzzling. In the Thai case, however, children’s traditional literature advocates caution and even distrust of other people. Contrary to the view of Asian cultures as encouraging solidarity with others, many aspects of Asian culture, including Buddhism, actually support a high degree of individualism (or at least familism) and autonomy not generally recognized in the debate over Asian values.

Table 1 indicates that institutional trust comprises a major factor in accounting for support for democracy. It also is an endogenous variable determined in a more direct causal process by the exogenous variables. Thus, an important consideration from Mishler and Rose is the causal determination of institutional trust and its role in bringing about stable, democratic states. We examine determinants of trust in institutions of government based upon seven questions representing the respondents’ trust in a variety of institutions. (See Appendix 1)

When demographic variables, representing social and economic conditions characterizing individual environment, are introduced as causal determinants, Equation 1 implies that variations in gender have little impact on institutional trust, but older persons

have slightly higher levels of trust than younger respondents (Table 3). Socio-economic status criteria, such as education and income and the SES index has a significant, *negative* association, however, indicating that trust in government is stronger among lower status citizens than among elites.

Other factors, of course, come into play. When the three variables representing later socialization are added to the equation, the results begin to take on more theoretical significance. Trust in others, participation in urban culture, and “modernist” cultural orientations supersede social status as explanations of institutional trust (Table 3, Equation 2).

The indicator of “traditionalism-modernism” again captures some of the cultural-socialization dimension. (See Appendix 1) Including other variables, specifically demographic characteristics, help to replicate the Mishler-Rose variables as closely as possible. At this point of the analysis, we find support for hypotheses of Mishler and Rose in the Asian context. Although interpersonal trust supports a corresponding level of trust in government, socialization to urban and modernist cultural values appears to produce significantly negative orientations in the ability of citizens to trust government institutions. Similarly, urban residence appears to produce a negative impact on citizen’s ability to trust government. In sum, indicators of modernization at the individual level appear to be associated negatively with trust in government.

We test the Mishler-Rose hypothesis by adding respondents’ evaluation of government performance to the equation. These indicators consist of evaluations of the government’s economic performance in both national and personal terms and evaluations



of governmental corruption by respondents. Equation 3 of Table 3 shows that, in general, these factors take precedence over all other factors explaining institutional trust.

Two aspects of these indicators are particularly intriguing. The first is that respondents' evaluations of national economic performance, as well as their own economic situation, past, present, and future combined, are highly significant in determining their evaluations of democracy and institutional trust. The second is that *perceptions* of corruption in local government are more important for explaining institutional trust even than personal experiences of corruption. The latter finding suggests a need for research into information networks, such as media use, that assist citizens in creating attitudes independently of personal experiences. In fact, these perceptions, rather than personal experiences of corruption, become the strongest of all the negative factors contributing to citizen orientations toward institutional trust.

#### *Anti-democratic Attitudes*

The data analyzed above can be interpreted in alternative ways. The fact that urban, modern elites tend to have negative attitudes toward government can be construed either as elite dissatisfaction with popular democracy or, as some scholars interpret it, as critical citizens (Norris, 1999). In order to help resolve this dilemma of interpretation, we apply the same model to a set of indicators resolved into a single index we call "Support for Alternatives to Democracy." In general, the index is based upon a set of question that pose alternatives to democratic government (Appendix 1).

Table 4 provides the analysis for this test. The data show that support for alternatives to democratic government reside essentially in the groups that were positive in support for democracy. Urban residents, for example, tend to oppose the anti-

democratic moves suggested in the “alternatives to democracy” questions; so, also do the respondents associated with “modern” perspectives in social values. Persons of higher SES are also less amenable to these alternatives. The data clearly weigh in favor of an interpretation that while economic success and social status do not necessarily instill confidence in or support for democracy, these same people are most opposed to anti-democratic alternatives. In the final analysis, perhaps, the data indicate that those who appear less supportive of democracy are composed of “critical citizens” in Asia.

### **Analysis and Interpretation**

The findings above indicate that individual-level data (within-variance) contribute in significant ways to explaining the variables relating to democratic government that are of interest across several of the six nations in this study. Indicators of cultural socialization (urban location, traditionalism-modernism, in particular) do not compete well with experiences of government performance (managing the economy and corruption). What is noteworthy is that the measures of higher socio-economic status – income, education, and subjective social status – often have significant, negative effects on factors, such as trust in government, that are supposed to lead to democratic consolidation.

Given the tremendous differences among East Asian societies, some scholars would probably doubt the explanatory power of individual-level variables. The statistical analysis of this paper has clearly demonstrated that, although dummy variables representing national idiosyncracies unsurprisingly do contribute to the variation in individual support for democracy, institutional trust, the utility and potential of demographic variables, cultural socialization, and especially interactions with government are nonetheless highly significant contributors to democratic consolidation in

the form of public attitudes and opinions that often supplant aggregated national traits. We are confident that the results of this paper, having survived the difficult test of the disparate East Asian setting, can be generalized to other contexts as well.

Of particular interest are the more personal, psychological factors – trust in other people, traditional-modern orientations, and attitudes toward corruption. Sources of these attitudes deserve much deeper study and analysis. In the Thai case, we believe that a lack of trust in others is communicated by Thai culture, socialization from an early age, leaving room for studies of national cultures to contribute to a more complete understanding of the other Asian nations. The data indicate clearly, however, that early socialization and cultural factors can be significant in sustaining governmental trust across all nations examined in the study, and they are, therefore, important in determining support for democracy indirectly.

The issue of class cleavages clearly comes into play. Although the more fully specified equations eliminate initial effects of education and income for support of democracy, these indicators of socioeconomic status survive to have significant impacts on institutional trust. The findings show that higher status respondents regard government as less trustworthy. The evidence suggests a political cleavage in which lower socioeconomic status people view government as a countervailing force to curb dominance by elites. Correspondingly, elites show less trust in democratic systems, especially those that curb their control of instruments of the economy and society.

Several other findings are especially worthy of note. First, it appears that if scholars are interested in idiosyncratic cultural and historical impacts, the area of investigation should focus on sources of trust and general optimism concerning the future.

This line of investigation might lead to an uncovering of reasons why persons most removed from traditional values are least likely to trust political and social institutions. Further analysis indicates that higher levels of education and urbanization are associated with higher levels of modernism, *ergo* also with lower levels of support for democracy and institutional trust.<sup>4</sup> Strength of the urban location variable suggests further attention to implications of the cleavages between urban and rural people. As with socioeconomic status, such a cleavage poses a threat of political conflict that may represent more fundamental issues of populist versus elite-dominated democracy.

Clearly, the ability to trust other people contributes to overall support for democracy, as well as trust in social and political institutions. As one might expect, support for democracy is also significantly related to a sense of optimism about economic futures, although the survival of both in the equation indicates that they have independent effects. The sense of optimism represented by these two sets of indicators has its origins in more complex life experiences, particularly childhood socialization. The data may offer clues to this process, but such an analysis extends well beyond the scope of this paper.

The study identifies a variety of indicators for which national identities are surrogates. Some of the differences among nations are, really, attributable to differences in respondents' location in urban versus rural culture, their movement away from "traditional" attitudes and patterns, their ability to trust other people, their optimism about future economic status, and, most especially, their views of government corruption.

When these variables are included in the model, half of the six nations disappear. Even

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<sup>4</sup> The equations reported in this study are very robust. In fact, the six-nation analysis yields findings that are virtually identical to previous studies of Thailand alone.

when they do not fully eliminate the differences, they generally reduce the disparities across the nations.

We believe that this analysis holds significant promise for rethinking how we approach comparative politics. The explanations in this analysis support the view that what we observe as between-nation variation often masks individual-level variation; that what we see as national differences are really different distributions of individual-level characteristics. It is these latter characteristics that produce outcomes of interest. The ability to substitute names of variables for names of nations in this way permits development of general theories of politics (and, of course, varying dimensions of democracy) that can be far more useful than comparisons of national aggregates. The development of such general theory is, after all, what we should be about.

Idiographic characteristics of nations that contribute to levels of support for democracy and trust in institutions in some cases survive the effort to replace the national dummies with substantive variable interpretations. Even inclusion of variables indicating traditionalism versus modernism and trust in other people does not eliminate the fact that at least half of the nations make important contributions to an overall explanation with national characteristics of interest. Origins of these differences may be evident from a future analysis of the data, but, clearly, this is the area most requiring further investigation in the political culture arena of comparative politics.

The endogenous variables are among the most significant predictors of each other in several cases, implying that they are significantly related in the causal process. As one might expect, institutional trust contributes substantially to support for democracy. But the same citizen traits that support democracy and trust in government also offer support

for “alternatives to democracy.” This finding is consistent only with the concept of what Pippa Norris (1999) calls “critical citizens,” who are more “modern,” “individualistic,” and of higher SES and who adhere to anti-state ideas and ideologies. There is, however, one exception to this generalization. Respondents with high perceptions of corruption in government or personal experiences with corruption are negative concerning democracy and trust in government, but positive about alternatives to democracy. The role of corruption in government and society thus becomes a critical factor for Asian countries on the road to democracy.

In effect, we find support for the hypotheses suggested by Mishler and Rose to some degree. Conceptually, we treat experiences with the economy and interactions with government that generate perceptions of corruption as another form of socialization. Trust in government institutions appears to come primarily from this later socialization. As noted above, however, we find highly significant differences between Eastern Europe and East Asia in institutional trust. It would be intriguing to combine the data sets to ascertain whether variance between regions is greater than intra-regional variation. If the former is the case, an analysis would require identification of factors that distinguish between Eastern Europe and East Asia that would account for these regional differences or the addition of dummy variables to account for regions. Because issues of democratic governance are critical to defining world futures, the search for and expansion of these models is critical to an understanding of democratic development and its relationship to modernizing societies in the contemporary world.

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**Table 1: Impacts of a Modernizing Society, Cultural Socialization and Interactions with Government, on Respondents' Support for Democracy**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Equation 1</b>	<b>Equation 2</b>	<b>Equation 3</b>	<b>Equation 4#</b>
<i>Constant</i>	-.089*	.273*	.149	.050
<i>Country Dummies<sup>+</sup></i>				
<b>Japan</b>			.269**	.276
<b>Hong Kong</b>			x	x
<b>Korea</b>			x	x
<b>Philippines</b>			x	x
<b>Taiwan</b>			-.106**	-.092**
<b>Thailand</b>			.572**	.607**
<i>Contextual Variables</i>				
<b>GDP (per capita ppp)</b>			.000	x
<b>Gini Index</b>			-.003	x
<i>Demographic</i>				
<i>Socialization Indicators</i>				
<b>Age group</b>	.002*	.003*	.001	x
<b>SES</b>	.051*	.031*	.015	x
<b>Gender (male)</b>	.020	.020	.036*	x
<i>Cultural Socialization</i>				
<b>Urban Residence</b>	-.340*	-.208*	-.023	x
<b>Modernism</b>	-.132*	-.042*	-.008	x
<b>Trust Others</b>	.015	.002	.030**	.027**
<i>Interactions with Government</i>				
<b>Economic Satisfaction and Optimism</b>		.129*	.088**	.100**
<b>Perception of Corruption in Local Government</b>		-.133*	-.077**	-.079**
<b>Personal Witness to Corruption</b>		-.049*	-.085**	-.077**
<b>Trust in Institutions</b>		.206*	.175**	.177**
<b>R-square=</b>	.081	.189	.290	.294
• = p<.01; **=p<.001				
• # Reduced form equation				

**Table 3: Impacts of a Modernizing Society, Cultural Socialization and Interactions with Government, on Respondents' Trust in Government Institutions**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Equation 1</b>	<b>Equation 2</b>	<b>Equation 3</b>	<b>Equation 4#</b>
<i>Constant</i>	-.109*	.347**	.119**	.222**
<i>Country Dummies<sup>+</sup></i>				
<b>Japan</b>			x	x
<b>Hong Kong</b>			.324**	.312**
<b>Korea</b>			x	x
<b>Philippines</b>			x	x
<b>Taiwan</b>			.115**	.116**
<b>Thailand</b>			.229**	.243**
<i>Contextual Variables</i>				
<b>GDP (per capita ppp)</b>			x	x
<b>Gini Index</b>			x	x
<i>Demographic</i>				
<i>Social Measures</i>				
<b>Age</b>	.001	.001	.001*	x
<b>Gender (male)</b>	-.016	-.003	.000	x
<b>SES</b>	.023*	.004	.015	x
<i>Cultural Socialization</i>				
<b>Urban Residence</b>	-.303**	-.194**	-.168**	-.168**
<b>Modernism</b>	-.288**	-.231**	-.212**	-.216**
<b>Trust Others</b>	.047**	.043**	.045**	.050**
<i>Interactions with Government</i>				
<b>Economic Satisfaction and Optimism</b>		.220**	.216**	.205**
<b>Perception of Corruption in Local Government</b>		-.183**	-.151**	-.155**
<b>Personal Witness to Corruption</b>		-.082**	-.088**	-.090**
<b>R-square=</b>	.128	.234	.263	.263
• = p<.01; **=p<.001				
• # Reduced form equation				

Table 4: Impacts of a Modernizing Society, Cultural Socialization and Interactions with Government, on Support for Alternatives to Democracy (Reduced Form Equation)

<u>Variables</u>	<u>(including Support for Democracy)</u>	
<i>Constant</i>	.059	.067*
<i>Country Dummies</i> <sup>+</sup>		
<b>Japan</b>	<b>-.515**</b>	<b>-.493**</b>
<b>Hong Kong</b>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>
<b>Korea</b>	<b>-.231**</b>	<b>-.240**</b>
<b>Philippines</b>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>
<b>Taiwan</b>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>
<b>Thailand</b>	<b>-.160**</b>	<b>-.130*</b>
<i>Contextual Variables</i>		
<b>GDP (per capita ppp)</b>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>
<b>Gini Index</b>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>
<i>Demographic Social Measures</i>		
<b>Age</b>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>
<b>Gender (male)</b>	<b>-.065**</b>	<b>-.061**</b>
<b>SES</b>	<b>-.052**</b>	<b>-.046**</b>
<i>Cultural Socialization</i>		
<b>Urban Residence</b>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>
<b>Modernism</b>	<b>-.226**</b>	<b>-.231**</b>
<b>Trust Others</b>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>
<i>Interactions with Government</i>		
<b>Economic Satisfaction and Optimism</b>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>
<b>Perception of Corruption in Local Government</b>	<b>.051**</b>	<b>.043**</b>
<b>Personal Witness to Corruption</b>	<b>.057**</b>	<b>.053**</b>
<b>Institutional Trust</b>	<b>.142**</b>	<b>.176**</b>
<b>Support for Democracy</b>		<b>-.130**</b>
<b>R-square=</b>	<b>.159</b>	<b>.170</b>
<b>* = p&lt;.01; **=p&lt;.001</b>		

## APPENDIX 1

### Definitions of Variables Used in the Analysis

*Support for Democracy:* Average Z-scores of responses to 5 questions:

1. Satisfaction with the way democracy works
2. Wanting democracy now
3. Preferring democracy to authoritarian government
4. Suitability of democracy for the country
5. Ability of democracy to solve country's problems

*Modernism:* Average Z-scores of responses to 8 questions:

1. Obedience to parents even when they are unreasonable
2. Hiring preferences for friends and relatives
3. Give way in opinions if co-workers disagree
4. Family needs take precedence over those of individual
5. Elders should be consulted to resolve disputes
6. One should accommodate neighbor if conflict occurs
7. Wealth and poverty, success and failure are determined by fate
8. A man will lose face if he works under supervision of a woman

*Trust Other People:* Response to question: Which is closest to your view?:

1. one cannot be too careful in dealing with other people.
2. most people can be trusted

*Trust in institutions:* Average Z-scores on four-point scale from "none" to "a great deal":

1. courts
2. national government
3. political parties
4. the Parliament
5. the military
6. local government

*Economic optimism:* Average Z-scores on five-point scale – "Very bad" to "Very good" or "Much worse" to "Much better."

1. Rate overall economy of the country today
2. Change in economy of the country over the past five years
3. Expectations of the country's economy in five years
4. Rate family economic situation today
5. Change in family economy over the past five years
6. Expectations of family economic situation in five years

*Support for alternatives to democracy:* Average Z-scores on a 4-point scale – SD to SA

1. Abolish the Parliament and have a strong leader decide things
2. No opposition party should be allowed to compete for power
3. The military should come in to govern the country
4. Abolish the Parliament and have experts run the country
5. OK for the government to disregard the law when dealing with difficult situations

## APPENDIX 2

### Factor Loadings Among Indicators of Support for Democracy in Appendix 1

Satisfaction with Democracy	.548
Wants Democracy Now	.679
Democracy is Suitable	.737
Prefer Democracy over Other Systems	.580
<u>Democracy Can Solve Problems</u>	<u>.591</u>

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