Institutional Trust in East Asia

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In political studies, trust refers to the confidence an individual citizen has toward a political agency or actor, the belief that the said political agency or actor will act in the person's interests. It can also be interpreted as one's willingness and tendency to rely on a political agency or actor. Such an agency or actor could be an individual person, such as a politician, an official or a leader, an organization, an institution, or a political regime or political system. Institutional trust therefore refers to citizens' trust in government and political institutions. Most of the time, we are talking about formal institutions, such as government agencies, while excluding informal ones such as cultural norms.

This chapter examines Asian citizens' trust in a wide range of political and governmental institutions in their respective societies. They range from national political agencies, such as the parliament and the government's cabinet, to the local government agencies as well as government branches such as the courts and the civil services. Empirical evidences will show that citizens of the various Asian societies show highly different levels of trust in their respective societies' political and governmental institutions. Typically, citizens in the non-democracies show much higher level of trust than citizens in democracies. Meanwhile, a similar change is occurring among citizens of most of these societies, and that is, younger generations are showing much more critical attitudes when it comes to trust in political institutions.

The reasons are complex. Political culture provides a socio-psychological foundation for the public's trusting disposition when they evaluate the political and government institutions. At

the present, citizens in Asia's non-democracies are immersed in a culture that emphasizes authority, order, and collective interests, among others. They therefore are more readily leaning toward trusting the political authorities in their societies, such as the national government and their top political leaders. By contrast, citizens in democracies, especially in the liberal democracies, have been functioning in a political culture that emphasizes accountability, people sovereignty, and individual rights. These often are "critical citizens" that tend to distrust the politicians and political institutions in their respective societies.

We will also see that performance and effectiveness of government, especially in economic terms, contribute to higher trust in political institutions. The quality of government institutions, such as the citizens' evaluation of the government's responsiveness, accountability, and cleanness, helps determine citizens' trust in government institutions too. But in general, the elected or election-related institutions in liberal democracies often become the scapegoats of policy failures and government ineffectiveness; therefore receive low levels of trust from citizens.

The trend in all Asian societies appears to point toward the emergence of more "critical citizens", even in the non-democracies, bringing the political culture of all Asian societies to closer to each other, and close to those found in mature democracies. Such a process may take a long time to complete, but is in the coming in any case.

Citizens' Trust in Political Institutions in Asia

Citizens' trust in government institutions plays very important roles in politics and governance. It represents a critical element of political support and government legitimacy (Easton 1975). Often known as political trust, a sufficient level of it is necessary for citizens to allow more discretion to government agencies in policy implementation (Cooper, Knotts, and

Brennan 2008), and provides democratic stability (Easton 1975). Since the 1990s, scholars have paid attention to the rapidly declining political trust in the US and other advanced democracies. In fact, since the late 1970s, trust in government institutions has continued to decline in advanced democracies, raising alarms such as "crisis of regime", "democratic malaise", "democratic deficits", and "disaffected democracy", among others (Crozier, Huntington, and Watanuki 1975; Dalton 2004; Easton 1975; Hetherington 2006; Norris 2011; Pharr and Putnam 2000; Pharr, Putnam, and Dalton 2000). Meanwhile, some non-democratic regimes such as China, Singapore, and Vietnam have showed high levels of political trust (Wang 2005; Wang, Dalton, and Shin 2006). The World Values Survey found that, for example, close to 90 percent of Chinese citizens, for example, express trust in their national government, while only 30-40% of US citizens do so.

The actual situations are in fact much more complicated than this simplistic view of a democracy vis-à-vis non-democracy divide. In the advanced democracies, for example, while citizens' trust in specific political institutions, such as the parliament or the presidency, is low, the trust in or support for the democratic system remains high. That is, although citizens may distrust politicians or their country's political institutions, they still show strong commitment to democratic principles (Klingamann, 1999). Furthermore, while citizens may hold very critical attitudes toward some political institutions, they often give higher levels of trust to non-elected institutions such as the courts and the police (Rothstein 2009). US citizens' trust in the federal institutions might be low and in decline, but their trust in the state or city governments are higher and remain quite stable across time (Cooper, Knotts, and Brennan 2008; Rahn and Rudolph 2005; Wolak and Palus 2010).

For the non-democratic regimes, similar diversities or disparities exist. In general, while their political institutions have generally enjoyed a relatively high level of trust from citizens, that level of trust has been in decline of late (more below). In terms of internal variations,

comparing to its central government, China's local governments has long suffered rather low level of political trust (Wang 2005). Furthermore, contrary to the situations in the non-democracies, the non-elected institutions such as police and the courts in the non-democracies often receive lower levels of trust.

Table 1 presents the up-to-date evidence regarding institutional trust in Asia. In the Asian Barometer Survey, a set of questions asked how much trust a representative sample of citizens of various societies has in their political institutions. The respondents may express "a great deal", "quite a lot", "not very much", or "not at all" trust in each of the dozen institutions mentioned to him or her. We count those who expressed either "a great deal" or "quite a lot" trust as those who trust a certain institution, and presented their percentages in the Table.

[Table 1 about here]

The messages in these data are three folds. First, institutional trust declines as we move from the non-democracies, to electoral democracies, and to the liberal democracies. This is in line with the general trend across the globe, and that is, citizens in more democratic settings tend to distrust political institutions in their respective societies, and such distrust has intensified across time. In fact, Asia's most established liberal democracy, Japan, appears to suffer the lowest level of institutional trust, with its political parties receiving trust from only less than 10 percent of the respondents. Institutions in Korea and Taiwan do slightly better, but the highest trust level still fails to reach above 50 percent.

Second, institutions in the non-democracies enjoy high levels of trust, the highest among the three groups of societies. These countries' top political offices (the Presidency or the Prime Minister), national government, and parliament enjoy trust from close to 90 percent of their citizens (remember in this analysis we excluded the respondents who did not give an answer to

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these questions). That is remarkably high comparing to the trust level in the liberal democracies. This high level of trust, however, is in decline in recent years, as Table 3 below will show.

Third, institutions enjoy different levels of trust. In electoral democracies, political parties and the parliament, as well as the national government, are likely to suffer low levels of trust. By contrast, un-elected or non-electoral institutions such as the courts, the civil services, and the police, enjoy higher levels of trust. Local governments in democracies also fare much better comparing to their national governments.

Institutions in non-democracies, however, present a reversed pattern. Table 1 shows that in non-democracies, the parliament, the political parties, the national government, and the top political office tend to receive high levels of trust. The professional institutions, such as the civil services, the police, the court, and the military, however, fare quite differently across the four non-democracies. In China the courts, the police, the civil services, and the local government seem to suffer rather low levels of trust, comparing to the national institutions. In Singapore, Vietnam, and Malaysia, these institutions appear to enjoy a decent level of trust as well.

Regime and Institutional Differences

We now take a closer look at these cross-institutional patterns in democracies and non-democracies below. Table 2 presents the average level of trust received by the various institutions in the three types of regimes. The figures are the average percentage of respondents who express "quite a lot" or "a great deal" of trust in these institutions for each type of regimes. The institutions are ordered according to the level of trust they each receive, from low to high.

[Table 2 about here]

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Looking at the trust levels received by institutions in the liberal democracies, a line can separate the institutions into a low-trust group and a (relatively) high-trust group. The difference appears to be due to the electoral nature of these institutions. Those elected institutions, such as the top national office, the parliament, and the national government (often represented by the elected politicians), or election-related institutions, such as the political parties, often suffer low levels of trust. By contrast, unelected and un-election-related institutions, such as the civil services and the courts, often fare better in winning public trust.

This relates to a very important debate in the studies of institutional and political trust, political support, and government legitimacy. In this debate, a typical view such as Weatherford's (1992) "the view from above" sees trust and political support as deriving from institutional features such as accountability, efficiency, and procedural and distributive fairness. Democratic institutions such as elections and checks and balance are believed to be the critical factor generating trust of citizens (Buchanan 2002; Dahl 2006; Goodwin-Gill 2006). By contrast, a non-democratic government such as China's lacks such institutions, hence is believed to suffer low political trust and legitimacy deficits.

The opposite view in this debate discounts the "democratic" nature of the institutions as the determinant of trust. Instead, it argues that the quality or outputs of these institutions are more important. Rothstein (2009), for example, argues that output matters more because policy fields related to people's daily lives such as education, health care, and social welfare are implemented by lower-level government officials, who are usually not elected. Scandinavian citizens have much less confidence in the elected or election-related institutions, such as political parties, the unions, and the Parliament. Instead, they trust institutions whose leaders they have no right to elect, such as the health care system, the police, and social services, because these institutions deliver positive impacts on their life. Furthermore, Rothstein (2009) sees the impartiality of

government policies and actions as a critical factor determining public support for government. In the Yugoslavia case, the Serbian secessionism movement emerged in Croatia not because Serbians believed that they would be a permanent minority in the country, hence would have no chance of winning an election, but because they encountered systematic discrimination and insufficient protection from government departments such as the police (Rothstein 2009; Rothstein and Teorell 2008).

The separation of a high-trust and a low-trust group among the institutions in East Asia's democracies therefore seems to support the Rothsteinian view, that electorally-related or electorally-affected institutions suffer relatively low levels of trust. The situations in the non-democracies appear to be less clear cut at first glance. Putting all four non-democracies together, it is difficult to draw a line in the last column of Table 2 which can separate the institutions into a high-trust and a low-trust group. But this is probably because in our group of non-democracies in fact comprise four countries with a rather diverse range of political institutions. In at least two of them, i.e. Singapore and Malaysia, elections have become quite an important institution in their political life. In both countries, very competitive elections (although not entirely fair by many standards) have been in place for many years. Therefore, averaging the figures of them with China, where really no meaningful election above village level exists, may blur many things. In fact, the trust levels received by elected or election-related institutions in Malaysia and Singapore are quite similar to their counterparts in some electoral democracies such as Indonesia and Thailand (see Table 1). This way, the Singapore and Malaysia cases supports the Rothstein (2009) view that election-related institutions tend to receive less trust. This is also supported by the electoral democracies, in which all the elected or election-related institutions are found in the low-trust group (middle-section of Table 2).

Following this logic, of all the twelve societies in East Asia included in this study, only in China and Vietnam we see no competitive elections. And the institutional trust in these two societies shares the reversed pattern comparing to the democracies and electoral democracies. In China and Vietnam, we see that the national political institutions, including the top political office (missing data from Asian Barometer but data from other surveys, such as the World Values Survey, can substitute), the central government, and the parliament, all enjoy high levels of trust from the public. The civil services, the police, and the local government (and the courts in China), in fact suffer lower levels of trust.

How to understand these different patterns in the democracies and the non-democracies? The first angel is to focus on the important role played by elections in democracies (and electoral democracies). There are three layers in this. First, electoral politics serve to bring political institutions closer to individual citizens, and demystify government power and government institutions. As a result, having participated in elections, citizens are more ready to critically assess those institutions. Second, elections, especially elections in newly democratized societies, tend to be plagued by their low quality, resulting in citizens' disliking political parties and elected politicians and offices. Thirdly, in democracies when governance quality is in question, such as when the nation faces economic downturns and government ineffectiveness (think Japan's sluggish economy and government weakness), citizens are prone to directing their discontent and discontents to the political parties and elected politicians or offices (Crozier, Huntington, and Watanuki 1975; Pharr and Putnam 2000). In non-democracies, by contrast, the national institutions and leaders are insulated from direct public assessment through elections. Citizens' evaluation of government competence and trustworthiness therefore is often constructed into two categories: even if they find specific offices or bureaus as incompetent or corrupt, they tend to retain the trust in the national offices or institutions (Li 2013). Therefore,

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citizens in non-democracies tend to blame government failures to the local agencies and actual implementers, while retaining trust in the central and national institutions (Wang 2005).

Another angel to understand this is political culture. Empirical democratic theories tend to support that in mature and quality democracies, citizens should hold a healthy dose of suspicion against the politicians and the government. The loyalty and firm support is for the democratic values and principles. In fact, a firm supporter or embracer of democracy, i.e. democratic values and principles, she does need to be vigilant in keeping the political power and authority in check. Therefore, it is common for mature democracies to give rise to a new generations of "critical citizens" who often show distrust in the political institutions (Norris 1999, 2011). By contrast, in non-democracies, both because long-last traditional values and government manipulation of political discourse and indoctrination, an authoritarian political culture permeates. Citizens are likely to reserve trust in government authorities. We take up this line of argument below.

Political Culture and Institutional Trust

Now we have compared the trust levels between different regime types, and we have compared trust levels across the institutions. At individual citizens' level, what makes a citizen trust political institutions more? Scholars have generally explained political trust from a culturalist and an institutionalist perspective. A culturalist view sees political culture as the key factors influencing citizens' trust in government. This can be traced all the way back to Webber, who looks at traditional authority as one main sources of legitimacy in government. The public in the traditional and subsistence-agriculture society are prone to the influence of authoritarian values, which emphasize hierarchy and obedience to political authority. Once industrialization and modern urban life brought a new type of political culture, citizens acquire pro-democratic

values (Inglehart and Welzel 2005). Citizens socialized in urban, post-materialist, and democratic environment therefore become more critical toward government, leading to decline in political trust (Norris 1999), with self-expression values emerging as a main contributor to the rise of critical citizens (Flanagan and Lee 2000; Kim 2010; Wang 2005). Given that the large part of Asia is still, at least until very recently, typified by non-urban, pre-industrialization socioeconomic life, we should expect to find heavy influence of traditional culture, which has strong authoritarian values (Yang 1995). Solid empirical evidences clearly show that authoritarian or paternalistic orientations as contributing to trust in government and diffused regime support in China, especially among the rural population (Chu 2011).

This section will show that, 1) Asian citizens influenced by traditional social values are prone to showing higher level of trust in political institutions, and 2) Asian citizens influenced by authoritarian values are prone to showing higher level of trust in political institutions. Vice versa, the evidences in this section are also showing that those more influenced by modern social values, and those more influenced by liberal democratic values are more likely to be critical citizens, and show lower levels of trust in political institutions.

Traditional Social Values and Institutional Trust

In Asian Barometer, we measure these values by asking people's opinion (agreement or disagreement with) about certain statements. Paternalistic values, for example, are measured by the respondent's agreement with the statement: children should always obey their parents even if parents' demands are unreasonable. Those who agree with such a statement are likely to hold paternalistic values. Authoritarian values are measured in a similar way, by asking the respondent's agreement or disagreement with statements such as, "People with little or no

education should have as much say in politics as highly-educated people." If a person agrees with such as statement, that means she holds liberal democratic values when it comes to equal political right. If she disagrees, she is influenced by stronger authoritarian values.

Table 3 presents the different percentages of people showing trust in various national institutions. Traditional vis-à-vis modern values are represented by people's respondent to three value statements: In a group, we should sacrifice our individual interests for group interest (collectivism), children should do what parents ask even if parents' demand are unreasonable (paternalism), and one should not insist on one's opinion if co-workers disagree with him/her (conflict avoidance). In each case, those who say "yes" (i.e. agree or strongly agree with) to these statements are under stronger influence by traditional values, while those who reject these statements have acquired more modern values.

[Table 3 about here]

In all three groups of Asian societies, we see a clear pattern that those more traditional individuals show higher likelihood of trusting their political institutions (the national government, their top political office, and the political parties). The difference between more traditional (those who say "yes") and more modern (those who say "no") is quite clear. The only exception is found the non-democracies when it comes to trust in the national government---here the trust level is very high among both traditionally and modernly oriented citizens. We shall talk more about high institutional trust in non-democracies later.

Authoritarian Values and Institutional Trust

By the same token, Table 4 shows the differences in institutional trust made by authoritarian vis-à-vis liberal democratic values. The modernization and postmodernization

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theory (Inglehart 1997), "human development theory" (Welzel, Inglehart, and Klingemann 2003), "critical citizens" argument (Norris, 1999), among others, all argue that socioeconomic modernization would give rise to a political culture that rejects authoritarian values, emphasizes liberal democratic values, self-expression values, and/or prodemocracy values (Wang 2008). Besides supporting democratic values, such a political culture also breed citizens' critical attitudes toward authority and political institutions (also see Chang and Chu's chapter on liberal democratic values prepared for this book). In Asian Barometer, we measure citizens' authoritarian vis-à-vis liberal democratic values using another set of value statements, to see whether an individual agree or disagree with them. Table 4 presents how people with stronger authoritarian values show high level of trust in political institutions comparing to people with stronger liberal democratic values.

[Table 4 about here]

Three values statements were selected to represent citizens' authoritarian vis-à-vis liberal democratic values. We present three value statements that differentiate authoritarian value holders from liberal democratic value holders, i.e. regarding whether discussion of ideas should be controlled by the government, whether government leaders should be treated as the head of a family, and whether the society should welcome different ways of thinking. Those who say "yes" to these statements hold stronger authoritarian values, while those who reject them hold stronger liberal democratic and self-expression values. Clearly, people in the "Yes" category" show much higher level of institutional trust, across all three regime types. And this pattern exists regarding to trust in the national government, in the top political office, and in political parties.

The Institutional Performance View

Alongside the culturalist approach to explaining institutional trust we can find an institutionalist approach. It looks at the properties as well as performance of government institutions as sources of political trust (Mishler and Rose 1997, 2001). One stream of this view argues that institutional trust (and political legitimacy of a government) derives from formal democratic institutions such as election, separation of power, and checks and balances. Empirical evidences presented in the earlier sections of this chapter have seriously challenged this view. Therefore, a second set of institutionalist arguments has emerged. Instead of focusing on the institutional structures and designs of a polity, this view argues that output, results, or performance of government determine institutional trust (Yang and Holzer 2006). This is especially relevant for recent scholarship on political support in East Asia. Performance-based legitimacy has a long tradition in Confucian societies' political history. In imperial China, citizens supported a dynasty if they believed it had "mandate of heaven". A dynasty would lose such a mandate if it failed to look after its people.[1] In today's China, it is argued that government performance, which specifically means the ability to promote China's economic development, has become "the sole source of legitimacy in China" (p.428) (Zhao 2009).

It must be noted that, "performance" of modern governments must go beyond the simple economic sense (It's economy, stupid.). It must also include areas such as environmental protection, promoting social justice, and providing public services such as ensuring food safety, provision of healthcare, and affordable housing. It should also include the quality of the institutions in terms of efficiency, responsiveness, transparency as regarding to general institutions and impartiality and fairness regarding to judicial institutions, among others. Studies

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[1] "Mandate of Heaven", or Tianming (Heavenly Order) is understood as the legitimacy of the ruler.

of government performance have evolved into a discourse of "good government", "government capacity", "government competence", and "governance" (Kaufmann, Kraay, and Mastruzzi 2008; Tendler 1997). To some extent, the study of democracy and democratization has moved to focus on the quality of democracy (Diamond 2008; Diamond and Morlino 2004), therefor converging with the study of good government, state building, and state capacity (Fukuyama 2004).

In any case, if the government can deliver economic development or provide quality services to the citizens, then it will generate public satisfaction (Wang 2010) as well as trust. The low levels of trust in government institutions often relate to citizens dissatisfaction with government's performance in various policy areas (Hetherington 2006). It is possible that a public will support a regime as long as it judges the government to be effective and competent, and believes that the government permits a sufficient number of channels through which voices can be heard and for government accountability to be determined (the first dimension of the World Bank's measurement of government effectiveness)—even if this does not meet the procedural definition of a formal democracy. This might reflect Asian citizens' outcome- instead of procedure-focused disposition (Shi and Lu 2010). They are attentive to the results or outputs of the political system. Citizen's trust in government institutions is determined not at the input but at the output side of the political system.

Asian Barometer measures government performance and competence in many dimensions. Table 5 presents a selected measurement of (citizens' perception of) government performance and institutional quality.

[Table 5 about here]

Table 5 shows that, in terms of citizens' perceived government performance in the economic area, as well as perceived government quality in terms of responsiveness and cleanness. In all the East Asian countries, those who feels the nation's economy is doing well, and those

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that feel their family economy is faring well, show much higher level of trust in their political institutions. In terms of government quality, those who feel their government is responsive and less corrupt clearly show higher level of trust in the major political institutions as well.

The culturalist and institutionalist views must be integrated when we assess institutional trust. While the non-democracies may benefit from the traditional and authoritarian political culture of their citizens, we must also take into account that in recent years, at least some of these regimes have shown competent performance in promoting economic development and effective and competent governance. Even in terms of ensuring transparency, responsiveness, and other quality of government institutions, some of them have done relatively well, at least comparing to their failed past (say China compared with pre-1978). By contrast, the mature liberal democracies such as Japan, has suffered long period of government instability (Inoguchi 2013). Combined with a critical-minded citizenry, the resulting low level of institutional trust is easy to appreciate.

Education, Modernization, and the Rise of Critical Citizens

The cultural patterns of institutional trust presented above have very significant socio-political implications. The dissolving of traditional social values such as family paternalism and collective orientation will prepare the way for the rise of critical citizens, whose disposition is to hold government institutions accountable, instead of offering compliance or obedience. Socioeconomic modernization, such as the expansion of education, and the mobilization of citizens from rural work and life to urban life and industrial, service, and knowledge professions will give rise to strong liberal democratic values (Inglehart 1997; Wang and Tan forthcoming 2013).

This general trend of human development and cultural change as driven by socioeconomic modernizations, however, has an institutionalist twist. While socioeconomic modernization and human development has the strong power to transform social and political values of the population, specific institutional arrangements could suppress or delay such changes. In general, socioeconomic modernization tends to create a pro-democratic public that will demand democratization of the political system (Welzel 2009; Welzel and Inglehart 2005, 2005). But holding other factors constant, the continuing existence of an authoritarian order would still have the effect of suppressing the growth of pro-democratic values. The comparison of Singapore with Korea and Taiwan can illustrate this well. While all three societies share similar level of socioeconomic modernization as measured by material wealth, level of public education, living standard, and penetration of modern communication, among others, the level of liberal democratic values in Singapore is lower than that measured in Taiwan and Korea, two societies that succeeded in democratic transformation of the political system.

The institutional causes to this divergence are two folded. On the one hand, once democratized, the political system will actively consolidate and promote liberal democratic values among its citizens. The political discourse in the public domain of a democratic society will further enhance citizens' support for and commitment to democratic values. An authoritarian regime, by contrast, will continue to control the spread of information, and maintain a political discourse and indoctrination effort supportive of the authoritarian order.

But such effort to suppress the liberal democratic values in a rapidly modernizing society will be untenable in the long run. This can be seen in the effect of education has on public's trust in government institutions. On surface, it is easy for people to think an authoritarian government and a society influenced by traditional values will be able to socialize its citizens into traditional and authoritarian values through its education system. But promoting formal education, as a

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modernizing government has to do in order to increase the country's human capital for developmental purpose, will certainly fail to serve the regime's indoctrination and socialization purpose. In fact, early childhood and adolescent socialization by family and community agents may transmit the dominant social values to the next generation of citizens, and government-engineered indoctrination could take place in pre-college schooling (Jennings and Niemi 1974) (add citation). But beyond that, higher level of education would play an empowering and emancipative instead of an indoctrinating role in human value changes. On the one hand, a high level of education would place the individual in a better socioeconomic status, by enabling her to enter a better-paid professional position (Jennings and Niemi 1974). Therefore, the human capital gained through longer period of education will translate into better economic return and more economic security. With more economic security, a person is more prone to developing stronger democratic tendencies, therefore acquiring critical attitudes and dispositions vis-à-vis government institutions and authority in general (Inglehart 1990). When such individuals raise their offspring, the next generation will be socialized in a more pro-democartic family and social environment. A societal-level value change will then take place.

Furthermore, while formal education up to a point can be effective in transmitting government-intended values and ideas into the individual, equipping citizens with strong intellectual skills and abilities will eventually give them the capacity to become independent and critical thinkers. In the age of globalization, it is increasingly difficult for any government to monopolize the supply of information and political thinking to its citizens. There are no more fully closed societies so to speak. Even regimes such as Myanmar and North Korea will find it difficult to cut their citizens completely off from the reach of information from other countries. In a semi-closed society such as China, Vietnam, and Singapore, more and more citizens will be able to access global information and therefore exposed to the discussion of democracy, regime

types, human rights, freedom, and other values and principles. And the more educated and better intellectually equipped citizens will have stronger ability in joining this discussion and obtain such values. Therefore better educated citizens in these regimes will be more critical toward the government and political establishment in general.

[Figure 1 about here]

On both accounts, therefore, higher level of education is associated with a stronger propensity to be critical vis-à-vis the political authority and institutions. This is clearly shown in Figure 1. In these East Asian societies, citizens are grouped by the level of education they received. Among the people with higher levels of education, the percentage of them expressing trust in their national government is always lower.

This strong effect of education, and exposure to global information and discussion, on institutional trust can be viewed from a different angle. Across Asia, data shows that those who use more internet tend to be more critical toward government institutions (Figure 2). It presents the double effects of education. More active internet users are those who are more educated and have been placed in more knowledge-intensive jobs because of their higher stock of human capital. They receive better income and salaries, therefore hold stronger liberal democratic values. On the other hand, they are also those more exposed to the global flow of information and the global discussion of democracy, human rights, freedom and other values and principles. Not surprisingly, they show more critical and less trusting views when it come government institutions.

[Figure 2 about here]

In the Long Run

When we take the discussion this far together, we could not help but arriving at two impressions as regarding to long-term trends. First, with the deepening of democratization, institutional trust is likely to be at a relatively low level—a critical citizenry appears to be a characteristic of a mature democracy. Therefore, low level of political trust is probably less alarming than it first appears to be. In fact, within this critical environment for democracy, new possibilities such as new forms of civic engagement would emerge (Norris 2002). Second, the high level of institutional trust in the several non-democracies in Asia may indeed be a temporary phenomenon. Such high levels of trust are partially made possible by the lingering traditional and authoritarian culture and the still relatively moderate level of socioeconomic modernization. Both factors, however, are in the process of fading away. Continued socioeconomic modernization is eroding traditional and authoritarian values among the citizens of these countries, and bringing modern and liberal democratic values. That means citizens will become increasingly critical and distrusting towards government institutions.

In fact, this trend is already on-going. Table 6 shows the percentage of people expressing "a great deal" of trust in their respective national governments in the past decade. The proportion has been stabilized at low levels in the liberal democracies. It has been in clear decline in the non-democracies. In China, in particular, it went from the 93% at the time of the first Asian Barometer survey, to merely 51% by the time the most recent survey was carried out (2011).

[Table 6 about here]

This long-term trend is most clearly observed by looking at the intergenerational patterns of institutional trust. Figure 3 shows the percentages of various generations of citizens in Asia's liberal democracies, electoral democracies, and non-democracies expressing trust in their

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country's national government. If the reader has followed the arguments in this chapter so far, he or she can make sense of the message in this Figure quite quickly. In East Asia, all the socioeconomic and socio-political factors are pointing to the decline of political trust. These include, first and foremost, the rising level of education and socioeconomic modernization in general. This is seriously eroding traditional and authoritarian values, especially in the non-democracies and electoral democracies. Therefore, each new generation is growing up in a socioeconomic environment ever more conducive to the emergence of liberal democratic and self-expression values. As a result, they become less trusting in government institutions than earlier generations. Furthermore, the deepening of democratization in the liberal and electoral democracies means citizens are more and more indoctrinated in and committed to democratic principles, therefore are ever more ready to assume elite- and authority-challenging values, resulting in lower level trust in political institutions. Especially, when their societies encounter sluggish economic situations and ineffective governance (such as the pension system reform issue in Japan), they are prone to direct their discontent toward the elected political institutions, such as the national government, the top political office, and the parliament and its members.

[Figure 3 about here]

Whether this trend of continuous decline of institutional trust will bring the trust levels in these non-democracies to that found the liberal democracies will take time to be found out. Formal institutions will have to play a role here. To be more precise, regime type plays a deterministic role. Although the number of critical citizens will keep growing, the change in these societies' political culture will eventually depend on whether a formal democratization process will take place. Only after a formal transformation of the regime will political discourse and indoctrination be fundamentally changed to be in-line with a democratic society.

Conclusions

The points take away include an understanding that institutional trust is jointly determined by cultural and institutional factors. In terms of (political) culture, traditional and authoritarian values are conducive to the forming of higher level of institutional trust among the citizens, while modern and liberal democratic values provides the ground for the contrary trend. Institutional factor includes the quality of the institutions such as responsiveness, effectiveness, and cleanness, as well as the performance (outputs) of these institutions such as economic welfare and service provision. This means that political culture and institutions (in terms of quality and performance) together are generating a high level of institutional trust in East Asia's non-democracies. By the same token, relatively lukewarm performance and a critical political culture are generating a low level of institutional trust in the region's electoral and liberal democracies.

Institutions matter at a higher level as well. To be specific, regime types affect political culture in two ways. First, non-democratic regimes tend to maintain a political discourse aiming at indoctrinating citizens with authoritarian values, so that citizens continue to trust the regime and its various institutions. By contrast, democratic regimes will support the political discourses that emphasize commitment to democratic principles but critical toward specific institutions and elected officials. Second, in a democratic regime, discontent and distrust are often directed to elected or election-related institutions, while professional institutions such as the civil services or the courts often win higher level of citizen trust if they are deemed as efficient, clean, and fair, among others. By contrast, in a non-democratic regime, due to lack of direct election and citizen participation, the national institutions are shield from direct access and assessment by the public, therefore often received a "manufactured" level of high trust, while instiutions directly dealing

with citizens, such as the local government, the civil services, the police, and the courts, may suffer a low level of trust. This is slightly better in a place such as Singapore, where these instiutions in fact demonstrate a high level of quality. But it is in quite a precarious situation in a country with much less competent government agencies, such as China. Indeed, citizens in China seriously distrust their local government, the police, and the courts (Li, 2004; Ma and Wang, 2013).

With the change in political culture effected by the rising income and socioeconomic modernization, together with global information, the level of institutional trust is in decline in the non-democracies. Whether a converge with the liberal democracy is in sight will depend on institutional changes, i.e. political changes in the non-democracies that result in more democratic institutions and a re-making of the political and ideological discourse in these societies. Such a change will reverse the fundamental beliefs of their citizens regarding government, power, and citizenship.

The challenges for liberal and electoral democracies, however, are of a different nature. Democratic "recession", "roll-back", and "malaise" have a lot to do with the quality and effectiveness of both the established and the new democracies. Electoral politics may alienate people, and populism often triumphs. To improve institutional trust, the government must focus on the improvement in quality of their democracy, and government performance in economic and political spheres ("Physician, Heal Thyself!) New forms of political engagement should be explored to empower and involve citizens, so that better linkages between citizens and the government can make democracy work (Putnam, 1987; Norris, 2006).

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Table 1 Citizens Trust in Political Institutions across Asia

Percentages of Respondents Saying they have somewhat or a great deal of trust in the various institutions

Political Institutions	Japan	Korea	Taiwan	Mongolia	Philippines	Thailand	Indonesia	China	Singapore	Vietnam	Malaysia
Top Political Office*	20	36	34	45	33	62	71	--	87	--	80
The Courts	51	36	30	22	43	63	52	70	86	78	72
National Government	12	22	33	35	44	55	56	88	86	93	77
Political Parties	9	12	14	17	35	35	42	88	69	82	54
Parliament	11	11	19	28	43	49	50	83	83	88	70
Civil Services	28	36	48	38	54	66	70	50	78	71	80
The Military	77	58	44	75	57	69	85	86	76	94	85
The Police	65	49	46	51	54	57	65	77	83	87	69
Local Government	52	29	50	39	59	74	70	55	--	83	75
Average	36	32	35	39	47	59	62	75	81	84	74
Liberal Democracies Average			35	Electoral Democracies Average			52	Non-democracies Average			78

* Presidency or Prime Minister.

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Table 2, Trust level varies across the institutions

Liberal Democracies		Electoral Democracies		Non-democracies	
Institutions	Trust %	Institutions	Trust %	Institutions	Trust %
Political Parties	12	Political Parties	37	Civil Services	70
Parliament	14	Parliament	47	Local Government	71
The National Government	22	The National Government	52	Political Parties	73
The Top Political Office*	30	The Courts	53	The Courts	76
Civil Services	37	The Top Political Office*	55	The Police	79
The Courts	39	The Police	59	Parliament	81
Local Government	44	Civil Services	63	The Top Political Office*	84
The Police	53	Local Government	67	The Military	85
The Military	59	The Military	71	The National Government	86

*The Presidency or Prime Minister.

Table 3 Traditional Social Values and Institutional Trust

	Agree or disagree with these value statements					
	We should sacrifice individual interest for collective interests		Children should always obey parents		One should not insist on one's opinion	
Trust in National Government	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Liberal Democracies	18	25	21	25	20	24
Electoral Democracies	49	58	50	62	53	57
Non-democracies	86	93	92	91	91	92
Trust in the Top Political Office						
Liberal Democracies	25	31	27	32	26	31
Electoral Democracies	56	63	56	66	58	62
Non-democracies	81	87	84	87	81	87
Trust in Political Parties						
Liberal Democracies	25	31	27	32	26	31
Electoral Democracies	56	63	56	66	58	62
Non-democracies	81	87	84	87	81	87

Table 4 Authoritarian Values and Institutional Trust

| | Agree or disagree with these value statements | | | | | |
| | Government should decide whether certain ideas should be allowed to be discussed in the society. | | Government leaders are like the head of a family, we should all follow their decisions. | | If people have too many ways of thinking, society will be chaotic. | |
	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Trust in the National Government						
Liberal Democracies	20	30	19	34	19	25
Electoral Democracies	48	58	46	63	56	55
Non-democracies	89	92	86	95	90	92
Trust in the Top Political Office						
Liberal Democracies	25	40	25	42	25	32
Electoral Democracies	56	63	51	68	62	60
Non-democracies	80	88	76	90	82	87
Trust in Political Parties						
Liberal Democracies	9	18	9	21	9	14
Electoral Democracies	36	45	34	48	41	42
Non-democracies	81	84	77	87	82	84

Table 5 Government Performance and Institutional Trust

Evaluation of Government Performance	National Economic Situation			Family Economic situation			Responsiveness		Corruption	
Trust in:	bad	so-so	good	bad	so-so	good	non-responsive	responsive	corrupt	not corrupt*
The Top Political Office	33	62	83	40	54	66	41	72	55	42
National Government	29	62	90	46	60	74	40	80	61	52
Political Parties	21	48	79	38	50	60	29	68	50	43

*combining those who feel "hardly anyone is involved" in corruption those who feel "not a lot of officials are corrupt" in their national

government. (question 117 of Asian Barometer Survey, Wave 3).

Data: pooled Asian Barometer Survey, Wave III

Table 6, Decline in Trust in Non-democracies between 2001 and 2011

	Percentages of respondents expressing "a great deal" of trust in their national government											
	Japan	Korea	Taiwan	Mongolia	Philippines	Thailand	Indonesia	Malaysia	China	Singapore	Vietnam	Malaysia
2001/02	2	3	3	14	11	18			93			
2005/07	1	0	4	12	6	12	7	21	69	28	70	21
2010/11	1	2	3	3	11	11	5	28	51	22	67	28

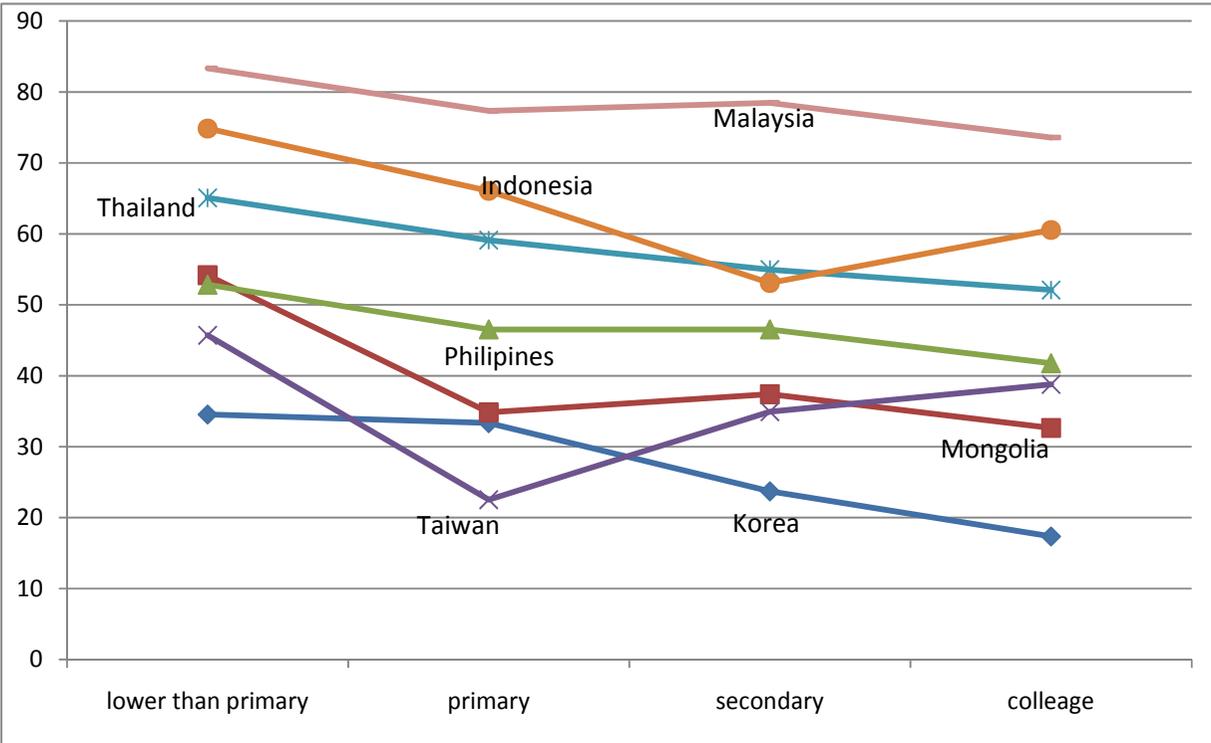Figure 1 Education Levels and Trust in the Country's National Government
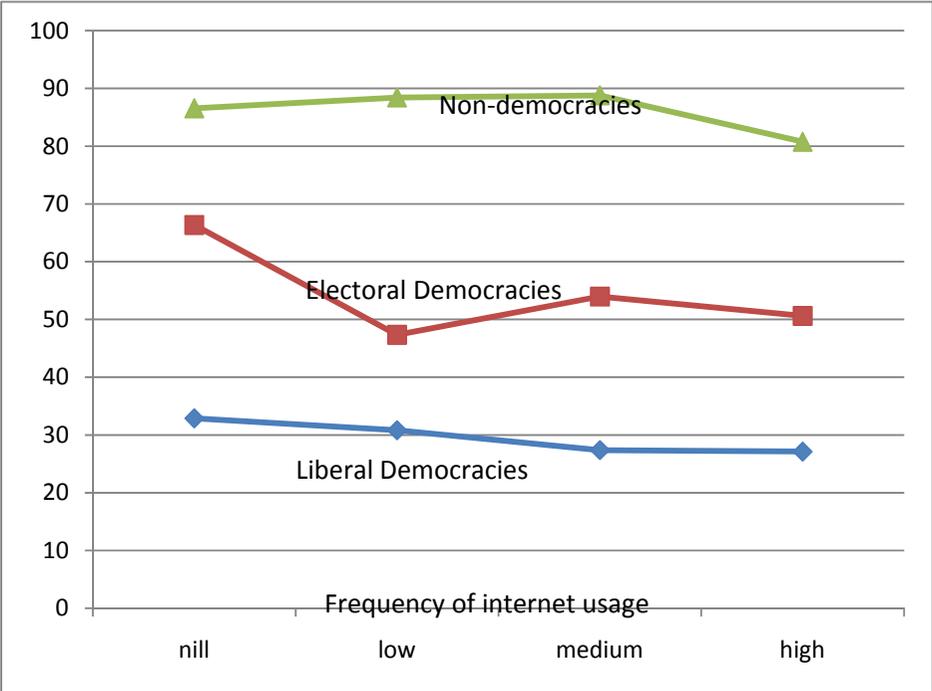
Figure 2, Internet Usage and Institutional Trust

Figure 3: intergenerational changes in trust levels in the national government

Non-democracies

Electoral Democracies

Liberal Democracies

Decades in which different generations were born

1930s 1940s 1950s 1960s 1970s 1980s