

# **Regime Legitimacy in Troubled Waters:**

## **To What Extent Does Inequality Influence Trust in Political Institutions in Thailand (2002-2016)?**

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**Abstract:** Thailand ranks not only among the world's most unequal societies but is also a unique case regarding political instability. Along many recent legitimacy crises, contributing to the country's instability, it turned out that Thailand mostly lacks specific support for regime institutions, as diffuse support for the national community is rather stable. This study intends to bridge a gap in the literature by connecting inequality and institutional trust, to find out if high socio-economic disparities contribute to the lack of regime legitimacy. Using ordered logistic regression models, data from the Asian Barometer surveys on trust in political institutions is related to explanatory variables such as income, evaluations of the national and household economy, regional origin and political values. The results show that inequality increasingly affects institutional trust. However, these effects are strongly connected to regional differences and additionally shaped by political values. This study conclusively provides an option for increasing regime legitimacy and mitigating Thailand's political conflict: Reduction of socio-economic inequality.

**Keywords:** Regime Legitimacy, Institutional Trust, Socio-Economic Inequality, Political Conflict, Thailand

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

“It’s an old story: the rich get richer, and the poor get poorer. The divide has never been starker. We can and must adopt policies that create opportunity for everyone, regardless of who they are or where they come from” (UNDP 2015b: Goal 10). In contrast to the Millennium Development Goals developed in 2000 (UNDP 2015a), the Sustainable Development Goals, introduced 15 years later, comprise reference particularly to inequity. The shift in United Nations policies mirrors the rising academic attention inequality attracts, induced mainly by Piketty’s account “Capital in the Twenty-First Century” (Piketty 2014) on the historical evolution of increasing socio-economic disparities.

This discussion is especially relevant for Southeast Asia, one of the most unequal regions globally. Although the development gap between countries has been reduced over the last decades, domestic inequality remains an often overseen but persistent problem (Mordecai 2017). Thailand sticks out in the region as one of the world’s most unequal countries. A recent study shows a continuous increase of inequality from 2001 to 2016 in Thailand, following Piketty’s main thesis of continuously widening socio-economic discrepancies, resulting in the global third place of unequal countries (CS 2018). Despite past, rapid economic growth and a per capita GDP of about 6.000 US Dollars, wealth distribution among the 70 million citizens is starkly imbalanced (WB 2018). In 2015, the Human Development Report indicated Thailand’s society to be the most unequal in East Asia (UNDP 2016: 5).

Thailand is not only one of the most unequal societies globally, but also one of the most politically turbulent. With 13 successful coups and several unsuccessful ones within 85 years, Thailand’s political system is severely unstable (Kasian 2016: 231). In academic and public discussions, the country’s political instability is often related to a lack of legitimacy. Since a discourse on inequality has influenced Thailand’s recent contentious politics more and more (see Wichit 2018; Rhoden 2013), this thesis intends to shed light on the important and understudied relation between socio-economic disparities and political legitimacy in Thailand.

By quantitatively evaluating the four datasets of the Asian Barometer surveys of 2002, 2006, 2012 and 2016, this thesis intends to clarify the link between legitimacy and inequality. The dependent variable chosen here is trust in political institutions. A political institution refers for instance to the government and parliament, representing the political regime. They are used in

this study since they offer the possibility for comparisons over time, due to their more permanent character. The hypothesized relation between socio-economic inequality and trust in institutions is in the forefront of this case study. Investigating four different survey waves allows for longitudinal analysis of eventual changes in the strength of the proposed effects. Furthermore, the longitudinal character enables an evaluation of the suggested relation against the backdrop of oscillations between authoritarian and rather democratic periods. Conclusively, this study intends to illuminate the relation between socio-economic inequality and trust in political institutions, considering possible time trends and differences between political regimes, reflected in the following research questions:

Main research question:

- *To what extent does economic inequality influence trust in political institutions in Thailand (2002-2016)?*

Sub-questions:

- *How does the evaluation of political institutions and the explanatory strength of independent variables change over the four survey waves? Is a time trend recognizable?*
- *Two survey waves were conducted under military juntas, and two survey waves were conducted under democratically elected governments. Do the evaluations of political institutions differ according to regime type?*
- *What other explanatory variables influence the support for political institutions?*

To be able to investigate this relation, the thesis is structured as follows: First, a general overview of Thailand's political system introduces background information required for a better comprehension and contextualization of the issue researched. This is followed by a review of the literature specifically focusing on regime legitimacy, but also the connection between socio-economic inequality and politics, highlighting this thesis' contribution to the academic discussion. Then, the theoretical framework narrows down the focus on political institutions and investigates the role economic discrepancies can play during political change. Next, the methodology chapter discusses the data collection and selection, and the model construction, using an ordered logistic regression analysis. The last two chapters present the results, including a discussion and contextualization of the findings in consideration of theories, background information and literature review. Finally, the conclusion disseminates the findings of this thesis in a more concise way.

## **2. BACKGROUND**

Before evaluating existing literature on the thesis topic and introducing its theoretical framework, it is necessary to look at the broader issue and its historical context. Since Thailand's past political development is not as straight forward as compared to other countries in the region, with its large number of military coups and complex power structures, it is worth shortly introducing historical political developments in Thailand. Then, the timeframe for the analysis of this work is described regarding its turbulent political evolution. Finally, the last section of this chapter provides additional background information on socio-economic discrepancies. Information on wealth and economy in Thailand highlight the persistence of inequality and its social consequences. This chapter is important since it also provides background information on the further control variables added in the analyses.

### **2.1. Failed Revolution: Military, Bureaucracy and Monarchy in Thailand**

After staging a peaceful coup against incumbent King Prajadhipok in 1932, the instigators did not realize how permanently they had unsettled Thailand's political system (Ferrara 2015: 75-76). Although the instigators considered the abolishment of absolute monarchy and the subsequent democratization irreversible, soon they had to acknowledge the re-growing importance of the military would turn out as problematic (*Ibid.*: 104-107). After World War II and a short period of democracy, instability of governments and party conflicts made way for military rule from 1948, almost uninterrupted, until 1973. The generals instigated the comeback of young King Bhumibol Adulyadej as holder of moral legitimacy for their regimes, and quite successfully brought economic growth to Thailand, in connection with Thai bureaucracy (Terwiel 2011: 278-279). This connection led Riggs to famously describe Thailand as "bureaucratic polity", highlighting the decision-making power of the bureaucracy and the military in absence of elections and public participation (see Riggs 1966). Only the mass protests of 1973 could put an end to military rule after almost 25 years (Ferrara 2010: 15). Largely influenced by the Cold War, globalization, student and labor uprisings and economic growth, democratization took place in Thailand (Baker/Pasuk 2005: 199-209). However, unstable coalition governments and communist revolutions in neighboring countries led the military to seize power again in 1976, endorsed by the monarchy (Thongchai 2002: 253).

The interim years between 1976 and 1980 were dominated by short-term regimes and scandals, until the next general came to power, Prem Thinsulanonda. Not only did he manage to accommodate the political opponents, but also slowly democratized the country between 1980 and 1988. Most importantly, Prem formed the contemporary political system in a decisive way as “Democracy with the King as Head of State” (Ferrara 2015: 190). Neither absolutist monarchy, nor democracy, King Bhumibol and his close ally Prem developed a network to rule Thailand as a “semi-democratic” regime (see Chai-Anan 1987). Supported by big businesses in the 1980s, the network concentrated wealth and power, while royally endorsed campaigns of self-sufficiency aimed at keeping the rural population away from the honeypots in Bangkok (Ferrara 2015: 191-192). Apart from this, the proposed democratization by Prem was taking effect. Disturbed by another coup, popular upsurge in 1992 was rather successful in progressing with democratizing the country (Terwiel 2011: 283). Important for this thesis is that the monarchy, in combination with the military and bureaucracy, has retained its importance despite popular challenges until today.

## **2.2. Thailand’s Political Odyssey (1997-2018)**

The early 1990s in Thailand are a starting point for a long period of democracy. Its two-fold climax reached the decade in 1997. Two-fold refers here to the Asian financial crisis and the drafting of the so-called ‘People’s Constitution’ in the same year. Not only did the country experience its first strong economic depression and necessary intervention by the International Monetary Fund to find back to economic growth, but these events also led to a restructuring of institutions and the whole political landscape. In the past, political parties were confined during several military regimes. Patron-client systems dominated parties, vote buying was popular, and thus parties used to be factionalized, regionalized and insufficiently institutionalized (Ockey 2004: 22-26). The 1997 constitution focused on professionalizing parties and connecting them closer with the populace (*Ibid.*: 168-169). Additionally, the establishment of a constitutional court ought to improve the balance of powers. Despite criticism against its elitist character, the 1997 constitution “retain[ed] the potential to move Thai politics towards a rule-based system” (Connors 2002: 54).

Indeed, the new constitution increased stability and enabled telecommunications billionaire Thaksin Shinawatra in 2001 to become the first elected Prime Minister to serve for the full four-year term. The financial crisis of 1997 created wishful thinking for new politics among

the population, which Thaksin and his Thai Rak Thai party could fulfill (Pasuk/Baker 2004: 62-64). Through incorporation of smaller parties and political patronage, with a landslide win in the national elections of 2001, the Thai Rak Thai Party secured 248 of 500 parliament seats (McCargo/Ukrist 2005: 83). Employing populist pro-poor policies, Thaksin secured support for his party especially in rural North and Northeast Thailand, the most populated and poorest regions (see Appendix 1, p. 65, for a map illustrating the regional rifts). Policies such as a one million Baht fund for every village or an inexpensive access to healthcare scheme were well received and favored Thaksin's re-election in 2005 with even a larger majority of 377 seats in the parliament (Somchai 2008: 106-109). Despite being supported by many political and economic elites before, especially General Prem and the 'network monarchy' turned against him: "By the beginning of Thaksin's second term of office, the informal political system of network monarchy that had operated in Thailand for three decades looked close to exhaustion" (McCargo 2005: 516). Hence, lack of elite support partly led to the 2006 military coup and years of political instability (Farrelly 2013: 287-288).

Quickly after the coup, public resistance formed against the generals, from which the 'red shirts' raised as a political movement of mostly Thaksin supporters. This movement found its antagonist in the 'yellow shirts', who formed a little earlier to protest the Thaksin government and leaned more towards the Democrat Party (Pavin 2014: 4-6). In a rough sketch, Thailand's recent political conflict is dominated by these two factions and their respective characteristics: Red shirts, related to Thaksin and his Thai Rak Thai party, tend to be from the working class, sometimes expressing an anti-royalist stance, but mostly advocating for democracy and against the coup. Contrastingly, the yellow shirts mostly identify themselves as royalists, traditionalists, coming more from Bangkokian middle class backgrounds with strong sentiments against Thaksin (Ockey 2009: 316).

The years from 2007 to 2010 saw different short-term regimes by politicians associated with Thaksin or the opposition Democrat Party. None of them could prevent the conflict from escalating, until it became increasingly violent and culminated in 2010 in Bangkok, when clashes between security forces and protesters led to more than 100 casualties. While hundreds of red-shirt protesters were imprisoned, reconciliation under the incumbent Democrat Abhisit Vejjajiva (2008-2011) and his rather yellow-shirt leaning government was out of question (Connors 2011: 290-294). Moreover, the yellow-red divide continued to problematize politics in Thailand. The 2011 general elections elevated Thaksin's sister

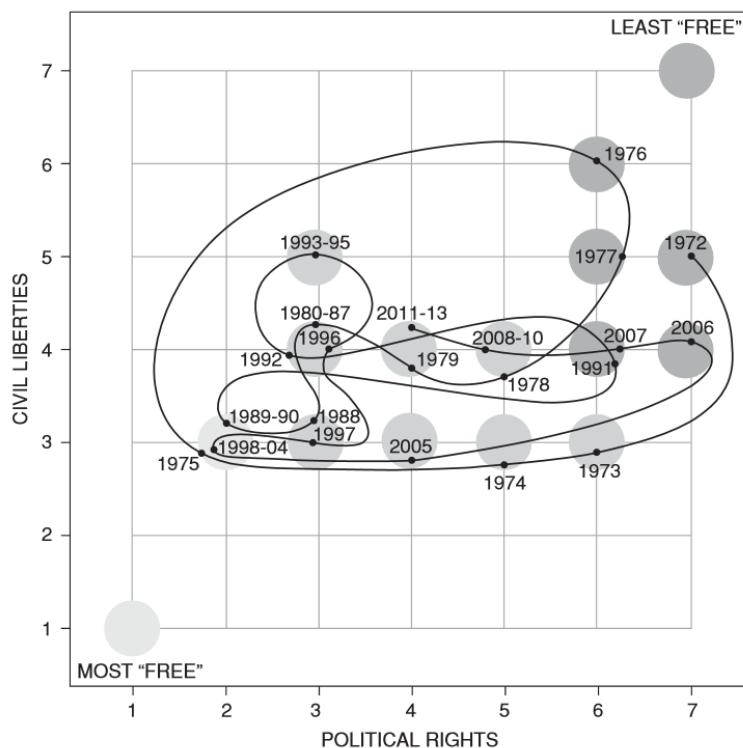


Figure 1: Thailand's Freedom House democracy ratings from 1972 until 2013 (Cited from Ferrara 2015: 7)

Yingluck Shinawatra into the Prime Minister's Office (Sinpeng/Kuhonta 2012: 390-395). Although the Kingdom experienced some moments of relatively relaxed day-to-day politics, protests and violence were to return. Whereas the conservative political and economic elite had initially believed to be rid of Thaksin's unacceptable policies, the rise of his sister disturbed the 'network monarchy': New groups of anti-Yingluck protesters emerged and continuously pressured the elected government. However, this time it was rather the elite than the general

public being dissatisfied, which in the end resulted in the May 2014 coup and the establishment of a military government under General Prayuth Chan-o-cha (Baker 2016: 389-390). The newly established National Council for Peace and Order legitimized its seizure of power by promising reconciliation and the re-establishment of social cohesion after the long-term conflict between yellow and red (Ferrara 2015: 290). A process that still seems to be undergoing. Until now, in May 2018, the junta is in power, proposed elections have been postponed several times, with February 2019 being the latest update. When or whether general elections will really be held remains open. Hence, Thailand's political odyssey seems to continue. This short background chapter has shown that for a long period, Thailand has been politically unstable. Figure 1 concisely illustrates this odyssey, mirrored in the Kingdom's Freedom House ratings. This contrasts with the trend of persistently high levels of socio-economic inequality. (See Appendix 1, p. 66, for a timeline summarizing this section).

### 2.3. Development of Socio-Economic Inequality in Thailand

Historical studies reveal a long-term development and restructuring of economic wealth in Thailand, already beginning in the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Akira 1996: 274). After World War II, the military governments in the 1950s and 1960s proposed import-substitution policies, opening

Thailand and leading to economic growth in specific fields, where foreign capital and technology mainly induced this growth. The economy turned to be dominated by three groups: 1) Public corporations with military connections, 2) multinational companies and 3) majorly ethnic-Chinese business groups (*Ibid.*: 282).

Moreover, the changes during this period did not do away with the pattern of rent-seeking endemic to Thailand's bureaucratic polity in which military rulers gain membership to corporate boards and some form of commission in exchange for political protection and favorable government ruling (Raquiza 2012: 65).

This economic system has both, advantages and disadvantages. On one side, the Thai economy grew rapidly in the 1960s, 1980s and 1990s. On the other side, “[p]rofits were concentrated among a few tens of families. To strengthen their bargaining power, they networked together through marriage alliances, cross shareholdings, and cooperation in associations providing community welfare” (Pasuk/Baker 2008: 4-5). The previously established, small group of economic winners has remained small, strengthening their networks. During economic growth in the period from 1975 and 1998, the income inequality among Thais significantly increased (Motonishi 2006: 484). Even the 1997 Asian financial crisis could not substantially jeopardize the concentration of wealth, since the survival of the so-called “controlled oligopoly” throughout the crisis relied upon their strong relations to, and support by, political networks (Thanee/Pasuk 2008: 250).

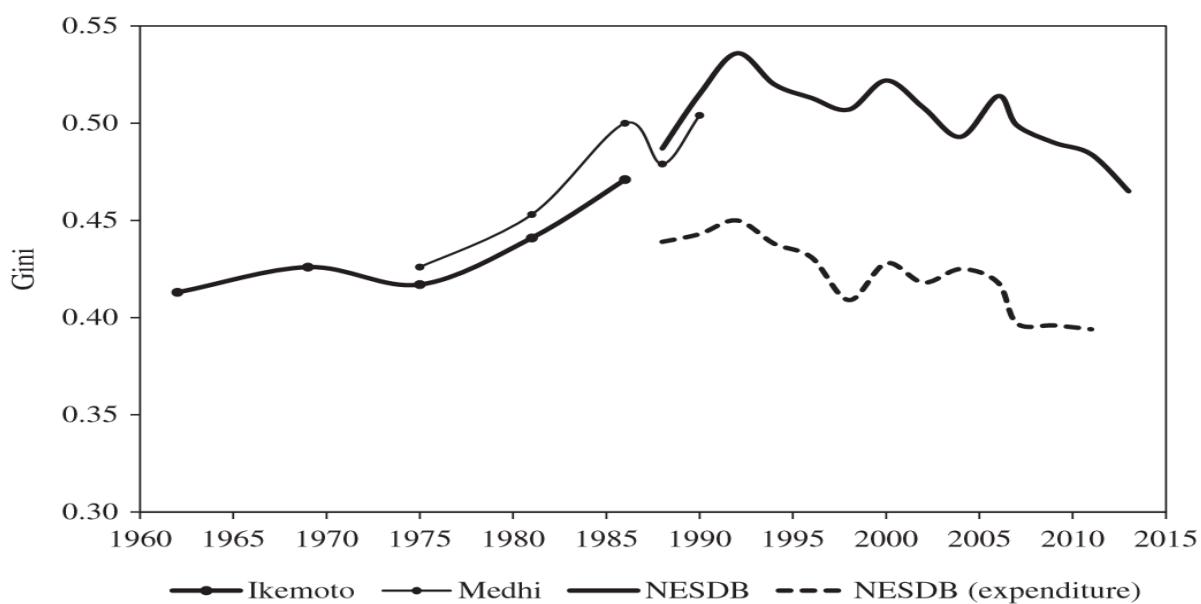


Figure 2: Gini Coefficients from different calculations from 1960-2015, Ikemoto and Medhi research papers, official data by National Economic and Social Development Board Thailand. Cited from Pasuk 2016: 407.

As a result, income and wealth is highly unequally distributed in Thailand. The Gini coefficient measures the distribution of incomes and wealth with 1 representing total inequality and 0 total equality. Recent calculations show that the standard coefficients for Thailand from 1990 until 2015 almost constantly remain on an average of 0.5 (see Figure 2). But if wealth distribution includes tax returns data, the Gini coefficient in 2009 for the top 1% of the income share is about 0.72, and for the top 0.1% the coefficient is 0.66, and thus much higher than in normal calculations (Vanitcharearnthum 2017: 6). The coefficient is normally calculated with income quintiles or deciles, Vanitcharearnthum's calculations indicate an even greater concentration of wealth among the elite.

The distribution of income and wealth has decisive impacts on the social structure in the country, reflected by very low social mobility (Pasuk/Baker 2016: 13). For lower classes it is more difficult to get access to distinguished secondary and tertiary educational institutions (see Dilaka 2016; Paweenawat/McNown 2014), and land entitlement (see Duangmanee 2016), which hinders the improvement of socio-economic status and keeps families in circles of poverty. This is pronounced by large regional disparities, and especially rural-urban differences, with wealth being centralized in Bangkok (Limpanonda 2012: 244-245). The next chapter further evaluates socio-economic inequality in relation to political conflict, after discussing legitimacy crises in Thailand.

### **3. LITERATURE REVIEW AND CONTRIBUTION**

Since this thesis investigates the relation of inequality and trust in political institutions in Thailand, the following review of existing research will introduce a general overview of relevant research in three parts: 1) Studies on regime support in connection to specific issues not included in the further analysis, 2) studies on regime legitimacy which influence this thesis, and 3) an overview of research on socio-economic inequality regarding its role in the political discourse. This chapter shall provide the reader with the necessary information on the current academic discussion, important factors and issues to consider, and extract shortcomings of the existing literature which the following analysis intends to address.

#### **3.1. The Monarchy and Legitimacy Crises in Thailand**

Many scholars on Thai politics take historical-cultural approaches to explain Thailand's political odyssey. What Ferrara accurately describes "unfinished business" is the process of re-strengthening the monarchy and its network to legitimize undemocratic and unconstitutional power-holders, based on a nationalist discourse (Ferrara 2015: 21). Thongchai describes this regain of moral strength of the monarchy in the 1960s, after the establishment of constitutional monarchy in 1932, and its current role as "above politics" (Thongchai 2008: 33), the King as father of the nation or even god-like. According to Anderson, the main reason for Thailand's political instability is the absence of a "decisive break with 'absolutism' fueled by social radicalism and indeed mass nationalism" (Anderson 2014: 40).

The academically unquestioned, dominant role of the monarchy in Thailand's political landscape is not due to its strength as a single institution, but because of the political 'network' it has developed after regaining power. McCargo proposes the term "network monarchy" for describing the strong relation between late King Bhumibol and General Prem Tinsulanonda, head of the Privy Council, as a "para-political institution" (McCargo 2005: 501). The main features of this network are its political decision-making power in times of crises, its role as dominant source of national legitimacy, its agenda-setting and elevating favorable personnel into political power. McCargo shows in his research that during the early 2000s, in times of political crises and lack of legitimacy, the monarchy actively impeded democratization to prevent loss of power (*Ibid.*: 506). Not alone, but especially in connection with the military (Chambers/Napisa 2016: 439) and the constitutional court (Mérieau 2016:

461), the monarchy forged an interdependent network to legitimize their moral power. The inflation of convictions for royal defamation in recent years (Haberkorn 2016: 245) reflects the network's power and that dissent is strongly inhibited. Veerayooth adds that members of the economic and social elite in the country joined the 'network monarchy' and the military, extending its grasp further into society, towards a rather anti-political, anti-democratic and neo-liberal rent-seeking culture (Veerayooth 2016: 500). While the role of the monarchy, the military and its network in legitimizing the political system in Thailand is studied broadly and generally undoubted by academics, the analysis of other (de-)legitimizing factors is rather scarce. Yet, it is important in the Thai context to discuss the monarchy's relevance as a legitimizing institution. Apart from studies on the monarchy, some scholars focus their attention on a specific crisis, such as Southern Thai separatism and religious conflict (see Askew 2010; McCargo 2015). However, most articles miss to address regime support in its broader terms.

### **3.2. General Regime Support in Thailand**

In a historical analysis, McCargo points out three different strategies regimes employed in the past to legitimize their rule. Although existing simultaneously, the strategies have waxed and waned in their importance. While the period of the Cold War was dominated by a discourse of security and the regime as protector, the 1990s were dominated by economic development as a source of regime support. A lack of emphasis on social equality later led to a dominance of a discourse on the degree of public participation from 1997 onwards, characterizing the third strategy (McCargo 2002: 51-61).

Building on McCargo's findings, Dressel proposes an analytical framework considering two different "notions of legitimacy". He argues that a first notion of the state as "stratified paternal-authoritarian" regime, under the omni-present trinity of "Nation, Religion, King", conflicts with a commonly shared second notion of "popular sovereignty as basis for legitimacy" in Thailand (Dressel 2010: 446-447). The second notion of legitimacy here is comparable to McCargo's legitimization strategy of public participation. Dressel's account indicates a constantly strong level of support for the first notion of "Nation, Religion and King", but shifting support for the second notion. While the role of the constitution, government performance and sovereignty of the people play a central role in continuous political debates, it is at the same time perceived by many as a threat to the foundation of

“Nation, Religion, King”. Following Dressel, the tensions between the two different notions of legitimacy are a major reason for political conflict in Thailand (*Ibid.*: 462-463).

Problematic in both articles, by McCargo and Dressel, is their persistent lack of theoretical and empirical foundations. Consequently, this thesis intends to extend especially Dressel’s findings, by adding a quantitative analysis of factors, which might contribute to the instability of support for the second notion of legitimacy, popular sovereignty. Complementary to the literature above, Mikami and Inoguchi, deal with regime support in Thailand more specifically. The authors develop a structural equation model of different variables, using Asian Barometer data, to analyze the influence of populist policies on political attitudes towards governance. Their results show that trust in political institutions from 2002 to 2006 was “almost entirely conditional on populist policies” (Mikami/Inoguchi 2008: 300). Although the authors’ evaluation of regime legitimacy and effectiveness is very comprehensive and provides an enriching insight, the use of a structural equation model with only income and education as basic independent variables is too narrow. Their focus rather lies on the given regimes’ outputs than on general trust levels. Nevertheless, possible findings of this thesis may lead to a necessary re-reading and further extension of Mikami and Inoguchi’s article. Moreover, research from a regional perspective has until now (to the author’s knowledge) not provided detailed accounts on regime legitimacy in Thailand (see Chang et al. 2013). Some regional studies broaden the research by analyzing effects of generational change, general perceptions of democracy or corruption on forming institutional trust. However, none of these studies specifically address socio-economic inequality, increasing the relevance of the following analysis (see Mujani/Liddle 2013; Lu 2013; Chang 2013).

Summarizing, Dressel’s paper on regime legitimacy provides the general analytical framework emphasizing political institutions and the results of Mikami and Inoguchi lead to a necessary, more detailed investigation of institutional trust. Using different methods and control variables, the outcomes of this analysis can either prove or disprove previous findings and extend the rather scarce literature on regime legitimacy in Thailand. Furthermore, this thesis catches up with another, more prominent issue in the contemporary political discourse as well, which the following section deals with.

### **3.3. Socio-economic Inequality and Politics**

In Thai studies, the rather new research focus of the relation between inequality and politics is mostly due to a recent dissemination of socio-economic discrepancies in the political arena. Coherent with the change of legitimization strategies from security and development to public participation, political conflict and regime change in the new millennium is largely influenced by socio-economic imbalances in its diverse forms (Pasuk/Baker 2016: 16-17). “In Thailand, at least until 2001, clientelist politics dominated whether regimes were authoritarian or had come from elections, and this pattern limited representation and hampered democratization” (Hewison 2014: 856). However, this changed in the 2000s, by focusing more on the relatively poor in rural Thailand. Although populist policies had positive effects for the poor, the deeply entrenched socio-economic rift between elite and lower classes could not be eased (*Ibid.*: 854-856). Especially regarding redistribution policies, the Thai political elite seems to be resistant, exemplified by Pasuk’s argument that the 2014 coup against democratically elected Prime minister Yingluck (2011-2014) was based upon critique by the wealthy against redistribution (Pasuk 2016: 420-421).

However, like in the previous literature review on regime legitimacy in Thailand, research on inequality lacks empirical foundations. As Hewison and Pasuk both argue, socio-economic inequality nowadays has increased its importance as a catalyst for political conflict. They base their research on macro-economic data (Pasuk 2016: 407-419) but exclude the opinion of regular citizens. Both research fields miss to make use of existing surveys and the analysis of evaluations by the populace. The aim in this thesis is to bridge the gap and add citizens’ opinions to the analysis of both research fields. Several studies emphasize the role of the rural population in political contest, which has been increasing since the 2000s. Mainly due to labor migration, the internet and rural development, citizens across the country became aware of inequality and their power in political struggles (see Walker 2012; Keyes 2014; McCargo 2017). This work intends to include these voices in a representative, quantitative analysis. The next chapter provides the study of inequality and trust in political institutions with the necessary theoretical foundations.

## **4. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

In coherence with the literature review, this chapter will likewise describe regime legitimacy and inequality, but here the theoretical underpinnings are emphasized. In the beginning, preliminary definitions and demarcations regarding regime typology, legitimacy and political institutions are presented. Then, from a more global perspective, the following sections provide detailed theoretical concepts on political legitimacy, the importance of diffuse and specific regime support and the role of political institutions, added by reflections on the impact of socio-economic inequality on political regimes. The chapter continues with a short evaluation of criticism of the theories used. Finally, the last section clarifies ontological and epistemological standpoints in this thesis.

### **4.1. Regime Typology and Legitimacy**

The oscillation between rather democratic and authoritarian regimes dominates the political discourse in Thailand. Although these terms and categorizations are often being unquestioningly used, distinct lines between the different regime types are hard to draw and a bi-polar categorization is by far out of date. Important to remember here is that political regimes themselves influence the discourse by claiming legitimacy for their own rule. Alagappa, in his account on Southeast Asia, identifies three components of legitimization processes: 1) The political identity in the nation-state, 2) the political regime, and 3) the incumbent government as executive power (Alagappa 1995: 27). The process includes the following features:

In the case of a democratic system [...] the operational referents will include the principles of participation and contestation, the associated institution (the constitution, legal system, political parties, elections, accountable executive and legislature, and independent judiciary), and procedures relating to the acquisition of power through elections and its exercise in accord with constitutional and legal provision (Alagappa 1995: 27)

However, this ideal version of democracy is hard to find, and especially in the region of Southeast Asia, democracy can be a mere façade. The region, and Thailand above all, experienced several democratic rollbacks. Colonization, the Cold War and globalization have destabilized the region, economic development has often been elitist, and in many societies

patrimonialism results in nepotism and scarcity of social uprisings (Betrand 2013: 17-29). Furthermore, the military still plays an important role in societies and politics across the region, civilian control is insufficient (Mietzner 2011: 3-12). Country-specific “communal elites”, such as representatives of religions or the monarchy, still exert enormous para-democratic power in Southeast Asia (Slater 2009:211). Hence, political regimes in the region and Thailand mostly do not fulfill the four main characteristics of democracy:

- 1) Executives and legislatures are chosen through elections that are open, free, and fair; 2) virtually all adults possess the right to vote; 3) political rights and civil liberties, including freedom of the press, freedom of association, and freedom to criticize the government without reprisal, are broadly protected; and 4) elected authorities possess real authority to govern, in that they are not subject to the tutelary control of military or clerical leaders (Levitzky/Way 2002: 53).

Nonetheless, many regimes nowadays are not fully authoritarian as well, but are frequently contested in “1) the electoral arena; 2) the legislature; 3) the judiciary; and 4) the media”, as some democratic tendencies are recognizable in these regimes (Ibid.: 54). Based upon this short review on democracy in Southeast Asia, and especially the case of Thailand, this thesis refrains from bi-polar categorizations in democratic or undemocratic regimes. As chapters two and three have shown, the case of Thailand is extremely ambivalent. In coherence with Mikami and Inoguchi, this analysis does not aim for measuring the quality of democracy in Thailand or categorizing its regime type (Mikami/Inoguchi 2008: 281). Instead, the following chapters will shed light on the evaluation of a specific part of Thailand’s political system by the populace: Its institutions.

## **4.2. Political Institutions**

Before taking a detailed look at the importance of legitimacy and support in political systems, it is necessary to give a broader definition of the dependent variable of the following analysis. A political institution is generally defined as:

... a relatively enduring collection of rules and organized practices, embedded in structures of meaning and resources that are relatively invariant in the face of turnover of individuals and relatively resilient to the idiosyncratic preferences and expectations of individuals and changing external circumstances (March/Olsen 2008: 3).

Acknowledging the large diversity of research on institutions, from various schools to interdisciplinary studies, this thesis takes a step back. The aim is not to study political institutions in Thailand, but to understand how citizens evaluate these institutions. Hence, here institutions are understood relatively old-fashioned as “concrete political institutions, such as the legislature, executive, bureaucracy, judiciary, and the electoral system” (*Ibid.*: 6), without studying much their internal processes. However, it is important to keep in mind that institutions are always embedded in a societal negotiating process, where institutions themselves and their impact, are constantly reconstructed and debated (*Ibid.*), influencing the political discourse. Norris’ theoretical approach later in this chapter will focus on the role of institutions in the political arena, but first it is necessary to understand why regime legitimacy is important.

### **4.3. Political Legitimacy**

For Weber, the state as holder of the monopoly of physical violence, must legitimize its rule over the subjects (Weber 1919: 397). No matter what kind of political regime incumbent, it is *Legitimitätsglaube* that solidifies any rule. Weber distinguishes three different kinds of legitimacy: 1) Customized legitimacy, a rule that has established itself over years and citizens are familiar with, for instance dynastic monarchies; 2) charismatic legitimacy, a rule that is based on the image of a certain person, for instance demagogues or party leaders; and 3) legal legitimacy, a rule that citizens recognize as just and equal, based on common law that forms the foundation of rule (*Ibid.*: 398). Although these forms of legitimacy almost never exist in purity, it is the appropriation and a mixture of these beliefs that form trust in political regimes. The set of different kinds of legitimacy and their rationale primarily defines the structure of the existing regime (Lassman/Speirs 1994: 312).

Strongly influenced by Weber’s analysis of the modern bureaucracy, his theorization of legitimacy must be connected to the bureaucracy and its institutions. “Under modern conditions political success is possible only if the political leader makes full use of bureaucratic techniques of government” (Mommsen 1989: 46). In this context, it is legal legitimacy that sets the foundation for the political system and its institutions, mostly in the form of a constitution. Weber’s notions of customized and charismatic legitimacy are difficult to grasp in modern times. Traditional societal borders disappear and many political systems (parties) are not only represented by single political leaders (Mommsen 1989: 47). Yet,

Weber's main argument that the modern nation state and its political system requires a significant amount of support and belief within its population, remains to be the basis of any analysis of political legitimacy (*Ibid.*: 48-49). Interestingly, Weber saw the equal distribution of goods and opportunities for citizens to get involved into decision-making as conducive for legitimate rule (Weber 1919: 399), a point that will appear later in Acemoglu and Robinson's concept of the role of inequality in political systems. Conclusively, Weber gave important initiatives for further research on regime legitimacy, however, his formulation remains quite narrow. Therefore, the next part deals with a necessary extension of the Weberian concept.

#### **4.4. Diffuse and Specific Support for Political Regimes**

Half a century later than Weber, under the behavioral turn in the social sciences, Easton added an important factor to the study of political legitimacy: The way citizens perceive legitimacy. Whereas Weber had not particularly focused on the perspective of citizens, Easton dramatically expanded the theory of legitimacy of political regimes, emphasizing the communicative processes between the regime and its embedding environment (Easton 1965a: 24-25). Deriving much of his work from Weber, Easton sees legitimacy as a part of system support. Important here is that due to limited space, and the fact that both legitimacy and support cover similar concepts, in the following the terms are used interchangeably (see Easton 1965b: 278-310).

Easton distinguishes two different kinds of system support: Diffuse and specific. The differentiation between the two poles may include some difficulties, though, it is helpful to analyze specific items or institutions as factors conducive for regime legitimacy. Support is specific when citizens can recognize a certain policy outcome, for instance the establishment of basic income, and connect this policy to a specific actor, like politicians, parties or trade unions which advocated this policy (Easton 1965b: 267-268). Easton states that "... support for any of the political objects [actors/institutions] will, in the long run, depend upon the members [citizens] being persuaded that outputs [policies] are in fact meeting their demands ..." (*Ibid.*: 267). Nevertheless, for Easton, specific support is not enough to stabilize regime legitimacy, due to factors like "postponement of benefits", "partial satisfaction of demand" or "time lag" of the specific policy effects (*Ibid.*: 269-270). Thus, he argues that regime legitimacy necessarily needs to be built on diffuse support as well. Diffuse support rests on the belief in trust in, and legitimacy of, the political regime and is necessary to "compensate

for any dissatisfactions at failing to have all demands met” (Ibid.: 273). In real life, not all citizens can have their demands fully satisfied, thus Easton argues that citizens are required to offer a certain amount of “good will” towards actors and institutions of the political regime (Ibid.: 273-276). In times of regime crises, diffuse support can take the role of a stabilizing factor, in case many citizens disagree with the specific outcomes. Both forms of support are multi-dimensional (Easton 1975: 446-447). To easier operationalize the concept of diffuse and specific support, Norris provides a specification of the sources of support on five levels, based on Easton’s concept.

#### **4.5. Institutions and Levels of Support**

As mentioned before, this thesis does not focus on institutions, the dependent variable, but rather on the citizens’ evaluations of these institutions. This focus is coherent with Norris’ framework for the study of diffuse and specific regime support in political systems. She fundamentally contributes to the study of regime support by establishing a general frame for comparative analyses. Therefore, she crystallizes five main levels of support that follow Easton’s view, ordered from diffuse to more specific support:

- “Political community”: The nation-state itself is a necessary condition of any political system, and important for social-capital theories concerned with social trust and civic engagement. Support for the political community is characterized by a sense of belonging to a community, national pride and identity.
- “Core regime principles”: Described here is the idealistic acceptance of principles like freedom, participation, tolerance, respect for legal-institutional rights and the rule of law. This level of support varies from system to system, dependent on historical evolutions of nation-states and its modern constitutions.
- “Regime performance”: This level has been proven difficult to grasp, as it often correlates with general regime principles. It is important to compare incumbent governments to understand the differences in policy outputs and separate them from the second level of support.
- “Regime institutions”: This level aims to represent a realistic view of government, including attitudes towards government, parliament, executive, legal system and police, state, bureaucracy, parties and the military. This can be operationalized by measuring generalized support for the institutions.

- “Political actors”: The specific evaluation and acceptance of individual politicians or actors in the political arena indicates regime support at the highest level (Norris 1999: 10-11).

Although Norris’ framework is based upon democratic regimes, she argues that any kind of regime is threatened or unstable if certain levels lack support. When the gap between the structure of government bodies and political culture grows larger, regimes increasingly must deal with insufficient legitimacy (Almond/Verba 1963; cited from Norris 1999: 2). Norris argues that tensions between ideals and reality normally ignite the rise of critical citizens, as they would for instance protest the incumbent government. Hence, a restructuring of institutions would then be required to reestablish the important connection between government and citizens (Norris 1999: 2-3). Compared to the short-term changes at the level of political actors or regime performance, analyzing trust in institutions allows for a long-term measurement of specific regime support (*Ibid.*: 20-23). “Thus, loss of confidence in institutions may well be a better indicator of public disaffection with the modern world because they are the basic pillars of society. If they begin to crumble, then there is, indeed, cause for concern” (Norris 2011: 29). Focusing on institutions enables a more accurate analysis of the potential gap between political regime and citizens in Thailand. Contrasting with the third and fifth level of support, institutions tend to reflect a rather long-term development within society, since political actors and policies nowadays quickly change and are less neutrally evaluated (Norris 1999: 20). After having established the general theoretical framework of this thesis with political institutions as dependent variable, the next section focuses on theoretical underpinnings explaining the link between inequality and regime support.

#### **4.6. Institutions, Inequality and Contentious Politics**

Whereas Easton and Norris pioneered in theorizing regime support, it is Acemoglu and Robinson’s work that established a necessary extension to the existing literature on political regimes in providing theoretical foundations for the connection between economy and regime type. Based on a rational-actor model, individuals “... evaluate various options, including democracy versus nondemocracy, according to their assessments of their (economic and social) consequences” (Acemoglu/Robinson 2006: 19). Acemoglu and Robinson describe societies in general as divided into a small, rich elite opposed to a larger part of poorer

citizens, inhabiting a conflictual relationship in which social choices and policies are different from elite to lower classes (*Ibid.*: 15). In this conflictual relationship, it depends on which group owns more “de jure or de facto political power” (*Ibid.*: 20), which consequently also defines the regime type. In democracies, most citizens have more de jure and de facto political power, resulting in stronger redistribution policies. In authoritarian regimes, the power instead lies more on the side of the elite (*Ibid.*: 18-19). In this struggle, the authors ascribe institutions an especially important role. “In practice, political institutions play a much more fundamental role than being a simple intermediating variable: they regulate the future allocation of political power between various social groups” (*Ibid.*: 23). Consequently, the struggle between lower classes and the elite is mirrored in a fight about de jure and de facto control over political institutions, enabling a more substantial and sustainable control of the redistribution of resources in the long-term (*Ibid.*: 25).

For this thesis, it is worth taking a more detailed look at two determinants for political change: Intergroup inequality and political institutions. Larger socio-economic inequality within a society incrementally challenges the elite. Among the lower classes, the feeling of inequality can ignite protest, or in other words, decreases trust in the political regime. On the other side, the elite and their wealth normally depend on tax evasion and rents from land ownership and capital investments. They tend to avoid redistribution, but as inequality increases, demands for change by the lower classes increase as well. Acemoglu and Robinson argue that “... the costs of redistributive taxation and democratic politics to the elites and, hence, their aversion to democracy should be generally higher for the elites in a society where the difference in incomes between the elites and the citizens is greater” (*Ibid.*: 36). When demands for the redistribution of wealth by the lower classes rise, repression becomes more likely. Consequently, in societies with higher inequality, unconsolidated regimes, military coups and political instability tend to be more frequently found than in societies with low levels of inequality (*Ibid.*: 36-38). This, in turn, affects the struggle for political institutions. In highly unequal societies, even under nominally democratic regimes, the rich elite is overrepresented in decision-making institutions. Unequal access to institutions can result in abuse or manipulation of power in favor of the elite. Basically, the elite can decide over the de jure and de facto political power on their own terms. For instance, “[i]f the elites have too much power in democracy, democracy will do little to improve the welfare of the majority. In this case, democracy is not a solution to social conflict, and the result will either be revolution or an elite that keeps itself in power through repression” (*Ibid.*: 35). As a result, inequality has

negative effects for the lower classes in any kind of regime, more democratic or more authoritarian, and jeopardizes social cohesion and stability in any country.

#### **4.7. Demarcations of the Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework of this thesis is quite complex, maybe not in depth but in its incorporation of different theories, hence, a couple of aspects need to be clarified. The emphasis in measuring the support for political institutions lies on the evaluations by regular citizens, which contrasts with a large part of the literature on legitimacy focusing on governments and their strategies in maintaining or increasing legitimate rule. The study of political legitimacy has often been criticized for elevating its importance on unstable empirical foundations, as analyzing social relations is far more complex than seeing the state and its institutions as a single unit. Marquez advises to be critical of too narrow definitions of legitimacy, since collective action problems, lack of alternatives to incumbent regimes, individual self-interest and short-term situational changes may look like stable trust in social order but are in fact not indicating ‘real’ trust (Marquez 2016: 27-30). Furthermore, Marxist theorists criticize the focus of legitimacy studies on the state, who instead emphasize the historical evolution of class conflict and capitalist power maintenance (Barker 1990: 21-25), or in Gramsci’s terms, the state as “instrument for adjusting civil society to the economic structure” (Bates 1975: 358). Nonetheless, the study of political support can provide interesting insights, as it analyzes 1) “observable relations of government”, 2) the important role it plays in social life as a form of “common sense”, which can stabilize societies, and 3) a base of “opposing unacceptable regimes” (Barker 1990: 14-15). This thesis does not aim at delivering new theoretical approaches of political legitimacy, but rather intends to provide a missing link between inequality and regime support. It follows Barker’s argument in analyzing observable relations of government, setting them into the context of society by evaluating citizen’s opinions and contributing to the academic and public political discussion in Thailand.

Likewise, research on the relation between economy, socio-economic inequality and their relation to regime type is debatable since coherent empirical findings are missing. Pengl convincingly criticizes that some comparative studies conclude that inequality has negative effects on democratization, however, depending on the data and kind of measurement, other studies show positive effects (Pengl 2013: 3). For instance, when land income is compared to

capital income, studies can show positive results. Przeworski et al. find different effects for different regime types: "... it appears that both regimes [democratic and authoritarian] are threatened when the rich get relatively richer, but only democracy is vulnerable when the poor get relatively poorer" (Przeworski et al. 2000: 121). Next to that, questions of conceptualization of democracy, type of economy or important actors influence the shape of the results (Pengl 2013: 4-7). That does not imply that studying the relation between inequality and democratization cannot make sense or add important knowledge. Researchers need to be aware of possible shortcomings of their choice of method, data and concepts. Thus, the results of this work need to be interpreted carefully, set into context, and may, in the case of Thailand, indicate deficits of theories and methods.

#### **4.8. Ontology and Epistemology**

Ontological and epistemological positions "shape what we study as social scientists, how we study it and what we think we can claim as a result of that study" (Furlong/Marsh 2010: 189). Although lines between formerly robust standpoints are continuously blurred, this thesis leans towards realism. Blurred standpoints refer here to the fact that realism is ontologically closer to positivism, but epistemologically closer to interpretivism. Realism shares with positivism its ontological basis of foundationalism, the viewpoint that human knowledge does not affect that the world itself exists (Niiniluoto 2002: 21). Following a rather natural science approach, causal explanations of social phenomena are plausible, however, not all structures are directly observable. This is the key characteristic that parts realism from positivism, there is an important difference between the real phenomenon and its outside representation (Furlong/Marsh 2010: 204). Realism evolved historically from Marxist approaches and interpretivist critique of positivism, especially the viewpoint that social phenomena have underlying structures. Its advantages derive from a relative openness and flexibility regarding methods, as both quantitative and qualitative opportunities are feasible. However, this flexibility also results in vulnerability for critique from both sides. Positivists criticize realism for acknowledging underlying structures. Interpretivists criticize realism for acknowledging structures that are independent of social interaction. In general, voices have raised denying the ability to combine positivist and interpretivist approaches, against the backdrop of their ontological and epistemological foundations (Ibid.: 205). Defending against this critique, realists propose that "[w]e need to identify and understand both the external 'reality' and the social construction of that 'reality' if we are to explain the relationship between social

phenomena” (Ibid.). It is important for researchers to clearly distinguish and acknowledge their own epistemological and ontological standpoints, because these underpinnings can be seen rather as “a skin not a sweater” (Ibid.: 209-210). Thus, the outcomes presented at the end of this work must be reflected upon from a realist perspective. On one side, it must be acknowledged that unobservable, underlying structures influence the respondent’s view and evaluation in the interviews used in the following analysis. Yet, these evaluations are plausible representations of social phenomena and therefore can have causal implications. In this chapter on the theoretical framework, the realist perspective is represented as well. While noticing the effect of inequality on regime change as causal relation, trust into political institutions is based on specific support and its underlying structures. It is essential to highlight that this thesis is focusing on the observable part of social phenomena.

## **5. METHODOLOGY**

The last chapter before presenting the study's findings introduces the 'toolbox' to operationalize and measure the data to answer the proposed research questions. The first section provides an overview of the Asian Barometer data collection procedures, as well as evaluations of validity and reliability of the data. According to that, the following two sections will deal with operationalizing the main and further control variables of the analysis. This will be done considering existing literature on the topic and comparing techniques and operationalizations in other studies. A discussion on the method of ordered logit regression, delimitations of the statistical analysis and ethical considerations conclude this chapter.

### **5.1. Data Collection**

Statistically analyzing datasets collected in the four Asian Barometer survey waves for Thailand should provide answers to the proposed research questions. The data for these four waves was collected by comparable questionnaires, with slight alternations in each wave. All surveys include an interview guideline of 150 to 170 thematical questions on the economy, social capital, trust in institutions, partisanship and participatory involvement in politics, traditional as well as authoritarian and democratic values. Additionally, the questionnaires investigate around 30 socio-economic background variables. In this work, relevant variables according to the operationalization of the research questions are included, for instance: Trust in political institutions like the government or the parliament, and additionally, the monthly household income and economic evaluations as main variables. As control variables, socio-economic background information is inserted in the model, and checks for authoritarian and democratic values. The aim in general is to keep the statistical model parsimonious and to be careful adding not too many variables to keep explanatory strength.

The Asian Barometer is a comparative survey set on politics and socio-economic issues across countries in Asia, orchestrated from the National Taiwan University, launched in 2000 (AB 2017a). Datasets, also the ones used in this thesis, are openly available (AB 2017b). The Global Barometer Network is mainly funded by the World Bank, in collaboration with the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance in Sweden (AB 2017c). The actual data collection for the national survey wave is conducted by local research institutes, as the King Prajadhipok Institute in Thailand.

According to the regulations of the Asian Barometer, high standards of data collection in each national sample are guaranteed. This includes random sampling, which is in Thailand weighted according to the population differences in the five major regions of Bangkok, North, Northeast, Center and South, and samples of around 1,500 participants in each survey which allows for probabilistic generalization (AB 2001: 7-8). The Asian Barometer is different from global surveys, since it highlights the importance of the local language, cultural context and conducting face-to-face interviews in a comfortable environment (Minato 2008: 166-173). The fieldworkers are professionally trained, retranslation is blind and corrected by several professional translators. All these measures underlie tight quality control, additionally, interviewers visit participants again and randomly recheck for the correctness of the given answers (AB 2017d). By setting these high standards in the collection process, the Asian Barometer enhances the validity and reliability of the data. Through test and retest procedures, stability of the measurement is improved, constant comparison and observation by trained researchers enhances internal reliability and guarantee inter-observer consistency (Bryman 2012: 169). Pretesting the questionnaire in several occasions helps to increase both measurement reliability and validity. Only when the data collection process follows these high standards, the results can be inferred to the whole population (*Ibid.*: 175-177). Since this thesis compares the relation between inequality and support for institutions and analyzes trends for all Thai citizens, the Asian Barometer data is a reliable source and of high utility, represented as well by frequent usage by established researchers (see AB 2017e). Being sure that this data has frequently been used elsewhere, the data and work on it has thus been peer-reviewed, is another helpful factor in assuring that the data reaches high quality standards. A final point to make is that this kind of internationalized English data enhances the replicability and transparency of the analysis, it can easily be reproduced and controlled for (Bryman 2012: 175-177).

Relying on data conducted by local institutes for Thailand only, has advantages and disadvantages. On one side, possible influences by the government to improve the findings are reduced in regional, comparative surveys. On the other side, Thai data eventually fits the vernacular context even better, enhancing representative results. Due to its formal limitations, but also financial and language barriers, making use of several datasets is unfeasible in this study, thus, only one perspective on socio-economic inequality and institutional trust is provided here. Nonetheless, the results still provide a foundation for further research, both quantitatively and qualitatively, to enrich a contemporarily rather understudied field. Future

research can control and extend this study's results, preferably from a more local perspective. The following two sections elucidate the variable selection process for dependent and independent factors related in the analysis.

## **5.2. Operationalization of the Main Variables**

*Institutions:* In the broader literature, quantitative research on institutions and inequality uses different measurements. For instance, it depends what kind of institutions are studied and how. Several studies use composite indices, in which many political institutions are related with the explanatory variables at once, after pursuing principal component analyses or other methods to measure the correlation between the single institutions. Composite indices make models more parsimonious, however, evaluations of individual institutions contain more explanatory strength.

According to Medve-Bálint and Boda and their multi-level regression analysis comparing central to eastern Europe, personal income has a much lower positive influence on a composite institutional trust index than the socio-tropic evaluation of the national economy (Medve-Bálint/Boda 2014: 438). Mishler and Rose estimate similar results in their regression analysis of a composite index of trust in political institutions in Eastern Europe (Mishler/Rose 2001: 52). When these indices are separated, and individual institutions analyzed, studies indicate surprising results. From a global perspective, lower income groups tend to negatively evaluate parliament and courts compared with higher income groups (Fischer/Torgler 2007: 28-29). This trend is confirmed by comparative ordinal regression analyses of new and old democracies. Socio-tropic indicators of economic satisfaction positively influence trust in institutions at all levels. Additionally, personal income has similar effects in Latin America and Eastern Europe, while established western democracies show negative effects of income (Catterberg/Moreno 2005: 44). Contrasting to that, the case of parliament evaluations in Europe shows opposite effects. Employing a linear regression model, van der Meer finds negative influences of personal income and no influence of socio-tropic evaluations (van der Meer 2010: 531).

This short review demonstrates that differences exist between composite indices and the measurement of individual institutions. The question of how to operationalize the variables is in this thesis mostly determined by theory and the characteristics of the data. First, this study

intends to analyze the main political institutions defined in the theoretical framework. In accordance with the data the following five different institutions from the Asian Barometer section on trust in institutions were chosen: Government, Parliament, Parties, Courts and Military. The Asian Barometer only included the Constitutional Court as variable in one survey wave, thus it is excluded. Furthermore, variables like trust in civil society organizations, media and the police are omitted as they are not part of Alagappa's definition. In contrast, the military is included due to its important role in Thailand's political system. All these variables are measured on a four-point scale.

Principal components analyses are a common way to clarify whether composite indices are feasible (Medve-Bálint/Boda 2014: 428-429). Preliminary principal components analyses by the author for all Asian Barometer datasets have shown that evaluations of the government, parties and parliament could be computed as a composite index, but that courts and military would have to be excluded from this. The special role of the military in Thailand results in the necessity to include it in the model, though, this variable continuously fails to reach the minimum value of 0.7 in the analyses (see Appendix 4). These outcomes led to the decision to refrain from computing a composite political institutions index in this study. Instead, individual regression analyses for each institution are preferred. Although less parsimonious, this way retains the opportunity to compare results between individual institutions.

*Inequality:* Regarding the main independent variable, a similar strategy is used to point out which way to operationalize inequality so that it fits data and theory best. As mentioned above, most studies include socio-tropic and individual evaluations of economic situations, but also personal income as explanatory variables. It is important to remember that only personal income directly reflects inequality. Splitting up the data on income in quintiles and relating them to institutions is quite common in the broader literature (Easterly 2001: 320-322; Pengl 2013: 3). In the datasets, the first wave did not measure such a computation, but divided incomes into five fixed categories. Thus, in the first wave the income variable must be interpreted differently. However, all other survey waves have included an income variable already computed into quintiles. Furthermore, this thesis adds more indirect evaluations of the household and national economies as reference variables to measure inequality. This is in line with most studies covering the same topic. Previous research in Asia found strong differences between these socio-tropic and egocentric variables, which this work controls for as well (Huang et al. 2013: 157-158).

*Time Effect:* Finally, the availability of the four different survey waves allows for evaluating possible changes of institutional trust over time (see van der Meer 2010; Ananyev/Guriev 2016). Panel analyses could have provided more comprehensive results regarding longitudinal research; however, the Asian Barometer surveys do not use the same cohort in each wave. Yet, this thesis compares the different survey waves to provide at least trends for answering the sub-research question on time trends in Thailand (Bryman 2012: 313). After concluding the description of the main variables, the next section presents added control variables.

### **5.3. Determining Explanatory Variables**

*Socio-Economic Background:* In this study, control variables mostly derive from comparable studies, but also from Thailand's political history. First and foremost, typical control variables like in any quantitative study in the social sciences comprise gender, age and education. Thailand's recent political conflict indicates a strong regional component; therefore, origin is also included. In the first and last survey waves, a regional variable already exists and comprises five parts: Bangkok, North, Northeast, Central and South. Survey waves two and three only offer a binary variable of rural or urban location. Although this difference decreases the comparability between all surveys, this can still highlight an important underlying factor shaping institutional trust in Thailand. The metric variables of age and years of formal education have been tested for curvilinearity, the results are noted in the analysis in case they significantly contribute to shaping institutional trust.

*Democratic and Authoritarian Values:* Finally, an important and influential factor is included in the model as well: Political attitudes and values. On one side, preference for democracy is an indicator for general trust in institutions perceived as democratic. On the other side, a high level of authoritarian values usually results in less trust in institutions perceived as democratic (Krieckhaus et al. 2014: 144-145). The Asian Barometer measures many indicators for democratic and authoritarian values. Like for political institutions, also here preliminary principal components analyses by the author provided the required insight in the datasets to include only the most relevant variables, thus making the model more parsimonious (see Appendix 4). Considering the four survey waves and question-sets on democratic and authoritarian values, only variables are included with most correlations with other variables, thus grasping much of the variance. The outcomes show that for democratic values, two

variables should be included: The evaluation of the satisfaction with the way how democracy works in Thailand and the general preference for democracy as regime type. For authoritarian values, the agreement with the statement ‘If people have too many different ways of thinking, society will be chaotic’ is the single variable included, showing most correlations with other variables across all survey waves. Added to the tests for curvilinearity of metric variables, the main explanatory variables are also tested for meaningful interrelations. In case they significantly contribute to the findings, they are noted in the analysis.

*Omitted Variables:* A factor that cannot be satisfactorily inserted in the model used for this thesis is inter-personal trust. Although previous studies show that institutional and individual trust levels are positively correlated (Mishler/Rose 2001:41; Fisher et al. 2011: 277). Regarding this, the Asian Barometer does not dedicate a full-scale question to inter-personal trust. Instead, the question is a highly biased, binary question in the way that people must choose between general trust in other people or no trust in other people at all. Since this question does not allow for a detailed evaluation on different degrees, this study does not cover inter-personal trust. Further research must investigate the relation between personal and institutional trust in Thailand elsewhere.

Additionally, the models avoid controlling for nationalist sentiments (López-Calva et al. 2012: 13), because the literature review indicated that support for the national community is sufficiently sustained already. Nationalist discourses are used on both sides in Thailand’s political conflict, and do not directly relate to inequality. For similar reasons, alternative explanatory variables that are inserted in other models, such as religion and unemployment are not included (Mishler/Rose 2001: 51). They were simply disregarded as they not directly influence institutional trust or are indirectly represented in the income and economic variables, thus keeping the model more parsimonious and not risking over-fit. The last section of this chapter further reflects on the choice of variables used.

In the following, first all dependent and independent variables are connected to the respective interview questions and answering possibilities, and below, Table 1 gives a comprehensive overview of all variables, codes in each survey wave and their scale measurement:

- Dependent variables: *Trust in the Courts, the National Government, Political Parties, Parliament, the Military* (1=A great deal; 2=Quite a lot; 3=Not very much; 4=None at all).
- Independent variables: *Region* (1=Bangkok; 2=Central; 3=North; 4=Northeast; 5=South) or *Rural-Urban* (survey waves two and three), *Gender* (1=male; 2=female), *Years of Formal Education* (Survey wave two includes ten education levels), *Income* (1=0-1,000; 2=1,001-5,000; 3=5,001-10,000; 4=10,001-20,000; 5=20,001 Baht and more in the first wave, other waves include income quintiles), *National Economy* (“How would you rate the overall economic condition today?” 1=very good; 2=good; 3=so so; 4=bad; 5=very bad), *Household Economy* (“As for your family, how would you rate your economic situation today?” 1=very good; 2=good; 3=so so; 4=bad; 5=very bad), *Authoritarian Values* (“If people have too many ways of thinking, society will be chaotic”: 1=strongly agree; 2=somewhat agree; 3=somewhat disagree; 4=strongly disagree) *Democratic Values* (“Satisfaction with the way democracy works in our country”: 1=not at all satisfied; 2=not very satisfied; 3=fairly satisfied; 4=very satisfied; “What comes closer to your opinion”: 1=under some circumstances authoritarian can be preferable; 2=for people like me it doesn’t matter; 3=democracy is always preferable)

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Wave 1</b>	<b>Wave 2</b>	<b>Wave 3</b>	<b>Wave 4</b>	<b>Scale</b>
National Government	Q008	Q008	Q008	Q9	Ordinal
Parliament	Q010	Q010	Q010	Q11	Ordinal
Parties	Q009	Q009	Q009	Q10	Ordinal
Courts	Q007	Q007	Q007	Q8	Ordinal
Military	Q012	Q012	Q012	Q13	Ordinal
Region/Rural-Urban	Region	Level 3 (Rural-Urban)	Level 3 (Rural-Urban)	Region/Level	Categorical
Gender	Se002	Se002	Se002	Se2	Categorical
Actual Age	Se003a	Se003	Se003a	Se3_2	Metric
(Years of) Education	Se005a	Se005 (degrees)	Se005a	Se5a	Metric

Income	Se009	Se009	Se013	Se14	Metric
National Economy	Q001	Q001	Q001	Q1	Metric
Household Economy	Q004	Q004	Q004	Q4	Metric
Authoritarian Values	Q139	Q139	Q147	Q148	Ordinal
Satisfaction with How Democracy Works	Q098	Q089	Q089	Q92	Ordinal
Preference for Democracy	Q117	Q117	Q124	Q125	Categorical

Table 1: Variables included in the regression models, their code in the questionnaires and the respective scale measurement.

#### 5.4. Ordinal Logistic Regression

Since the following analysis is reliant on the Asian Barometer questionnaires, the formulation of questions and choice of scales starkly influence the analytical model. The dependent variable of institutional trust is measured on an ordinal scale with four indicators. Independent and control variables are large in number and diverse in scales, as nominal, ordinal as well as interval scales need to be integrated. Since linear regression models only apply for metric dependent variables, logistic regression models are opted here for, enabling to analyze non-metrical variables through logit transformation (Everitt 2010: 117-119). In difference to binary regressions, ordinal regressions take categorical answering options into account, and indicate the probabilities of the dependent variable's values lying below or equal to a specific threshold. The statistical program used, SPSS (IBM 2016), produces an output indicating three thresholds as constants when the dependent variable has four values (Orme/Combs-Orme 2009: 125-128).

Ordinal logistic regression comprises the advantages of being able to use categorical dependent variables and several diverse independent variables at once. This model is normally calculated under the proportional odds assumption, which means that the effects of independent variables on the ordinal outcome must be the same at each threshold (Agresti 2002: 275-277). On one hand, the proportional odds option allows for computing more

parsimonious models. On the other hand, the proportional odds assumption does not hold often (Harrell 2015: 313), but there are some strategies to circumvent this problem: The most comprehensive approach is a generalized ordered logit model, which can accurately measure independent variables in the degree they vary at certain thresholds. Whereas the proportional odds model uses a common odds ratio, the generalized ordered logit model can react to these differences (Williams 2016: 19). The developers of SPSS have not yet included an option for using generalized ordered logit models. In fact, other programs can calculate these models more appropriately (Liu 2009: 640-644), however, due to restricted financial resources this research is reliant on SPSS. Hence, in case the proportional odds assumption is violated, a different but still valuable method is used. When odds are not proportional, three different dummy variables are computed, turning the ordinal original dependent variable into three binary variables, which then will be related in a binary logistic regression model with the same explanatory variables. This method is relatively easy to pursue and can indicate which variables at which threshold are over- or underrepresented by a common odds ratio (Peterson/Harrel 1990: 205-207). By scanning the outcomes of the binary models, “... users of the proportional odds model can evaluate the aptness of the model while gaining added insight into the complexities of the data” (Brant 1990: 1176). Therefore, in this thesis, binary regression models will be computed if the proportional odds assumption is violated. Afterwards, the single explanatory variables which break the assumption are analyzed regarding their individual odds ratios. When the average odds ratio from the binary regression is similar to the common odds ratio from the ordinal model, the former model can be accepted. When the average odds ratio diverges significantly from the ordinal model, this independent variable must be excluded from the discussion (O’Connell 2006: 35-36).

Regarding the interpretation of the results, the regression outputs in SPSS contain three thresholds of the dependent variables at the very top. Following this are the estimates for all explanatory variables, metric and categorical. The values noted in the table are logits, which need to be exponentiated for a clearer interpretation, however, they already hint at slope and strength of the individual independent variables. Exponentiating the logits leads to the odds ratio, expressing higher or lower odds for reaching stronger trust in institutions. By taking the odds ratio, subtracting 1 and multiplying this by 100 illustrates the in- or decreases of the odds as percentage. For metric explanatory variables, this means an in- or decrease in odds each additional value step. For categorical variables, the odds always must be referred to the

baseline category, which is expressed as ‘Constant’ in the table and has no effect on the parameter estimates. In general, only significant results are interpreted.

Conclusively, ordinal logistic regression is only one of many statistical models. Yet, it is parsimonious, fits the data and can produce significant results for answering the research questions. In general, there is no right or wrong in choosing one model over the other, but it must be made clear and replicable. Controlling the results by using different models can enhance the quality of the outcomes, especially measurement and construct validity (Bryman 2012: 47). Thus, Appendix 2 provides all necessary materials to re-run the models and check for their short-comings (John 2010: 280). Finally, all statistical models retain a certain amount of inexplicability and errors. It is incrementally important to remember that, although referring to the whole Thai population, the results of this thesis do not necessarily apply to everyone in the same way. They express probabilities, not facts.

## **5.5. Ethical Considerations**

This research mainly relies on secondary data. The Asian Barometer ensures that the conduction of interviews for their datasets follows high ethical standards (AB 2017c). These standards (e.g. consent, anonymity, secrecy) are in line with the ethical guidelines of the Swedish Research Council (SRC 2017: 40-41). Although this research uses secondary data only, it intends to provide transparency at all times, in order to increase reliability and replicability of the analysis by attaching all syntax files (see Appendix 2) and outcomes. By discussing the findings, providing alternative explanations and referring to existing literature, subjectivity is reduced, but not completely unavoidable. Nonetheless, the interpretation of the results remains relatively subjective, like the selection of variables. To reduce the risk of misinterpretation, this thesis intends to rely on previous research and applies neutral language to avoid any discrimination against others, being aware that as a white, heterosexual man, the author is a member of the most privileged class in society (see Letherby 2003: Ch. 1). The use of secondary data somewhat reduces cultural bias of an individual non-Thai author working on Thailand. In addition, this research aims to include works from scholars of Thai and foreign origin, as well as both sexes as much as possible. The shrinking academic freedom and tense political situation in Thailand also requires the use of neutral language and objectivity to not take sides or harm anyone (Bryman 2012: 149-150).

## **6. RESULTS**

The following sections provide the results of the ordered logistic regressions for each of the five institutions according to survey wave. Each section presents the general trust levels for the political institutions and information on the explanatory strength of the models as well as measurement validity. Then, explanatory variables and their effects on institutional trust are displayed. Beginning with inequality and followed by the control variables, the last part points out significant interactions. For descriptive statistics of all variables included and correlations between them please see Appendix 3.

### **6.1. First Survey Wave (2002)**

*Model-Fit:* The regression models for all institutions significantly explain the variance better than an intercept-only model and increase the explained variance of trust in institutions between 11% to 16%. Three of five models fit the data well, but all regressions violate the proportional odds assumption. In the case of the government and the military, region must be omitted as explanatory variable as it violates the assumption. Satisfaction with how democracy works has to be excluded from interpreting the results for the military and the parliament.

*General Trust Levels:* One year after Thaksin Shinawatra became Prime Minister of Thailand and the political system could be described as rather democratic, trust in institutions in general was relatively high. Government and courts reach around 70% of trust when positive answers are combined. Parties and parliament are generally less trusted, with about 50% and 60% each. By far the most trusted institution is the military with 80% of the Thai citizens evaluating it positively (see Figure 3).



Figure 3: General Trust Levels per Institution in Valid Percent: Survey Wave 1 in 2002

*Inequality and Institutions:* Analyzing the outcomes of the regression regarding inequality, the results are mixed. A change from a lower to a higher income category significantly reduces the odds of trusting the parliament, parties and military between 11,4% and 13,5%. Pessimistic socio-tropic evaluations of the national economy have a negative effect as well, reducing the odds for trusting the government about 37,5%, for parliament, parties and courts by 18,5% and 25%. Likewise, assessing the household economy pessimistically, the odds for trusting the parliament and parties decrease by 20% and 18%. These results indicate that inequality influences the trust in all institutions. Whereas negatively evaluating economic variables results in less trust, less income tends to increase trust.

*Standard Control Variables:* Other explanatory variables significantly explain variance of trust but differ a lot in their influenceability. Identifying as male reduces the odds of trusting parties by about 20%, each additional year of age reduces the odds of trusting the military by 1%. Education has similar effects, reducing the odds for having trust in parties and the military by about 5% per additional year of education. Furthermore, the analysis indicates a strong effect of regional origin on institutional trust. For instance, being from central Thailand increases the odds of trusting the parliament by 65% compared with the South as constant. The Northeast only reaches a 7% increase. Similar differences are observed for trust in the courts. Living in Bangkok leads to a 161% increase of the odds, contrasting to the Northeast with only 60%. However, regarding political parties, the Northeast here has the highest increase in odds with 27%. Regional differences are quite pronounced in the evaluation of

trust in political institutions. Bangkok sticks out as the capital city, almost always differing from other parts of the country, observable in Table 2.

*Political Values:* When looking at democratic and authoritarian values, the picture is mixed as well. The results for regime preference are mostly insignificant, only when authoritarianism is preferred, the odds for trusting the parliament decrease by 38%. Instead, satisfaction with how democracy works in Thailand mostly provides meaningful results. Being not at all satisfied with the state of democracy accounts for a decrease of the odds of trusting parties, government and the courts between 92% and 82%. In line with that, authoritarian values show opposite effects on trusting the government and the courts, leading to an increase in the odds from 79% to 90%. In this analysis, democratic and authoritarian values show the expected outcomes. Evaluating the way democracy works in Thailand negatively, leads to lower trust in the institutions representing the political system. Likewise, strong authoritarian values lead to more trust in the central decision-making institution and the courts.

*Interactions:* Significant interactions between explanatory variables remain rather weak in this survey wave. In the case of trust in parties, there is a positive effect of education and coming from Central or Northeastern Thailand, increasing odds by 47% and 37%. For trust in the courts, there is a similar effect for Northern and Northeastern Thailand, combined with income group and household economy evaluations, increasing the odds by around 29% in each region. Having trust in the military shows relevant effects. A good evaluation of the national economy and more years of education lead to a decrease in odds by 17%, but when the household economy is added in the interaction, the effect becomes positive with an increase of 5%. When including the personal economic status, trust in the military rises.

<b>Thresholds between:</b>	<b>Government</b>	<b>Parliament</b>	<b>Parties</b>	<b>Courts</b>	<b>Military</b>
No Trust or else	-5,487**	-4,250**	-5,222**	-4,437**	-5,596**
No and not very much Trust or else	-2,278**	-1,655**	-2,316**	-1,684**	-3,306**
No to quite a lot of Trust or else	0,355	0,723	-0,013	0,650	-0,735
<b>Control Variables:</b>					
Male	-0,041	-0,116	-0,235*	0,092	0,113
Female	Constant	Constant	Constant	Constant	Constant
Age	0,005	0,006	0,001	0,001	-0,10*
Education	-0,016	-0,017	-0,048**	0,015	-0,047**
Region=Bangkok	0,476*	0,067	-0,389	0,961**	-0,335
Region=Central	0,864**	0,974**	0,080	0,392	-0,178
Region=North	0,696**	0,557**	0,240	0,659**	0,393
Region=Northeast	1,111**	0,499*	0,649**	0,471*	0,324
Region=South	Constant	Constant	Constant	Constant	Constant
<b>Inequality:</b>					
Income	-0,034	-0,121*	-0,135*	-0,096	-0,145**
National Economy	-0,469**	-0,204**	-0,286**	-0,252**	-0,036
Household Economy	-0,166	-0,224*	-0,196*	-0,089	-0,047
<b>Preference for Democracy:</b>					
“Authoritarianism can be preferable”	0,053	-0,479**	-0,121	0,019	-0,322
“For people like me it doesn’t matter”	0,498	-0,183	-0,069	0,022	0,078
“Democracy is always preferable”	Constant	Constant	Constant	Constant	Constant
<b>Satisfaction with How Democracy Works:</b>					
“Not at all satisfied”	-2,155**	-2,320**	-2,482**	-1,745**	-2,410**
“Not very satisfied”	-1,268**	-0,949**	-1,004**	-1,601**	-0,943**
“Fairly satisfied”	-0,523**	-0,282*	-0,396**	-0,236	-0,516**
“Very satisfied”	Constant	Constant	Constant	Constant	Constant
<b>Pluralism Makes Society Chaotic:</b>					
“Strongly agree”	0,582**	0,318	0,346	0,643**	0,256
“Somewhat agree”	0,167	0,214	0,067	0,193	-0,351
“Somewhat disagree”	0,012	-0,027	-0,134	0,027	-0,405
“Strongly disagree”	Constant	Constant	Constant	Constant	Constant
<b>Variance Explained (Pseudo R-Square):</b>					
Nagelkerke	0,161	0,113	0,163	0,109	0,148
Cox and Snell	0,143	0,101	0,147	0,097	0,131
<b>Measurement:</b>					
Intercept only – Final Model	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000
Goodness of Fit - Pearson	0,011	0,293	0,004	0,062	0,002
Proportional Odds Assumption	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000

Table 2: Results of the Ordered Logistic Regression for Survey Wave 1. Notes: \* = 95% Significance Level, \*\* = 99% Significance Level, Values are Estimated Log-odds, Rounded to the Third Decimal

## 6.2. Second Survey Wave (2006)

*Model-Fit:* The second regression model includes the same explanatory variables, only the regional variable is substituted by a binary factor for rural or urban origin. Like the first wave, all regression models significantly explain the variance of trust in institutions better than an intercept-only model, and three of five models fit the data well. The explanatory strength of the models has increased in the second wave, by explaining between 12% to 22% of the variance. All models violate the proportional odds assumption; hence, satisfaction with how democracy works must be excluded from the analysis of the government, parties and the courts. For the military, authoritarian values must be omitted.

*General Trust Levels:* Shortly after the military coup and the toppling of popular Prime Minister Thaksin in 2006, general evaluations of trust in political institutions changed. The government only won the trust of around 65% of the population, parliament and parties could gain slightly more trust with 65% and 57%. Trust levels for the military remained relatively stable around 80%, while trust in courts jumped at the military level (see Figure 4).

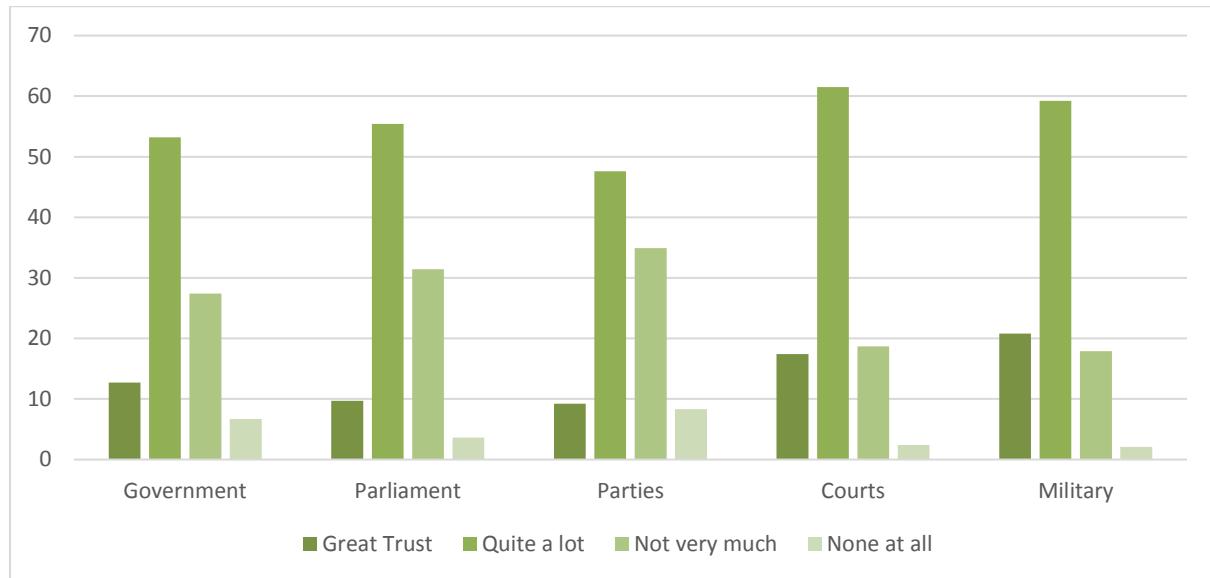


Figure 4: General Trust Levels per Institutions in Valid Percent: Survey Wave 2 in 2006

*Inequality and Institutions:* Income has significant negative effects on the government, parliament and parties. A higher income quintile results in 13% to 19% lower odds of reaching higher trust levels. Like the first survey wave, positive evaluations of the national and household economy lead to higher trust in political institutions. For the government, parliament and parties, this increase in odds lies between 26% and 67%. Additionally, better

evaluations of the national economy let the odds for trusting the courts grow by 48%. The second survey wave indicates that higher incomes result in less trust in institutions, in contrast, better economic evaluations reach higher trust levels. The richest income quintile therefore tends to trust political institutions the least.

*Standard Control Variables:* Checking for age, gender, and education in this survey wave does not provide significant test results. Only urban location as factor contributes to trust in parties, the courts and the military, by increasing the odds between 45% and 139%. Trust in parties, the courts and the military are strongly related to urban origin, as shown in Table 3.

*Political Values:* Controlling for democratic and authoritarian values, the change from a rather democratic regime to military rule is marked significantly. Citizens indifferent to regime type trust the government and parliament less, with declining odds of 68% and 57% respectively. If citizens answer with a preference for authoritarianism, odds decrease for all institutions between 33% and 57%, with the strongest declines for the government and parties. Controlling for authoritarian values shows surprising results, as strongly agreeing with the statement that pluralism makes society chaotic increases the odds for trusting all institutions but the military around 130%. These results seem to be a bit contradictory, since political parties should receive less trust if authoritarian values were high. Likewise, the question on satisfaction with the way democracy works in Thailand is revealing. When citizens are not very satisfied with democracy, odds for trust in the parliament decrease by 63%, however, more interesting is that the odds for trusting the military significantly decline at all levels even when fairly satisfied with democracy. The odds here decrease by 72% to 38% compared with the constant.

*Interactions:* Statistically significant interactions between explanatory variables mostly comprise three-way interactions of urban location, income and assessments of the national or household economy. For the government, parties and courts, odds for more trust increase between 20% and 48%. Contrasting to that, a two-way interaction between urban location and income has a strong negative effect on the odds for trusting parties, with a percentage decline of 74%. While positive evaluations of the economy are associated with positive trust in institutions, there is a steep decline of the odds for trusting parties when income grows.

<b>Thresholds between:</b>	<b>Government</b>	<b>Parliament</b>	<b>Parties</b>	<b>Courts</b>	<b>Military</b>
No Trust or else	-1,018	-1,484**	-0,411	-2,456**	-4,270**
No and not very much Trust or else	1,263*	1,362**	2,066**	-0,031	-1,699**
No to quite a lot of Trust or else	4,278**	4,597**	5,020	3,234**	1,306*
<b>Control Variables:</b>					
Male	-0,062	-0,098	-0,150	0,013	0,150
Female	Constant	Constant	Constant	Constant	Constant
Age	0,007	0,004	0,007	0,000	0,004
Education	-0,035	-0,017	-0,038	-0,048	-0,039
Urban	0,311	0,191	0,373*	0,680**	0,872**
Rural	Constant	Constant	Constant	Constant	Constant
<b>Inequality:</b>					
Income	-0,162**	-0,143*	-0,209**	-0,025	0,077
National Economy	0,457**	0,406**	0,515**	0,394**	0,146
Household Economy	0,302**	0,326**	0,232*	0,180	0,005
<b>Preference for Democracy:</b>					
“Authoritarianism can be preferable”	-0,779**	-0,569**	-0,843**	-0,395**	-0,474**
“For people like me it doesn’t matter”	-1,129**	-0,843*	-0,655	-0,357	-0,068
“Democracy is always preferable”	Constant	Constant	Constant	Constant	Constant
<b>Satisfaction with How Democracy Works:</b>					
“Not at all satisfied”	-1,414**	-0,773	-1,438**	-0,870	-1,272**
“Not very satisfied”	-1,344**	-0,988**	-1,262**	-0,805**	-0,713**
“Fairly satisfied”	-0,115	-0,239	-0,071	-0,330*	-0,478**
“Very satisfied”	Constant	Constant	Constant	Constant	Constant
<b>Pluralism Makes Society Chaotic:</b>					
“Strongly agree”	0,832*	0,832*	1,240**	0,768*	0,001
“Somewhat agree”	0,314	0,461	0,785*	0,247	-0,677*
“Somewhat disagree”	0,101	0,609	0,798*	0,086	-1,032**
“Strongly disagree”	Constant	Constant	Constant	Constant	Constant
<b>Variance Explained (Pseudo R-Square):</b>					
Nagelkerke	0,215	0,145	0,200	0,122	0,123
Cox and Snell	0,193	0,126	0,223	0,105	0,107
<b>Measurement:</b>					
Intercept only – Final Model	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000
Goodness of Fit - Pearson	0,004	0,982	0,000	0,174	0,070
Proportional Odds Assumption	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000

Table 3: Results of the Ordered Logistic Regression for Survey Wave 2. Notes: \* = 95% Significance Level, \*\* = 99% Significance Level, Values are Estimated Log-odds, Rounded to the Third Decimal

### 6.3. Third Survey Wave (2012)

*Model-Fit:* The regression models for the third survey wave, including the same independent variables as in wave two, keep their statistical significance for all institutions compared with intercept-only models, and all models fit the 2012 data well. Regarding explanatory strength, the models explain between 17% and 21% of the variance, only the regression for parties sticks out with about 12% explanation of variance. For the first time, the regression for courts fulfills the proportional odds assumption and all explanatory factors can be considered. Nonetheless, for the analysis of the government and parties, authoritarian values must be excluded, for the parliament the variable of how democracy works, and for the military the assessment of the national economy must be omitted.

*General Trust Levels:* Trust in institutions slightly alternates from previous survey waves, despite regime change and a new elected government in 2012. The government once again receives less trust with about 60%. Parliament and parties especially suffer from losing trust with only 56% and 41% respectively, compared to previous surveys. Only the courts and the military could retain higher trust levels with slightly over 70% of the population trusting both institutions, yet they also lost some support (see Figure 5).

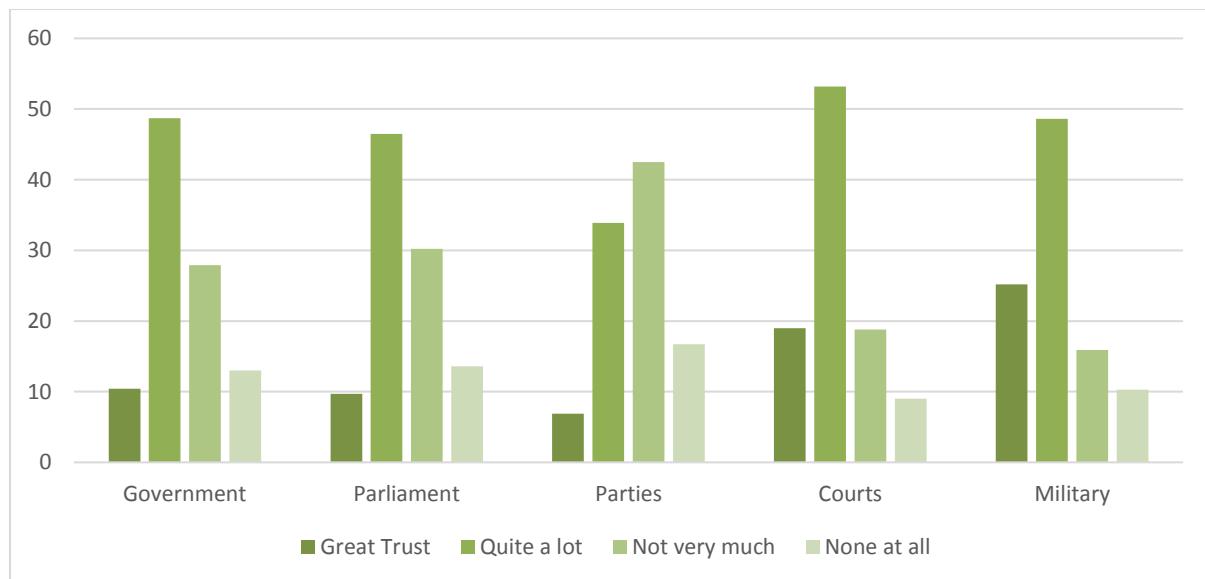


Figure 5: General Trust Levels per Institutions in Valid Percent: Survey Wave 3 in 2012

*Inequality and Institutions:* The third survey wave shows surprising results, as the explanatory strength of different variables seems to be inverted. The influence of inequality on trust in institutions lost somewhat clarity, as income is significantly affecting trust only for the parliament, decreasing the odds for trust by 13%. While the assessments of the household

economy are insignificant for all institutions, better evaluations of the national economy retain their positive effects on institutional trust, increasing odds from 53% to 98%, as observable in Table 4.

*Standard Control Variables:* Standard control variables in 2012 also show significant effects, especially when looking at the gender of the participants. Identifying as male increases the odds for trusting the government and courts by 46% and 43% respectively. Age shows positive effects for the parliament and the courts as well, increasing odds about 1% for each additional year. Results for education are the most encompassing, as only the courts are not affected. For each additional year of formal education, odds rise between 5% and 8% for trusting political institutions. Regarding the rural-urban divide, the results indicate opposition against the parliament and the courts in cities, decreasing the odds for trust by around 27% each. In contrast, living in cities increases the odds for trusting the military by 49%.

*Political Values:* Checking for democratic and authoritarian values is a bit tough for the data of the third survey wave since preference for democracy and authoritarian values do not deliver significant results. Only the satisfaction of how democracy works meaningfully affects trust in institutions. Being “Very satisfied” and “Fairly satisfied” with democracy in Thailand both has negative effects on trust for all institutions and decrease odds for trust between 71% and 78%. Only for the parties the trend is somewhat moderated, with a decrease of about 60%. Thai citizens tend to evaluate democracy detached from trust in institutions in this survey wave.

*Interactions:* Statistically significant interactions are rarer in the third survey wave. Results suggest an interaction between education and the assessments of national and household economies for trust in the parliament, increasing odds for more trust by 6% and 19%. For urban households, the negative influence on parties tends to be growing when adding household economy and income, leading to decreasing odds for trusting parties by 20%. Hence, the urban population tends to lose trust in parties when having more income and perceiving the state of household economies as good.

<b>Thresholds between:</b>	<b>Government</b>	<b>Parliament</b>	<b>Parties</b>	<b>Courts</b>	<b>Military</b>
No Trust or else	-0,352	-0,416	-1,279	-0,599	1,063
No and not very much Trust or else	2,568**	2,402**	1,111	2,115**	3,310**
No to quite a lot of Trust or else	4,309**	4,198**	3,208**	3,553**	4,543**
<b>Control Variables:</b>					
Male	0,376**	0,168	0,232	0,356**	0,002
Female	Constant	Constant	Constant	Constant	Constant
Age	0,003	0,010*	0,002	0,014*	0,009
Education	0,049**	0,071**	0,058**	0,024	0,081**
Urban	-0,388	-0,465**	-0,014	-0,467**	0,400**
Rural	Constant	Constant	Constant	Constant	Constant
<b>Inequality:</b>					
Income	-0,015	-0,136*	0,011	0,002	0,001
National Economy	0,681**	0,665**	0,453**	0,428**	0,446**
Household Economy	0,184	0,168	0,108	0,171	0,180
<b>Preference for Democracy:</b>					
“Authoritarianism can be preferable”	-0,178	-0,496	0,200	-0,264	-0,045
“Democracy is always preferable”	-0,158	-0,034	-0,153	-0,251	0,439
“For people like me it doesn’t matter”	Constant	Constant	Constant	Constant	Constant
<b>Satisfaction with How Democracy Works:</b>					
“Very satisfied”	-1,474**	-1,480**	-0,923**	-1,411**	-1,512**
“Fairly satisfied”	-1,357**	-1,219**	-1,002**	-1,494**	-1,243**
“Not very satisfied”	-0,274	-0,287	-0,307	-0,082	-0,269
“Not at all satisfied”	Constant	Constant	Constant	Constant	Constant
<b>Pluralism Makes Society Chaotic:</b>					
“Strongly agree”	0,261	0,045	-0,210	-0,232	-0,173
“Somewhat agree”	0,202	-0,039	0,001	-0,338	-0,366
“Somewhat disagree”	0,090	-0,138	-0,043	-0,129	-0,015
“Strongly disagree”	Constant	Constant	Constant	Constant	Constant
<b>Variance Explained (Pseudo R-Square):</b>					
Nagelkerke	0,203	0,210	0,116	0,166	0,184
Cox and Snell	0,185	0,192	0,105	0,182	0,169
<b>Measurement:</b>					
Intercept only – Final Model	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000
Goodness of Fit - Pearson	0,036	0,032	0,437	0,724	0,729
Proportional Odds Assumption	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,013	0,000

Table 4: Results of the Ordered Logistic Regression for Survey Wave 3. Notes: \* = 95% Significance Level, \*\* = 99% Significance Level, Values are Estimated Log-odds, Rounded to the Third Decimal

#### 6.4. The Fourth Survey Wave (2016)

*Model-Fit:* For 2016, the Asian Barometer questionnaires include the regional component again, but otherwise comprise the same variables. All regression models significantly explain the variance of trust better, only for the government the data does not fit the model well. The regression models for wave four reach the highest levels of variance explained, ranging between 18% and 28%. Furthermore, the models for the government and the parliament both fulfill the proportional odds assumption. For the other institutions, the regional factors mostly violate the assumption and therefore need to be excluded. Only the significant results for Northeastern Thailand in the case of trust for parties can be included.

*General Trust Levels:* After another regime change, Thai citizens had already been living under military rule for two years in 2016. This is mirrored by the general trust levels for political institutions, as the military receives the highest percentage of trust from all survey waves with about 90%. With 66%, the government is more trusted again, the courts could gain some trust as well, reaching 77% in 2016. For the parliament and parties, trust levels could raise to 63% and 43% respectively (see Figure 6).

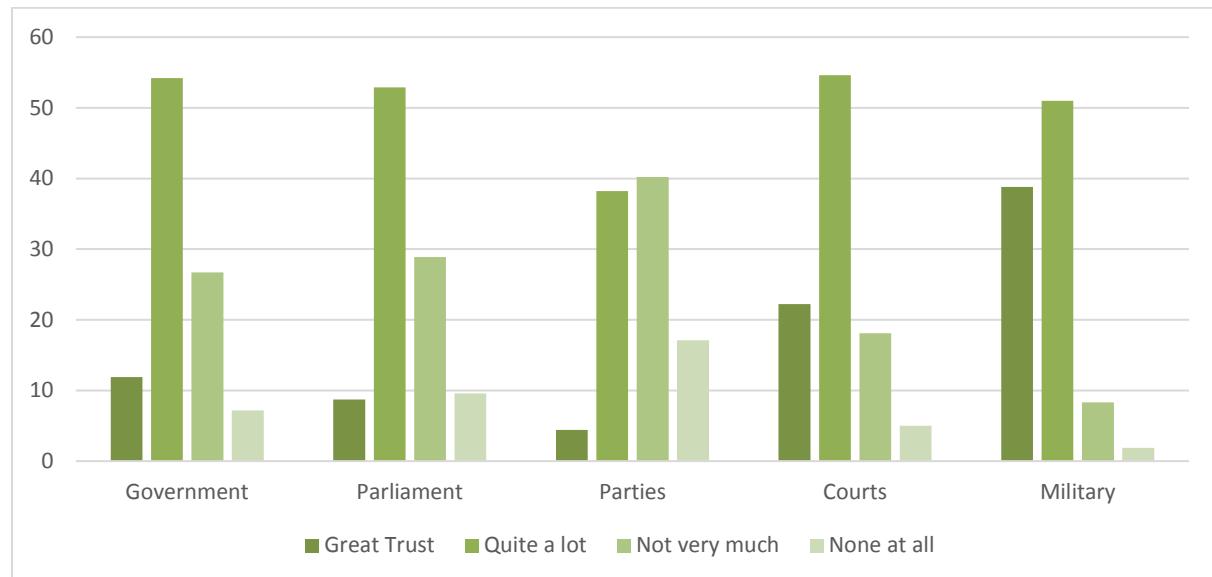


Figure 6: General Trust Levels per Institutions in Valid Percent: Survey Wave 4 in 2016

*Inequality and Institutions:* Income as explanatory variable influences trust in parties positively and for the military negatively, increasing odds for trust in parties by 18% and decreasing odds for trust in the military by 27%. Assessments of the national economy show similar results as before, increasing odds for trust in parliament, parties and courts between 33% and 48%. Better household economies only affect trust in parties, increasing odds by

39%. Higher incomes in 2016 decrease trust in the military, economic evaluations instead retain similar positive results as in past survey waves.

*Standard Control Variables:* Gender cannot contribute significant results this time, but higher age in 2016 positively affects trust in courts and the military, increasing odds by 1% each additional year. This is coherent with the effects of education. Each additional year of formal education increases the odds for trusting the courts and the military by 5% and 8% respectively. Education here has a cubic effect on trust for the military, meaning that around the median level of education, the positive trend is shortly inverted and trust in the military decreases. Contrasting, rural origin negatively influences trust in the military, significantly reducing the odds by 50%. Regional differences can be observed in 2016 as well, decreasing trust in the government, parliament and parties. In Bangkok, these negative effects are most moderate in reducing the odds for trusting the government by 58%, the reduction of the odds for the Northeast is 91%. Trust in the parliament and parties suffers from similar reductions, though more moderate, as shown in Table 5.

*Political Values:* Compared with these relatively strong and significant results, the variables for authoritarian and democratic values are less contributive. Meaningful effects can be observed for preference of democracy and authoritarian values, while the satisfaction with democracy in Thailand does not provide significant results. Preference for democracy positively affects trust in the parliament and parties, raising the odds between 80% and 90%. Contrastingly, preference for authoritarianism also raises the odds for trust in the parliament by 83%, whereas authoritarian values reduce the odds for trusting the parliament by 63%.

*Interactions:* In contrast to other survey waves, the 2016 survey comprises many significant interactions, especially when adding the regional component. Coming from Bangkok or the Northeast, combined with income, leads to a strong decrease of the odds for trusting all institutions between 92% and 99%. For the courts and the military, being from the North or from Central Thailand has negative effects when combined with income, but slightly more moderate with 93% to 97%. These negative influences are toned down or even inverted when adding factors like economic evaluations or education. For instance, adding education for Bangkok makes the odds for trusting the government and parliament rise by 33% and 22%. For the Northeast, including the assessment of the national economy increases the odds for trusting the parliament and parties by 48% and 36%.

<b>Thresholds between:</b>	<b>Government</b>	<b>Parliament</b>	<b>Parties</b>	<b>Courts</b>	<b>Military</b>
No Trust or else	-4,423**	-2,211*	-1,615	0,301	-0,284
No and not very much Trust or else	-1,194	1,293	1,478	3,463**	2,698**
No to quite a lot of Trust or else	1,170	3,617**	4,029**	5,474**	4,580**
<b>Control Variables:</b>					
Male	-0,086	0,113	0,110	-0,136	-0,158
Female	Constant	Constant	Constant	Constant	Constant
Age	0,001	0,011	-0,008	0,013*	0,014*
Education	-0,012	-0,005	0,009	0,052*	0,079**
Rural	-0,087	0,287	0,429	-0,079	-0,684*
Urban	Constant	Constant	Constant	Constant	Constant
Region=Bangkok	-0,865*	-1,252**	-0,300	0,456	-0,663
Region=North	-1,380**	-0,493	-0,159	0,633	-0,107
Region=Central	-1,623**	-1,146**	-0,366	0,245	-0,374
Region=Northeast	-2,416**	-2,276**	-1,238**	-1,034**	-1,086**
Region=South	Constant	Constant	Constant	Constant	Constant
<b>Inequality:</b>					
Income	0,010	-0,039	0,170*	-0,090	-0,317**
National Economy	0,118	0,389**	0,313**	0,282**	0,040
Household Economy	-0,018	0,166	0,333**	-0,228	0,208
<b>Preference for Democracy:</b>					
“Authoritarianism can be preferable”	-0,133	0,607*	0,434	0,151	-0,242
“Democracy is always preferable”	0,051	0,640*	0,588*	0,435	-0,290
“For people like me it doesn’t matter”	Constant	Constant	Constant	Constant	Constant
<b>Satisfaction with How Democracy Works:</b>					
“Very satisfied”	-0,731	-1,081	-0,809	-0,296	-0,554
“Fairly satisfied”	-0,154	-0,165	-0,222	1,150	-0,001
“Not very satisfied”	-0,168	-0,367	0,751	0,906	0,223
“Not at all satisfied”	Constant	Constant	Constant	Constant	Constant
<b>Pluralism Makes Society Chaotic:</b>					
“Strongly agree”	-0,643	-1,004*	-0,513	-0,315	-0,082
“Somewhat agree”	-0,417	-0,431	-0,309	0,029	0,378
“Somewhat disagree”	0,087	-0,513	0,098	-0,390	0,538
“Strongly disagree”	Constant	Constant	Constant	Constant	Constant
<b>Variance Explained (Pseudo R-Square):</b>					
Nagelkerke	0,232	0,280	0,245	0,230	0,178
Cox and Snell	0,206	0,249	0,221	0,202	0,152
<b>Measurement:</b>					
Intercept only – Final Model	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000
Goodness of Fit - Pearson	0,001	0,234	0,530	0,641	0,969
Proportional Odds Assumption	0,015	0,11	0,000	0,000	0,000

Table 5: Results of the Ordered Logistic Regression for Survey Wave 4. Notes: \* = 95% Significance Level, \*\* = 99% Significance Level, Values are Estimated Log-odds, Rounded to the Third Decimal

## **7. DISCUSSION**

The results of the ordinal logistic regression models with the data of the four Asian Barometer datasets for Thailand show significant outcomes. This chapter sets these results in context to the background, literature review and theoretical framework, as well as methodological issues at hand. The discussion of the results follows the order of the research questions:

*To what extent does economic inequality influence trust in political institutions in Thailand?* This study made use of two different measures of inequality, income and economic evaluations. Both, direct and indirect measures, indicate that socio-economic discrepancies influence trust in political institutions. Higher household income mostly leads to less trust in institutions, contradicting the theoretical assumption that lower classes would oppose socio-economic disparities by less trust in political institutions. Only the courts are exempted from these negative effects, eventually because they are not directly associated with personal income by Thai citizens. Otherwise, the government, parliament, parties and the military mostly receive less trust when incomes are higher. Different to that, better assessments of household and national economies continuously affect trust in political institutions positively. When citizens perceive the household and national economic situations as good, the odds for trust in all institutions rise. Only in 2002, after the 1997 financial crisis, better economic evaluations affect trust in institutions negatively, which could result from the feeling of missing effective economic growth policies and disappointment due to the crisis. In all other surveys the perception of a good economy is related to positive trust in all institutions.

Apparently, respondents answer questions regarding the national and household economies coherently, while household economy and income contradict each other. It seems that the amount of income does not necessarily relate to the evaluation of the household economy. Therefore, it is necessary to carefully evaluate the methodological approach on operationalizing inequality, as both indirect and direct measures can have different effects. Further studies researching inequality in Thailand need to include both measures to paint a more complete picture.

Connecting the research results to the theoretical framework, expected outcomes proposed by Acemoglu and Robinson would suggest that citizens who perceive their household economy as bad, tend to distrust political institutions. However, the results show that this explanation

approves the theory, but income as variable contradicts the assumption that poorer classes would lose trust. Instead, citizens with higher incomes, who rather profit from anti-democratic elite structures, tend to distrust institutions. The differences in direct and indirect measurement of inequality are obvious here and a clear interpretation of the results is difficult. Yet, the results support the theory in the way that inequality influences support in institutions, only the direction of the influence is unclear. Nonetheless, this implicates that, in case Thailand's political system lacks legitimacy, the specific support in institutions is significantly affected by socio-economic inequality, which contributes to political instability according to Norris and Easton. Conclusively, the results add socio-economic disparities as a relevant factor to Dressel's analysis of a lack of legitimacy for Thailand's institutions.

*How does the evaluation of political institutions and the explanatory strength of independent variables change over the four survey waves?* Overall, the comparison of the results rarely indicates obvious time trends. Considering inequality, income does not show any significant changes over time, but economic evaluations do. From 2002 to 2012, the effects of both socio-tropic and household assessments rise in strength from around 20% to 70%. This development supports the argument of the dissemination of inequality into the political arena as mentioned in the literature review and likewise reflects increasing inequality and further polarization along classes. Against the backdrop of these findings, Thai citizens tend to emphasize socio-economic disparities in relation with trust in institutions, thereby threatening regime legitimacy and prolonging political conflict in Thailand. The detected time trend suggests that by inequality further rising among the Thai population and as the topic is increasingly receiving more attention among the society, political conflict will be even more difficult to resolve; regime legitimacy will probably remain unstable. The 2016 results are not coherent with this trend, possibly affected by two years of living under military rule, as inequality has not been reduced. For other control variables, the results do not indicate time trends, which means that for instance regional conflicts or political values are not subject to change along short-term societal developments. These variables tend to be more robust and thereby more difficult to influence when aiming for improving political legitimacy in Thailand.

*Do the evaluations of political institutions differ according to regime type?* The two survey waves conducted under rather democratic periods show coherent results, both conducted under elected governments, with major parties representing similar policies. However, the

comparison between 2006 and 2016 raises questions. Although military governments ruled during both years, 2016 indicated much stronger results, especially reflected in the general trust levels of political institutions. Arguably, this is because the 2006 coup and the subsequent military rule were expected to end rather early and the return to democracy was foreseeable. Instead, in 2016, Thai citizens were already living under military rule for two years, which possibly led to consternation or fatigue among citizens preferring democracy. However, explanatory variables in the last survey have less powerful effects on trust in the military, which could also mean that many Thai citizens are satisfied with military rule and government policies. This study cannot provide explanations in detail. What it can provide is evidence that the military was successful in transmitting their rule as legitimate, receiving the highest trust levels of all survey waves in 2016. In general, mostly the trust in political institutions perceived as democratic suffers from regime change. Government, parliament and parties, often blamed for the political conflict by subsequent military governments, receive less trust in 2006 and 2016. Consequently, the answer to this research question is that the regime type certainly influences the trust level of individual political institutions in Thailand. For settling political conflict and increasing regime legitimacy, decision-makers would therefore need to find ways to stabilize trust in the government, parties and the parliament more sustainably. This study shows that frequent regime change is not a way to achieve this goal.

*What other explanatory variables influence the support for political institutions?* Standard control variables vary strongly in the significance of their effects, thus coherent trends are absent. Gender for instance mostly has no effects. Identifying as male tends to decrease trust in parties, identifying as female in turn increases trust in the government and courts. However, these results are mostly insignificant and can therefore not be generalized. Likewise, age only sometimes has significant effects on institutional trust, in 2002 older citizens trust the military less, in 2016 under military rule, they tend to trust the courts and the military more than younger people. These results show no coherent answering pattern, thus a possible generational change in Thailand is not detectable. Moreover, education affects trust in institutions incoherently as well. More education decreases trust in parties and the military in 2002, increases trust for all institutions in 2012, and for the courts and the military in 2016. Additionally, the results under democratic rule in 2002 and 2012 contradict each other, denying a trend for education levels as well.

Regarding the thesis of regionalized, political conflict in Thailand, the regression results of this work largely confirm regional discrepancies. Only included in the 2002 and 2016 questionnaire, yet informative, especially being located in Bangkok leads to different trust levels compared to coming from North, Northeast, Central or Southern Thailand. Under democratic rule in 2002, not being from Bangkok increases the odds for trusting in formally democratic institutions like the parliament and parties. During military rule in 2016, being from Bangkok has the most moderate effects on trusting the government, parties and parliament, compared with large negative effects in other regions. Likewise, the rural/urban variable in 2006 and 2012 indicates that in cities, the military receives the highest levels of trust, compared with mostly negative or more moderate effects on trust for parties and courts. These findings on regional discrepancies back up the general literature on political conflict in Thailand. The North and Northeast stick out and show the most pronounced effects on institutional trust in this analysis, compared to the capital. This can be referred to the theoretical framework of Acemoglu and Robinson as well, since the capital in Thailand concentrates most wealth and the political elite, here most citizens are more trustful. Summarizing, the contentious political development between rich elite and lower classes is strongly defined by regional divides in Thailand.

This finding is further supported by looking at significant interactions in the analyses of the four surveys. Particularly significant is the relation between urban locality, income and economic evaluations on trust in parties. When considering household economies and income, trust in parties decreases in cities. A trend detectable during democratic as well as authoritarian regimes, hinting at coherent negative evaluations of parties among the richer urban population. Even though parties receive fewest trust in all survey waves, which also could be interpreted as failed institutionalization and lack of public support among Thai political parties, negative evaluations are still most pronounced in cities. This supports Acemoglu and Robinson's thesis of authoritarian preferences among the richer classes. Similarly, region and income as two-way interaction have a strong negative effect on all institutions in 2016, hinting at a general loss of trust in the political regime along regional and income discrepancies. However, when including education and economic evaluations, these negative impacts are inverted. This could mean that higher educated citizens living under better economic conditions tend to trust institutions more, again confirming differences among classes as education is largely dependent on income in Thailand. Already in 2002, education combined with region had positive effects on parties, whereas the military received

less trust. Also, in 2012, more education combined with income rather support democratic institutions, indicating a general preference for pluralism among higher education levels, but only combined with regional origin.

The strongest effects on institutional trust are ascribed to democratic and authoritarian values. Inequality has much weaker effects across the board, compared with political attitudes. Especially the question for the satisfaction of how democracy works in Thailand shows expected results for trust in institutions. Under rather democratic rule in 2002 and 2012, citizens trust institutions more, when they are generally satisfied with democracy in the country. This trend is confirmed in 2006, after the military coup, as citizens' trust in the military drops drastically when being dissatisfied with democracy in Thailand. Furthermore, the effect of satisfaction with democracy is coherent with answers for the variable of regime preference, showing similar effects on trust in institutions. When citizens prefer autocracy, they disregard parties, the government and courts. When they prefer democracy, they trust more in the parliament and parties. These results quite clearly show that Thai citizens trust in individual institutions according to their general political attitudes, additionally indicating that the government, parties and parliament are generally perceived as rather democratic compared with other institutions. When citizens feel more attached to authoritarian values, they trust more in the government and courts, but trust in the parliament less, and, interestingly, tend to confirm military rule by increasing trust in all institutions. Since no interactions with other variables produce significant results, it seems that political attitudes and values are detached from socio-economic background variables. Further research needs to investigate how political attitudes and values affect institutional trust in detail, how these values are shaped and how they influence social and political conflict in Thailand.

## **8. CONCLUSION**

Regime legitimacy in Thailand is in troubled waters. This thesis intends to shed light on the possible connection of increasingly high levels of socio-economic inequality and trust in political institutions as a factor for legitimizing Thailand's political regime. The results of the Asian Barometer surveys from 2002, 2006, 2012 and 2016 confirm this connection and enable to bridge a gap in contemporary research: Inequality influences trust in the government, parliament and parties, as well as courts and military. As wealth concentration has been increasing in the new millennium, the effect of inequality on trust in institutions has equally been more pronounced. Consequently, socio-economic disparities among the Thai population not only jeopardize social cohesion, but they affect trust in political institutions, thus contributing to political instability in the Kingdom.

The effects of inequality are pronounced, but this study indicates that regional differences and political values and attitudes shape trust in institutions stronger. However, it is important to contextualize regional differences, which are mostly defined by economic disparities. Further studies in the research field of inequality and its relation to political legitimacy in Thailand are required, especially in unbundling regional variances, using different measurements of inequality, such as land entitlement, and advancing measurement quality and model-fit in general. This study made use of only income and economic evaluations reflecting inequality, other indicators could potentially discover further underlying factors contributing to the lack of specific regime support in Thailand. Although, the analysis above does not show great effects of standard control variables such as age and gender, particularly a more detailed study on the effects of education on trust in institutions could be revealing, as education is strongly connected to socio-economic inequality in Thailand.

This thesis has mainly shown that regime legitimacy in Thailand is threatened. Regime change is an obvious reason for political instability. If Thailand wants to maneuver itself out of the troubled waters, then the primary factor for change will be a comprehensive and enduring political regime. However, since the 'network monarchy', in relation with the military, retains strong moral legitimacy among the population, a sustainable political regime would need to involve royal affirmation, otherwise, the possibility of revolution could grow. An easier way to ease societal conflict and increase regime legitimacy would be to distribute wealth and income more equally. Policies like progressive taxation, land tax or more

comprehensive redistribution policies could strengthen Thailand's regime legitimacy. The historical development of Thailand's oscillating political regimes suggests that its future will remain uncertain, unless new legitimization strategies can enhance the Kingdom's stability. One feasible option is to reduce inequality.

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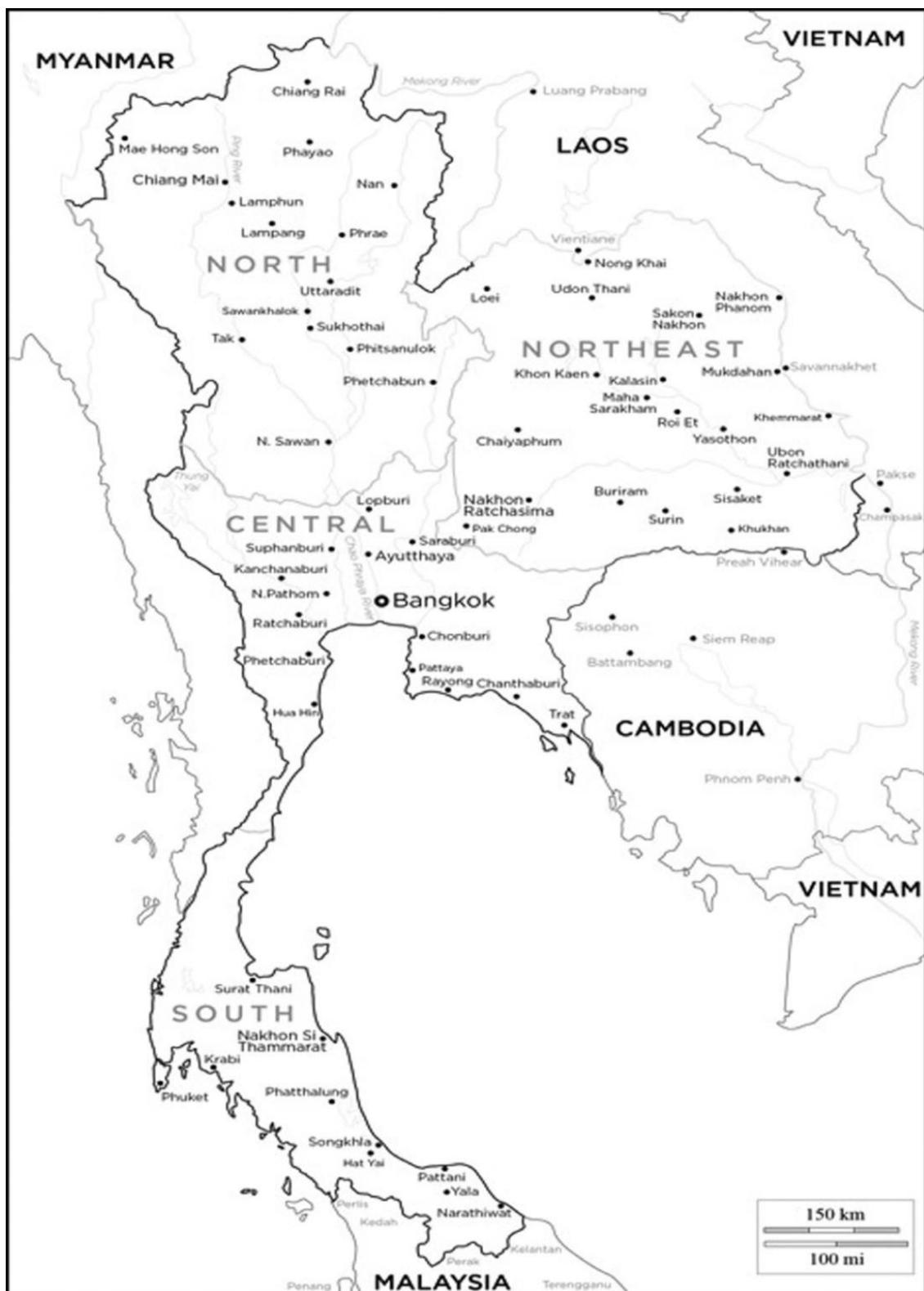
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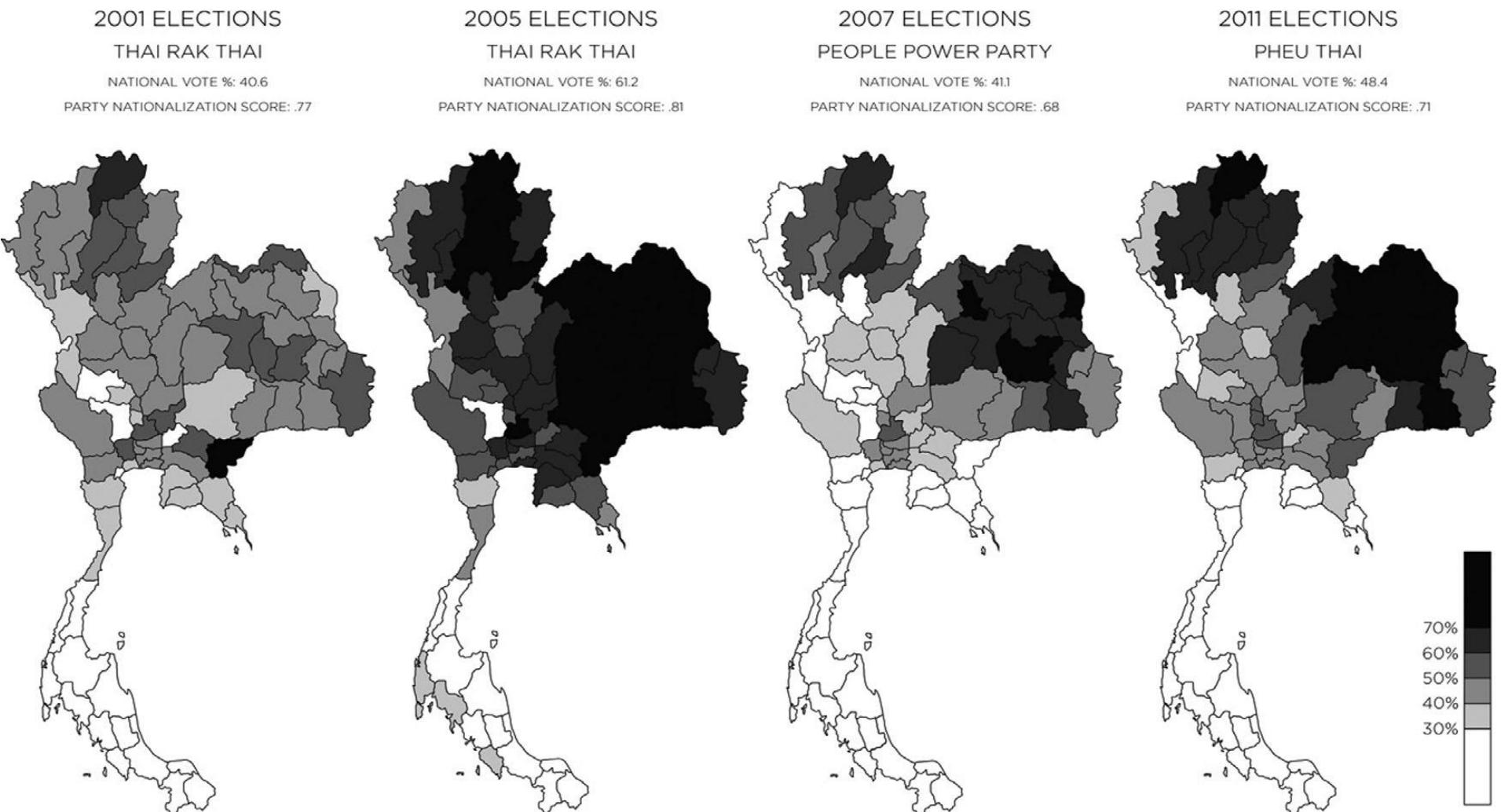
## **10. APPENDIX**

The following documents intend to clarify issues described in the thesis above. The first part illuminates regional political conflict in Thailand and summarizes the information given in the background section 2.2 in the form of a timeline from 2001 to 2018. Following this, all example syntax files from the regression models for survey wave one are displayed to allow for replicability of the analysis' calculations. As third part, descriptive statistics and correlations between all variables included in the survey waves used provide additional information on the datasets. In the end, the results of the preliminary principal components analyses are presented, which were required for deciding between a composite index for institutional trust or the analysis of single institutions, as well as for deciding which variables for democratic and authoritarian variables should be included in the analysis. In case the reader requires more information on the calculations or the collection of all original SPSS outputs, these documents can be obtained upon request from the author.

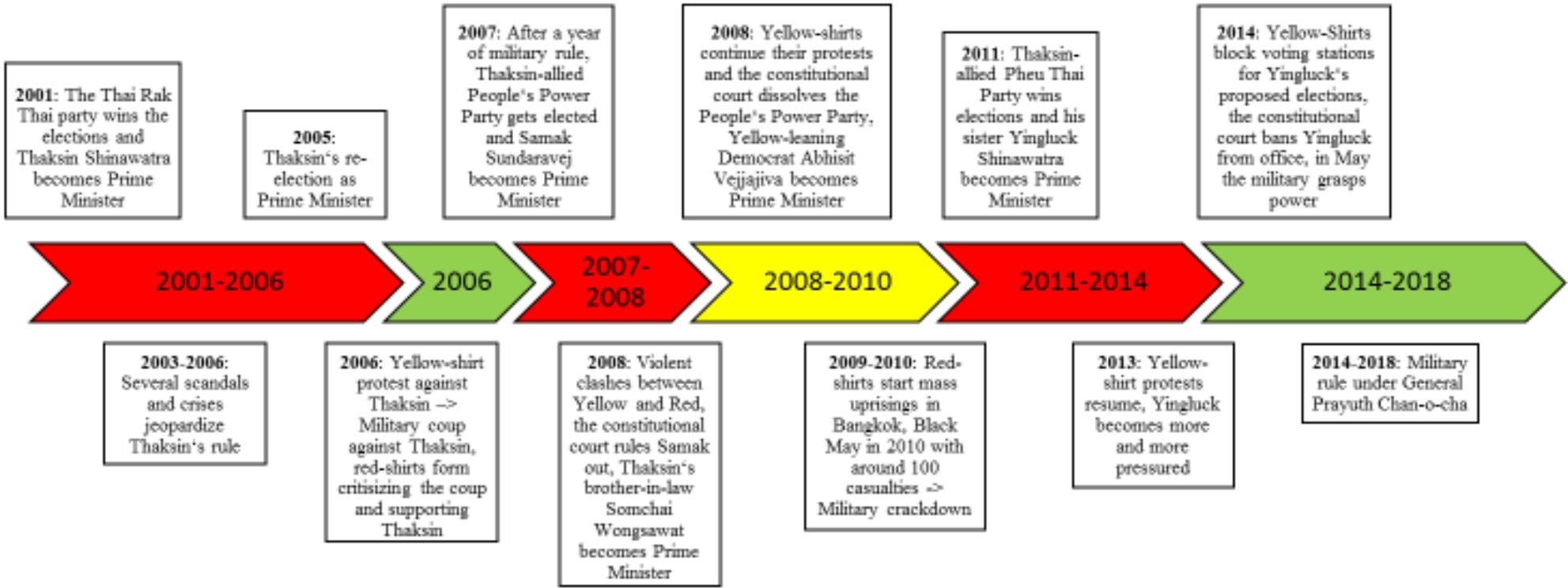
## 10.1. Appendix 1: Background Information on Thailand's Political Conflict



Appendix 1: Map - Regions of Thailand (Cited from Ferrara 2015: ix)



Appendix 1: “Election performance of parties led or backed by Thaksin Shinawatra” (cited from Ferrara 2015: 254)



Appendix 1: Timeline of Thailand's Political Conflict from 2001 to 2018, created with information from Ferrara 2015: Chapters 7 and 8. Red arrows imply the governments of the time were rather leaning towards the red shirts, yellow arrows imply the incumbent rulers were leaning rather towards the yellow shirts, green arrows represent military governments.

## **10.2. Appendix 2: Example Syntax Files from the Model for the Government in Survey Wave 1 and the PCA for Institutions**

Normal Order Logit Regression for the Government:

```
PLUM q008 BY region se002 q117 q139 q098 WITH se003a se009 q001 q004  
se005a  
/CRITERIA=CIN(95) DELTA(0) LCONVERGE(0) MXITER(100) MXSTEP(5)  
PConverge(1.0E-6) SINGULAR(1.0E-8)  
/LINK=LOGIT  
/PRINT=FIT PARAMETER SUMMARY TPARALLEL.
```

Ordered Regression Model Including Tests for Correlations:

```
PLUM q008 BY region se002 q117 q139 q098 WITH se003a se009 q001 q004  
se005a  
/CRITERIA=CIN(95) DELTA(0) LCONVERGE(0) MXITER(100) MXSTEP(5)  
PConverge(1.0E-6) SINGULAR(1.0E-8)  
/LINK=LOGIT  
/LOCATION=region se002 q117 q139 q098 se003a se009 q001 q004 se005a  
q001*q004 q001*se009 q004*se009 region*se009 region*se005a se005a*se009  
q001*se005a q004*se005a region*se005a*se009 q001*region*se009  
q004*region*se009 q001*q004*se005a  
/PRINT=FIT PARAMETER SUMMARY TPARALLEL.
```

Ordered Regression Model Including Tests for Curvilinearity:

```
PLUM q008 BY region se002 q117 q139 q098 WITH se003a se009 q001 q004  
se005a age2 age3 education2 education3  
/CRITERIA=CIN(95) DELTA(0) LCONVERGE(0) MXITER(100) MXSTEP(5)  
PConverge(1.0E-6) SINGULAR(1.0E-8)  
/LINK=LOGIT  
/PRINT=FIT PARAMETER SUMMARY TPARALLEL.
```

Binary Regression at the First Threshold:

```
LOGISTIC REGRESSION VARIABLES government1orabove  
/METHOD=ENTER region se002 se009 q117 q001 q004 se003a se005a q139 q098  
/CONTRAST (region)=Indicator  
/CONTRAST (se002)=Indicator  
/CONTRAST (q117)=Indicator  
/CONTRAST (q139)=Indicator  
/CONTRAST (q098)=Indicator  
/PRINT=GOODFIT  
/CRITERIA=PIN(0.05) POUT(0.10) ITERATE(20) CUT(0.5).
```

### Principal Components Analysis for Institutions:

```
FACTOR  
/VARIABLES q007 q008 q009 q010 q012  
/MISSING PAIRWISE  
/ANALYSIS q007 q008 q009 q010 q012  
/PRINT INITIAL SIG KMO EXTRACTION ROTATION  
/FORMAT BLANK(.10)  
/CRITERIA MINEIGEN(1) ITERATE(25)  
/EXTRACTION PC  
/CRITERIA ITERATE(25) DELTA(0)  
/ROTATION OBLIMIN  
/METHOD=CORRELATION.
```

### 10.3. Appendix 3: Descriptive Statistics and Correlations

#### Descriptive Statistics for the Variables Included in Survey Wave 1:

Variable	Total n	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance	Answering Options and Frequencies
Trust in Government	1453	2,85	0,731	0,534	(1) "None at all" (33 – 2,3%) (2) "Not very much" (415 – 28,6%) (3) "Quite a lot" (734 – 51,1%) (4) "A great deal" (262 – 18,0%)
Trust in Parliament	1396	2,69	0,780	0,570	(1) "None at all" (77 – 5,5%) (2) "Not very much" (474 – 34,0%) (3) "Quite a lot" (646 – 46,3%) (4) "A great deal" (199 – 14,3%)
Trust in Parties	1422	2,57	0,775	0,600	(1) "None at all" (89 – 6,3%) (2) "Not very much" (599 – 42,1%) (3) "Quite a lot" (571 – 40,2%) (4) "A great deal" (163 – 11,5%)
Trust in Courts	1229	2,95	0,767	0,589	(1) "None at all" (33 – 2,7%) (2) "Not very much" (294 – 23,9%) (3) "Quite a lot" (602 – 49%) (4) "A great deal" (300 – 24,4%)
Trust in Military	1463	3,07	0,755	0,570	(1) "None at all" (38 – 2,6%) (2) "Not very much" (255 – 17,4%) (3) "Quite a lot" (737 – 50,4%) (4) "A great deal" (433 – 29,6%)
Income	1537	2,56	1,204	1,450	(1) "0-1,000 Baht" (272 – 17,7%) (2) "1,001-5,000 Baht" (634 – 41,2%) (3) "5,001-10,000 Baht" (289 – 18,8%) (4) "10,001-20,000 Baht" (187 – 12,2%) (5) "More than 20,000 Baht" (155 – 10,1%)
National Economy	1541	3,32	0,867	0,751	(1) "Very good" (27 – 1,8%) (2) "Good" (192 – 12,5%) (3) "So so" (716 – 46,5%) (4) "Bad" (469 – 30,4%) (5) "Very bad" (137 – 8,9%)
Household Economy	1541	3,19	0,665	0,443	(1) "Very good" (7 – 0,5%) (2) "Good" (139 – 9,0%) (3) "So so" (1010 – 65,5%) (4) "Bad" (323 – 21,0%) (5) "Very bad" (62 – 4,0%)
Gender	1538	1,53	0,499	0,249	(1) "Male" (716 – 46,6%) (2) "Female" (822 – 53,4%)
Age	1533	45,14	14,809	213,292	-

Education	1419	7,23	4,259	18,139	-
Region	1546	3,14	1,221	1,492	(1) "Bangkok" (169 – 10,9%) (2) "Central" (356 – 23,0%) (3) "North" (310 – 20,1%) (4) "Northeast" (514 – 33,2%) (5) "South" (197 – 12,7%)
Preference for Democracy	1536	2,74	0,637	0,406	(1) "Under some circumstance authoritarian can be preferable" (163 – 10,6%) (2) "For people like me it doesn't matter" (78 – 5,1%) (3) "Democracy is always preferable" (1295 – 84,3%)
Satisfaction with the way how democracy works in Thailand	1518	3,24	0,645	0,416	(1) "Not at all satisfied" (16 – 1,1%) (2) "Not very satisfied" (128 – 8,4%) (3) "Fairly Satisfied" (845 – 55,7%) (4) "Very satisfied" (529 – 34,8%)
If people have too many different ways of thinking, society will be chaotic	1541	1,94	0,926	0,857	(1) "Strongly agree" (582 – 37,8%) (2) "Somewhat agree" (586 – 38,0%) (3) "Somewhat disagree" (250 – 16,2%) (4) "Strongly disagree" (123 – 8,0%)

### Descriptive Statistics for the Variables Included in Survey Wave 2:

Variable	Total n	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance	Answering Options and Frequencies
Trust in Government	1405	2,72	0,768	0,590	(1) "None at all" (94 – 6,7%) (2) "Not very much" (385 – 27,4%) (3) "Quite a lot" (748 – 53,2%) (4) "A great deal" (178 – 12,7%)
Trust in Parliament	1400	2,71	0,686	0,471	(1) "None at all" (50 – 3,6%) (2) "Not very much" (439 – 31,4%) (3) "Quite a lot" (775 – 55,4%) (4) "A great deal" (136 – 9,7%)
Trust in Parties	1387	2,58	0,771	0,595	(1) "None at all" (115 – 8,3%) (2) "Not very much" (484 – 34,9%) (3) "Quite a lot" (660 – 47,6%) (4) "A great deal" (128 – 9,2%)

					(1) “None at all” (32 – 2,4%)
Trust in Courts	1357	2,94	0,672	0,452	(2) “Not very much” (254 – 18,7%)
					(3) “Quite a lot” (835 – 61,5%)
					(4) “A great deal” (236 – 17,4%)
					(1) “None at all” (30 – 2,1%)
Trust in Military	1441	2,99	0,686	0,471	(2) “Not very much” (258 – 17,9%)
					(3) “Quite a lot” (853 – 59,2%)
					(4) “A great deal” (300 – 20,8%)
					(1) “Lowest quintile” (381 – 27,6%)
Income	1378	2,28	1,131	1,280	(2) “2 <sup>nd</sup> quintile” (524 – 38,0%)
					(3) “3 <sup>rd</sup> quintile” (244 – 17,7%)
					(4) “4 <sup>th</sup> quintile” (163 – 11,8%)
					(5) “Top quintile” (66 – 4,8%)
					(1) “Very bad” (83 – 5,5%)
National Economy	1506	2,96	0,906	0,821	(2) “Bad” (373 – 24,8%)
					(3) “So so” (587 – 39,0%)
					(4) “Good” (440 – 29,2%)
					(5) “Very good” (23 – 1,5%)
					(1) “Very bad” (29 – 1,9%)
Household Economy	1537	3,02	0,649	0,422	(2) “Bad” (208 – 13,5%)
					(3) “So so” (1021 – 66,4%)
					(4) “Good” (264 – 17,2%)
					(5) “Very good” (15 – 1,0%)
Gender	1546	1,52	0,500	0,250	(1) “Male” (746 – 48,3%)
					(2) “Female” (800 – 51,7%)
Age	1541	43,01	15,303	234,171	-
					(1) “Nor formal education” (44 – 2,8%)
Education	1544	4,60	2,280	5,198	(2) “Incomplete primary” (31 – 2,0%)
					(3) “Complete primary” (804 – 52,1%)
					(4) “Incomplete secondary vocational” (20 – 1,3%)
					(5) “Complete secondary vocational” (194 – 12,6%)
					(6) “Incomplete secondary” (24 – 1,6%)
					(7) “Complete secondary” (117 – 11,5%)
					(8) “Some university education” (114 – 7,4%)
					(9) “Complete university education” (123 – 8,0%)
					(10) “Post-graduate degree” (13 – 0,8%)
Rural - Urban	1546	1,81	0,393	0,155	(1) Urban (295 – 19,1%)
					(2) Rural (1251 – 80,9%)

Preference for Democracy	1373	2,79	0,484	0,234	(1) “For people like me it doesn’t matter” (45 – 3,3%) (2) “Under some circumstances, an authoritarian government can be preferable” (204 – 14,9%) (3) “Democracy is always preferable” (1124 – 81,9%)
Satisfaction with the way how democracy works in Thailand	1468	3,10	0,700	0,490	(1) “Not at all satisfied” (29 – 2,0%) (2) “Not very satisfied” (208 – 14,2%) (3) “Fairly Satisfied” (822 – 56,0%) (4) “Very satisfied” (409 – 27,9%)
If people have too many different ways of thinking, society will be chaotic	1447	1,91	0,779	0,607	(1) “Strongly agree” (461 – 31,9%) (2) “Somewhat agree” (712 – 49,2%) (3) “Somewhat disagree” (222 – 15,3%) (4) “Strongly disagree” (52 – 3,6%)

### Descriptive Statistics for the Variables in Included Survey Wave 3:

Variable	Total n	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance	Answering Options and Frequencies
Trust in Government	1399	2,44	0,845	0,714	(1) “A great deal” (145 – 10,4%) (2) “Quite a lot” (681 – 48,7%) (3) “Not very much” (391 – 27,9%) (4) “None at all” (182 – 13,0%)
Trust in Parliament	1308	2,48	0,846	0,716	(1) “A great deal” (127 – 9,7%) (2) “Quite a lot” (608 – 46,5%) (3) “Not very much” (395 – 30,2%) (4) “None at all” (178 – 13,6%)
Trust in Parties	1299	2,69	0,829	0,687	(1) “A great deal” (90 – 6,9%) (2) “Quite a lot” (440 – 33,9%) (3) “Not very much” (552 – 42,5%) (4) “None at all” (217 – 16,7%)
Trust in Courts	1317	2,18	0,840	0,705	(1) “A great deal” (250 – 19,0%) (2) “Quite a lot” (701 – 53,2%) (3) “Not very much” (248 – 18,8%) (4) “None at all” (118 – 9,0%)
Trust in Military	1421	2,11	0,900	0,810	(1) “A great deal” (358 – 25,2%) (2) “Quite a lot” (691 – 48,6%) (3) “Not very much” (226 – 15,9%) (4) “None at all” (146 – 10,3%)

					(1) “Lowest level” (404 – 28,6%)
Income	1412	2,33	1,190	1,416	(2) “Low level” (488 – 34,6%)
					(3) “Middle level” (250 – 17,7%)
					(4) “High level” (186 – 13,2%)
					(5) “Highest level” (84 – 5,9%)
					(1) “Very good” (26 – 1,7%)
National Economy	1489	3,25	0,829	0,687	(2) “Good” (214 – 14,4%)
					(3) “So so” (699 – 46,9%)
					(4) “Bad” (469 – 31,5%)
					(5) “Very bad” (81 – 5,4%)
					(1) “Very good” (16 – 1,1%)
Household Economy	1498	2,98	0,653	0,427	(2) “Good” (264 – 17,6%)
					(3) “So so” (970 – 64,8%)
					(4) “Bad” (227 – 15,2%)
					(5) “Very bad” (21 – 1,4%)
Gender	1497	1,52	0,500	0,250	(1) “Male” (723 – 48,3%)
					(2) “Female” (774 – 51,7%)
Age	1497	46,92	14,722	216,748	-
Education	1381	7,95	4,600	21,163	-
Rural - Urban	1512	1,75	0,431	0,186	(1) “Urban” (373 – 24,7%)
					(2) “Rural” (1139 – 75,3%)
Preference for Democracy	1329	1,30	0,592	0,350	(1) “Democracy is always preferable” (1029 – 77,4%)
					(2) “Under some circumstances, an authoritarian government can be preferable” (206 – 15,5%)
					(3) “For people like me it doesn’t matter” (94 – 7,1%)
Satisfaction with the way how democracy works in Thailand	1447	1,98	0,740	0,548	(1) “Very satisfied” (354 – 24,5%)
					(2) “Fairly satisfied” (831 – 57,4%)
					(3) “Not very Satisfied” (203 – 14,0%)
					(4) “Not at all satisfied” (59 – 4,1%)
If people have too many different ways of thinking, society will be chaotic	1444	1,96	0,939	0,881	(1) “Strongly agree” (530 – 36,7%)
					(2) “Somewhat agree” (587 – 40,7%)
					(3) “Somewhat disagree” (188 – 13,0%)
					(4) “Strongly disagree” (139 – 9,6%)

### Descriptive Statistics for the Variables in Included Survey Wave 4:

Variable	Total n	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance	Answering Options and Frequencies
Trust in Government	1099	2,29	0,768	0,589	(1) "A great deal" (131 – 11,9%) (2) "Quite a lot" (596 – 54,2%) (3) "Not very much" (293 – 26,7%) (4) "None at all" (79 – 7,2%)
Trust in Parliament	1067	2,39	0,778	0,605	(1) "A great deal" (93 – 8,7%) (2) "Quite a lot" (564 – 52,9%) (3) "Not very much" (308 – 28,9%) (4) "None at all" (102 – 9,6%)
Trust in Parties	1086	2,70	0,801	0,641	(1) "A great deal" (48 – 4,4%) (2) "Quite a lot" (415 – 38,2%) (3) "Not very much" (437 – 40,2%) (4) "None at all" (186 – 17,1%)
Trust in Courts	1098	2,06	0,775	0,601	(1) "A great deal" (244 – 22,2%) (2) "Quite a lot" (600 – 54,6%) (3) "Not very much" (199 – 18,1%) (4) "None at all" (55 – 5,0%)
Trust in Military	1150	1,73	0,691	0,477	(1) "A great deal" (446 – 38,8%) (2) "Quite a lot" (586 – 51,0%) (3) "Not very much" (796 – 8,3%) (4) "None at all" (22 – 1,9%)
Income	1096	2,28	1,151	1,325	(1) "Lowest quintile" (320 – 29,2%) (2) "2 <sup>nd</sup> quintile" (394 – 35,9%) (3) "3 <sup>rd</sup> quintile" (198 – 18,1%) (4) "4 <sup>th</sup> quintile" (128 – 11,7%) (5) "Highest quintile" (56 – 5,1%)
National Economy	1189	3,02	0,893	0,798	(1) "Very good" (41 – 3,4%) (2) "Good" (282 – 23,7%) (3) "So so" (535 – 45,0%) (4) "Bad" (274 – 23,0%) (5) "Very bad" (57 – 4,8%)
Household Economy	1189	2,95	0,673	0,453	(1) "Very good" (12 – 1,0%) (2) "Good" (243 – 20,4%) (3) "So so" (750 – 63,1%) (4) "Bad" (162 – 13,6%) (5) "Very bad" (22 – 1,9%)
Gender	1198	1,53	0,499	0,249	(1) "Male" (559 – 46,7%) (2) "Female" (639 – 53,3%)
Age	1198	45,55	12,991	168,758	-
Education	1091	9,47	4,725	22,324	-

					(801) "Bangkok" (106 – 8,8%)
					(802) "North" (221 – 18,4%)
Region	1200	803,26	1,171	1,370	(803) "Central" (300 – 25,0%)
					(804) "Northeast" (405 – 33,8%)
					(805) "South" (168 – 14,0%)
Rural - Urban	1200	1,21	0,407	0,166	(1) Rural (949 – 79,1%) (2) Urban (251 – 20,9%)
					(1) "Democracy is always preferable" (609 – 59,9%)
Preference for Democracy	1016	1,49	0,657	0,431	(2) "Under some circumstances, an authoritarian government can be preferable" (315 – 31,0%)
					(3) "For people like me it doesn't matter" (92 – 9,1%)
Satisfaction with the way how democracy works in Thailand	1095	2,02	0,687	0,472	(1) "Very satisfied" (223 – 20,4%) (2) "Fairly satisfied" (647 – 59,1%) (3) "Not very satisfied" (202 – 18,4%) (4) "Not at all satisfied" (23 – 2,1%)
If people have too many different ways of thinking, society will be chaotic	1086	1,85	0,761	0,579	(1) "Strongly agree" (370 – 34,1%) (2) "Somewhat agree" (552 – 50,8%) (3) "Somewhat disagree" (124 – 11,4%) (4) "Strongly disagree" (40 – 3,7%)

### Correlation Matrix for the Variables in Included Survey Wave 1:

	Trust in Government	Trust in Parliament	Trust in Parties	Trust in Courts	Trust in Military	Income	National Economy	Household Economy
<b>Trust in Government</b>	-	0,365**	0,523**	0,286**	0,246**	-0,133**	-0,249**	-0,098**
<b>Trust in Parliament</b>	0,365**	-	0,511**	0,272**	0,244**	-0,132**	-0,154**	-0,081**
<b>Trust in Parties</b>	0,523**	0,511**	-	0,294**	0,310**	-0,226**	-0,149**	-0,058*
<b>Trust in Courts</b>	0,286**	0,272**	0,294**	-	0,243**	-0,076**	-0,117**	-0,045
<b>Trust in Military</b>	0,246**	0,244**	0,310**	0,243**	-	-0,243**	-0,041	0,014
<b>Income</b>	-0,133**	-0,132**	-0,226**	-0,076**	-0,243**	-	-0,029	-0,217**
<b>National Economy</b>	-0,249**	-0,154**	-0,149**	-0,117**	-0,041	-0,029	-	0,352**
<b>Household Economy</b>	-0,098**	-0,081**	-0,058*	-0,045	0,014	-0,217**	0,352**	-
<b>Gender</b>	-0,44	-0,012	0,021	-0,033	-0,016	-0,016	0,068**	0,023
<b>Age</b>	0,028	0,033	0,042	0,010	0,022	-0,178**	0,112**	0,133**
<b>Education</b>	-0,111*	-0,098**	-0,197**	-0,025	-0,191**	0,482**	-0,052*	-0,170**
<b>Region</b>	0,054*	-0,005	0,171**	-0,031	0,156**	-0,346**	0,038	0,057*
<b>Preference for Democracy</b>	0,029	0,104**	0,050	0,035	0,075**	-0,070**	-0,048	0,035
<b>How Democracy Works</b>	0,224**	0,177**	0,205**	0,206**	0,204**	-0,150**	-0,097**	-0,033
<b>Authoritarian Values</b>	-0,109**	-0,050	-0,071**	-0,116**	-0,084**	0,071**	-0,042	-0,047

	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Education</b>	<b>Region</b>	<b>Preference for Democracy</b>	<b>How Democracy Works</b>	<b>Authoritarian Values</b>
<b>Trust in Government</b>	-0,44	0,028	-0,111*	0,054*	0,029	0,224**	-0,109**
<b>Trust in Parliament</b>	-0,012	0,033	-0,098**	-0,005	0,104**	0,177**	-0,050
<b>Trust in Parties</b>	0,021	0,042	-0,197**	0,171**	0,050	0,205**	-0,071**
<b>Trust in Courts</b>	-0,033	0,010	-0,025	-0,031	0,035	0,206**	-0,116**
<b>Trust in Military</b>	-0,016	0,022	-0,191**	0,156**	0,075**	0,204**	-0,084**
<b>Income</b>	-0,016	-0,178**	0,482**	-0,346**	-0,070**	-0,150**	0,071**
<b>National Economy</b>	0,068**	0,112**	-0,052*	0,038	-0,048	-0,097**	-0,042
<b>Household Economy</b>	0,023	0,133**	-0,170**	0,057*	0,035	-0,033	-0,047
<b>Gender</b>	-	-0,091**	-0,057*	-0,007	0,005	-0,111**	-0,055*
<b>Age</b>	-0,091**	-	-0,400**	0,50*	0,104**	-0,002	-0,001
<b>Education</b>	-0,057*	-0,400**	-	-0,197**	-0,051	-0,087**	0,030
<b>Region</b>	-0,007	0,50*	-0,197**	-	0,011	0,123**	-0,055*
<b>Preference for Democracy</b>	0,005	0,104**	-0,051	0,011	-	0,120**	0,023
<b>How Democracy Works</b>	-0,111**	-0,002	-0,087**	0,123**	0,120**	-	-0,023
<b>Authoritarian Values</b>	-0,055*	-0,001	0,030	-0,055*	0,023	-0,023	-

(Note: Table presents Pearson correlation coefficients; \* = 95% Significance level; \*\* = 99% Significance level)

### Correlation Matrix for the Variables in Included Survey Wave 2:

	Trust in Government	Trust in Parliament	Trust in Parties	Trust in Courts	Trust in Military	Income	National Economy	Household Economy
<b>Trust in Government</b>	-	0,567**	0,729**	0,522**	0,284**	-0,126**	0,271**	0,169**
<b>Trust in Parliament</b>	0,567**	-	0,529**	0,434**	0,342**	-0,105**	0,209**	0,148**
<b>Trust in Parties</b>	0,729**	0,529**	-	0,430**	0,246**	-0,134**	0,296**	0,158**
<b>Trust in Courts</b>	0,522**	0,434**	0,430**	-	0,397**	-0,017	0,195**	0,148**
<b>Trust in Military</b>	0,284**	0,342**	0,246**	0,397**	-	0,050	0,097**	0,074**
<b>Income</b>	-0,126**	-0,105**	-0,134**	-0,017	0,050	-	-0,020	0,162**
<b>National Economy</b>	0,271**	0,209**	0,296**	0,195**	0,097**	-0,020	-	0,382**
<b>Household Economy</b>	0,169**	0,148**	0,158**	0,148**	0,074**	0,162**	0,382**	-
<b>Gender</b>	-0,012	0,003	0,008	-0,018	-0,071**	-0,036	-0,039	-0,001
<b>Age</b>	0,070**	0,047	0,072**	0,013	0,045	-0,113**	-0,085**	-0,090**
<b>Education</b>	-0,111**	-0,071**	-0,105**	-0,037	-0,033	0,455**	0,035	0,158**
<b>Rural-Urban</b>	-0,003	-0,002	-0,004	-0,058*	-0,133**	-0,414**	-0,026	-0,150**
<b>Preference for Democracy</b>	0,211**	0,156**	0,188**	0,097**	0,097**	-0,050	0,072**	0,005
<b>How Democracy Works</b>	0,275**	0,233**	0,248**	0,152**	0,175**	-0,122**	0,218**	0,107**
<b>Authoritarian Values</b>	-0,167**	-0,114**	0,150**	-0,130**	-0,166**	-0,027	-0,055**	-0,055**

	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Education</b>	<b>Rural-Urban</b>	<b>Preference for Democracy</b>	<b>How Democracy Works</b>	<b>Authoritarian Values</b>
<b>Trust in Government</b>	-0,012	0,070**	-0,111**	-0,003	0,211**	0,275**	-0,167**
<b>Trust in Parliament</b>	0,003	0,047	-0,071**	-0,002	0,156**	0,233**	-0,114**
<b>Trust in Parties</b>	0,008	0,072**	-0,105**	-0,004	0,188**	0,248**	0,150**
<b>Trust in Courts</b>	-0,018	0,013	-0,037	-0,058*	0,097**	0,152**	-0,130**
<b>Trust in Military</b>	-0,071**	0,045	-0,033	-0,133**	0,097**	0,175**	-0,166**
<b>Income</b>	-0,036	-0,113**	0,455**	-0,414**	-0,050	-0,122**	-0,027
<b>National Economy</b>	-0,039	-0,085**	0,035	-0,026	0,072**	0,218**	-0,055**
<b>Household Economy</b>	-0,001	-0,090**	0,158**	-0,150**	0,005	0,107**	-0,055**
<b>Gender</b>	-	-0,037	0,002	-0,057*	-0,018	-0,020	0,019
<b>Age</b>	-0,037	-	-0,445**	0,095**	0,025	0,073**	0,003
<b>Education</b>	0,002	-0,445**	-	-0,355**	-0,028	-0,141**	0,016
<b>Rural-Urban</b>	-0,057*	0,095**	-0,355**	-	0,036	0,074**	0,046
<b>Preference for Democracy</b>	-0,018	0,025	-0,028	0,036	-	0,156**	-0,049
<b>How Democracy Works</b>	-0,020	0,073**	-0,141**	0,074**	0,156**	-	-0,118**
<b>Authoritarian Values</b>	0,019	0,003	0,016	0,046	-0,049	-0,118**	-

(Note: Table presents Pearson correlation coefficients; \* = 95% Significance level; \*\* = 99% Significance level)

### Correlation Matrix for the Variables in Included Survey Wave 3:

	Trust in Government	Trust in Parliament	Trust in Parties	Trust in Courts	Trust in Military	Income	National Economy	Household Economy
<b>Trust in Government</b>	-	0,508**	0,537**	0,526**	0,441**	-0,007	0,338**	0,189**
<b>Trust in Parliament</b>	0,508**	-	0,509**	0,449**	0,420**	-0,061*	0,325**	0,189**
<b>Trust in Parties</b>	0,537**	0,509**	-	0,356**	0,322**	0,088**	0,242**	0,122**
<b>Trust in Courts</b>	0,526**	0,449**	0,356**	-	0,452**	-0,032	0,267**	0,155**
<b>Trust in Military</b>	0,441**	0,420**	0,322**	0,452**	-	0,090**	0,242**	0,135**
<b>Income</b>	-0,007	-0,061*	0,088**	-0,032	0,090**	-	-0,057*	-0,162**
<b>National Economy</b>	0,338**	0,325**	0,242**	0,267**	0,242**	-0,057*	-	0,376**
<b>Household Economy</b>	0,189**	0,189**	0,122**	0,155**	0,135**	-0,162**	0,376**	-
<b>Gender</b>	-0,062*	-0,055*	-0,079**	-0,101**	-0,036	-0,070**	0,001	0,041
<b>Age</b>	-0,010	0,029	-0,042	0,072**	-0,021	-0,186**	0,070**	0,081**
<b>Education</b>	0,068*	0,035	0,149**	-0,011	0,187**	0,506**	-0,007	-0,092**
<b>Rural-Urban</b>	0,016	0,065*	-0,083**	0,048	-0,145**	-0,539**	0,002	0,029
<b>Preference for Democracy</b>	0,002	-0,060*	0,037	0,009	-0,053	0,141**	-0,070*	-0,062*
<b>How Democracy Works</b>	0,252**	0,211**	0,188**	0,232**	0,247**	0,087**	0,162**	0,140**
<b>Authoritarian Values</b>	-0,011	0,002	0,084**	0,037	0,127**	0,175**	0,056*	0,014

	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Education</b>	<b>Rural-Urban</b>	<b>Preference for Democracy</b>	<b>How Democracy Works</b>	<b>Authoritarian Values</b>
<b>Trust in Government</b>	-0,062*	-0,010	0,068*	0,016	0,002	0,252**	-0,011
<b>Trust in Parliament</b>	-0,055*	0,029	0,035	0,065*	-0,060*	0,211**	0,002
<b>Trust in Parties</b>	-0,079**	-0,042	0,149**	-0,083**	0,037	0,188**	0,084**
<b>Trust in Courts</b>	-0,101**	0,072**	-0,011	0,048	0,009	0,232**	0,037
<b>Trust in Military</b>	-0,036	-0,021	0,187**	-0,145**	-0,053	0,247**	0,127**
<b>Income</b>	-0,070**	-0,186**	0,506**	-0,539**	0,141**	0,087**	0,175**
<b>National Economy</b>	0,001	0,070**	-0,007	0,002	-0,070*	0,162**	0,056*
<b>Household Economy</b>	0,041	0,081**	-0,092**	0,029	-0,062*	0,140**	0,014
<b>Gender</b>	-	-0,048	-0,051	0,003	0,039	-0,016	-0,058*
<b>Age</b>	-0,048	-	-0,486**	0,145**	-0,014	-0,102**	-0,041
<b>Education</b>	-0,051	-0,486**	-	-0,424**	0,053	0,090**	0,193**
<b>Rural-Urban</b>	0,003	0,145**	-0,424**	-	-0,126**	-0,165**	-0,277**
<b>Preference for Democracy</b>	0,039	-0,014	0,053	-0,126**	-	0,073**	0,008
<b>How Democracy Works</b>	-0,016	-0,102**	0,090**	-0,165**	0,073**	-	0,053*
<b>Authoritarian Values</b>	-0,058*	-0,041	0,193**	-0,277**	0,008	0,053*	-

(Note: Table presents Pearson correlation coefficients; \* = 95% Significance level; \*\* = 99% Significance level)

### Correlation Matrix for the Variables in Included Survey Wave 4:

	Trust in Government	Trust in Parliament	Trust in Parties	Trust in Courts	Trust in Military	Income	National Economy	Household Economy
<b>Trust in Government</b>	-	0,651**	0,583**	0,543**	0,353**	0,075*	0,180**	0,124**
<b>Trust in Parliament</b>	0,651**	-	0,647**	0,539**	0,286**	0,016	0,244**	0,202**
<b>Trust in Parties</b>	0,583**	0,647**	-	0,386**	0,153**	0,140**	0,240**	0,190**
<b>Trust in Courts</b>	0,543**	0,539**	0,386**	-	0,459**	0,104**	0,181**	0,062*
<b>Trust in Military</b>	0,353**	0,286**	0,153**	0,459**	-	0,015	0,079**	0,075*
<b>Income</b>	0,075*	0,016	0,140**	0,104**	0,015	-	0,158**	-0,054
<b>National Economy</b>	0,180**	0,244**	0,240**	0,181**	0,079**	0,158**	-	0,449*
<b>Household Economy</b>	0,124**	0,202**	0,190**	0,062*	0,075*	-0,054	0,449*	-
<b>Gender</b>	-0,013	-0,022	-0,046	0,002	0,016	0,009	0,021	0,001
<b>Age</b>	-0,063*	0,006	-0,072	0,033	-0,053	-0,084**	-0,009	0,045
<b>Education</b>	0,152**	0,060	0,155**	0,103**	0,164**	0,352**	0,084**	-0,030
<b>Region</b>	-0,034	-0,048	-0,084**	-0,200**	-0,061*	-0,387**	0,014	0,053
<b>Rural-Urban</b>	0,063*	-0,019	0,034	0,122**	0,118**	0,374**	0,016	-0,062
<b>Preference for Democracy</b>	0,088**	0,066*	0,041	0,051	0,125**	0,002	-0,009	-0,048
<b>How Democracy Works</b>	0,192**	0,205**	0,269**	0,211**	0,173**	0,096**	0,196**	0,112**
<b>Authoritarian Values</b>	0,205**	0,190**	0,130**	0,146**	0,158**	0,074*	-0,002	0,014

	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Education</b>	<b>Region</b>	<b>Rural-Urban</b>	<b>Preference for Democracy</b>	<b>How Democracy Works</b>	<b>Authoritarian Values</b>
<b>Trust in Government</b>	-0,013	-0,063*	0,152**	-0,034	0,063*	0,088**	0,192**	0,205**
<b>Trust in Parliament</b>	-0,022	0,006	0,060	-0,048	-0,019	0,066*	0,205**	0,190**
<b>Trust in Parties</b>	-0,046	-0,072	0,155**	-0,084**	0,034	0,041	0,269**	0,130**
<b>Trust in Courts</b>	0,002	0,033	0,103**	-0,200**	0,122**	0,051	0,211**	0,146**
<b>Trust in Military</b>	0,016	-0,053	0,164**	-0,061*	0,118**	0,125**	0,173**	0,158**
<b>Income</b>	0,009	-0,084**	0,352**	-0,387**	0,374**	0,002	0,096**	0,074*
<b>National Economy</b>	0,021	-0,009	0,084**	0,014	0,016	-0,009	0,196**	-0,002
<b>Household Economy</b>	0,001	0,045	-0,030	0,053	-0,062	-0,048	0,112**	0,014
<b>Gender</b>	-	0,018	-0,129**	-0,032	-0,028	-0,037	-0,019	0,010
<b>Age</b>	0,018	-	-0,467**	-0,102**	0,052	-0,090**	-0,093**	-0,057
<b>Education</b>	-0,129**	-0,467**	-	0,008	0,167**	0,134**	0,203**	0,183**
<b>Region</b>	-0,032	-0,102**	0,008	-	-0,456**	0,038	-0,057	-0,045
<b>Rural-Urban</b>	-0,028	0,052	0,167**	-0,456**	-	0,003	0,085**	0,047
<b>Preference for Democracy</b>	-0,037	-0,090**	0,134**	0,038	0,003	-	0,188**	0,114**
<b>How Democracy Works</b>	-0,019	-0,093**	0,203**	-0,057	0,085**	0,188**	-	0,069*
<b>Authoritarian Values</b>	0,010	-0,057	0,183**	-0,045	0,047	0,114**	0,069*	-

(Note: Table represents Pearson correlation coefficients; \* = 95% Significance level; \*\* = 99% Significance level)

## 10.4. Appendix 4: Principal Components Analyses

### Preliminary Principal Components Analysis Results for Political Institutions:

Institutions	Wave 1	Wave 2	Wave 3	Wave 4
Government	0,732	0,849	0,781	0,897
Parliament	0,721	0,743	0,774	0,894
Parties	0,809	0,828	0,777	0,902
Courts	0,577	0,758	0,728	0,805
Military	0,554	0,601	0,618	0,614
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure	0,756	0,814	0,831	0,852
Bartlett's Test	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000

(Note: Values represent factor loadings in the analyses' component matrix)

### Preliminary Principal Components Analysis Results for Democratic Values Variables:

Democratic Values	Wave 1	Wave 2	Wave 3	Wave 4
<b>Satisfaction with how democracy works in Thailand</b>	<b>0,417</b>	<b>0,316</b>	<b>0,740</b>	<b>0,482</b>
To what extent would you want Thailand to be a democracy?	0,565	0,805	0,738	-
Do you think democracy is suitable for our country	0,572	0,824	0,406	-
<b>Preference for Democracy</b>	<b>0,510</b>	<b>0,540</b>	<b>0,631</b>	<b>0,753</b>
Democracy can solve the country's problems	0,494	0,576	0,443	0,762
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure	0,648	0,736	0,806	0,901
Bartlett's Test	0,101	0,000	0,000	0,000

(Note: Table represents communalities of variables for democratic values. Other questions appear only in one or two survey waves and were therefore excluded. The two variables in bold have been chosen simply because survey wave four again excluded variables two and three, which thus had to be omitted. The first variable was preferred over the last in the end, because variable four and five cover a similar thematic focus on the general preference for democracy, whereas the first variable captures a more contextual question on the country's current performance)

**Preliminary Principal Components Analysis Results for Authoritarian Values Variables:**

<b>Authoritarian Values</b>	<b>Wave 1</b>	<b>Wave 2</b>	<b>Wave 3</b>	<b>Wave 4</b>
Government leaders are like the head of a family; we should all follow their decisions	0,439	0,458	0,551	0,646
Harmony of the community will be disrupted if people organize lots of groups	0,570	0,717	-	0,675
If we have political leaders who are morally upright, we can let them decide everything	0,382	-	0,569	0,730
<b>If people have too many different ways of thinking, society will be chaotic</b>	<b>0,618</b>	<b>0,693</b>	<b>0,505</b>	<b>0,751</b>
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure	0,730	0,902	0,807	0,905
Bartlett's Test	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000

(Note: Table represents communalities of variables for authoritarian values. Other questions appear only in one or two survey waves and were therefore excluded. Variables two and three in the table above have also been excluded for not being questioned in survey waves three and two respectively. In the end, the fourth variable has been chosen as the one covering most of the variance, because the first variable shows rather low values for survey waves one and two. Therefore, only one variable has been selected covering authoritarian values in the analysis)