

STATE OF DEMOCRACIES IN ASIA:

**Prospects of Democracies Surviving in
Emerging Countries**

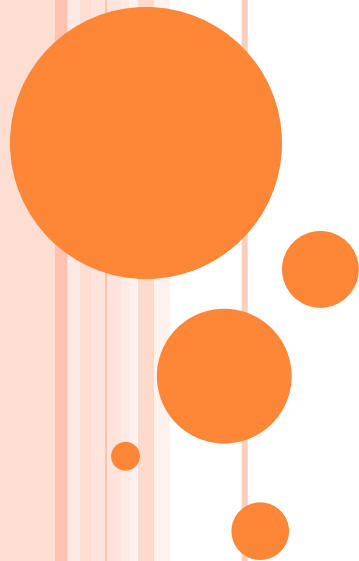
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Forum**

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. "Democratic Recession"

- Growing concern for the state of democracies in the world.
- In terms of numbers
- In terms of quality (US, UK etc)

2. Definitions

3. Overview of trend of political regimes

- In the World
- In Asia

4. Case studies: Indonesia, Philippines, Malaysia, Myanmar, Thailand and Cambodia -> Countries with Regime Transformations.

5. Implications on Democratic Countries and IFIs

II. DEFINITIONS

1. Democratic Regimes

1) People select political offices through free, fair, and regularly held elections. Civil rights that are necessary to make political competition and elections free and fair, are protected.

2) All effective political offices are held accountable, either directly or indirectly, to the electorate through elections.

2. Semi-Democratic Regimes

1) Even when elections are held regularly to select political offices, they are not fully free or fair. Civil rights that are necessary to make political competition and elections free and fair—such as freedoms of expression and association—are not sufficiently protected.

2) Not all effective political offices are held accountable to the electorate through elections. In other words, even when free and competitive elections are regularly held, there remain “reserved domains”—political offices that are not accountable to the electorate that can project significant political power.

3) Only a portion of the population has the right to vote.

3. Authoritarian Regimes (by Juan Linz)

1) Political systems with limited, not responsible, political pluralism: without electorate and guiding ideology (but with distinctive mentalities); without intensive nor extensive political mobilization (except some points in their development).

2) A leader (or occasionally a small group) exercises power within formally ill-defined limits but actually quite predictable ones

III. OVERVIEW

1. Use Data from the Freedom House

1) Rating between 1 and 7

2) Classifications

- 1-2.5 → Free = Democratic Regime
- 3-5 → Partly Free = Semi-Democratic Regime
- 5.5-7 → Not Free = Authoritarian Regime

2. State of Political Regimes in the World

1) Third Wave from 1974

2) Number of democratic regimes increased from 41 in 1974 to reach peak with 90 in 2006 and 2012.

3) Number of authoritarian regimes decreased from 63 in 1974 to 42 in 2008. Then, it recovered to 50 in 2018.

Figure 1. Number of Different Political Regimes in the World

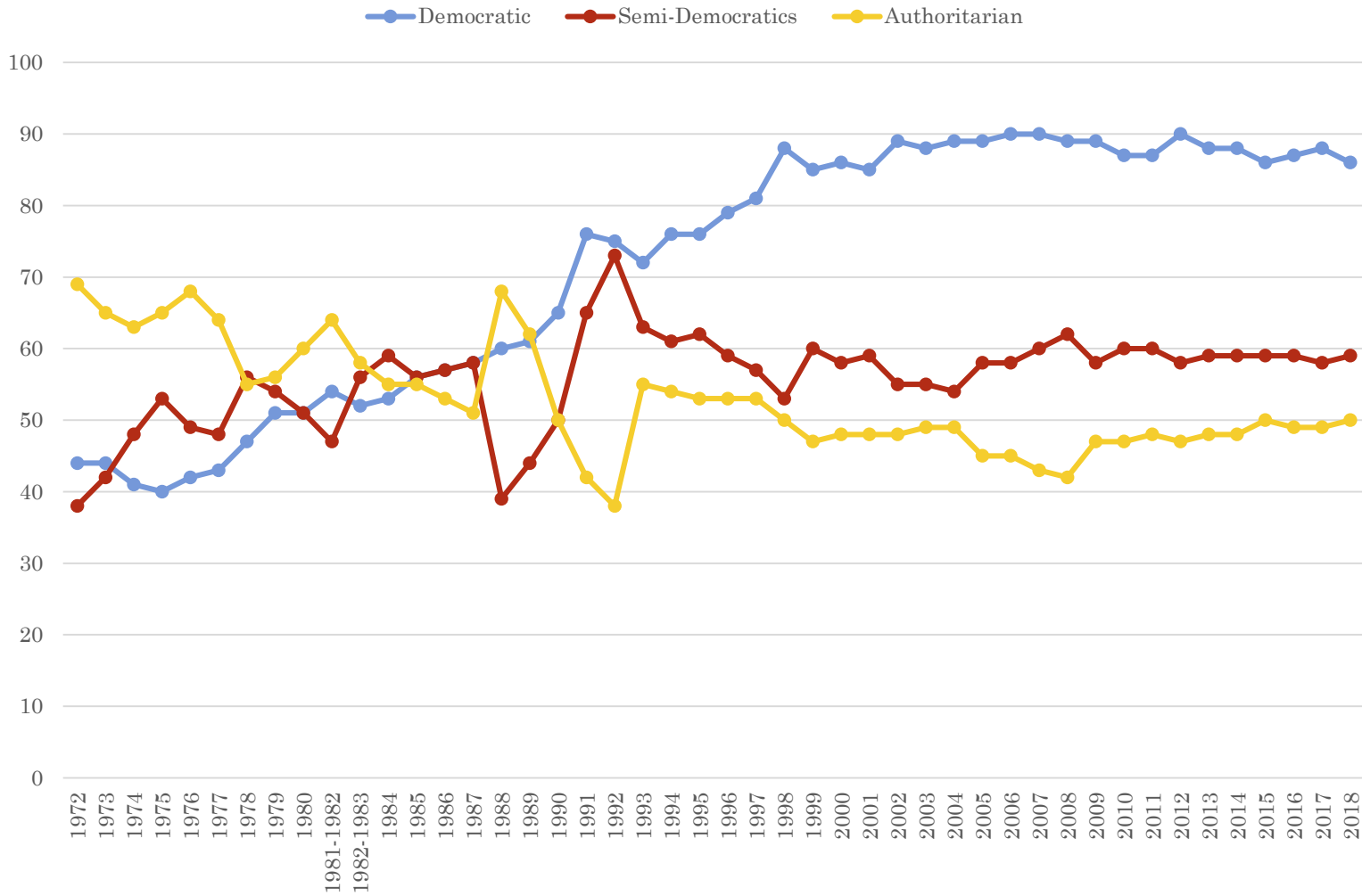
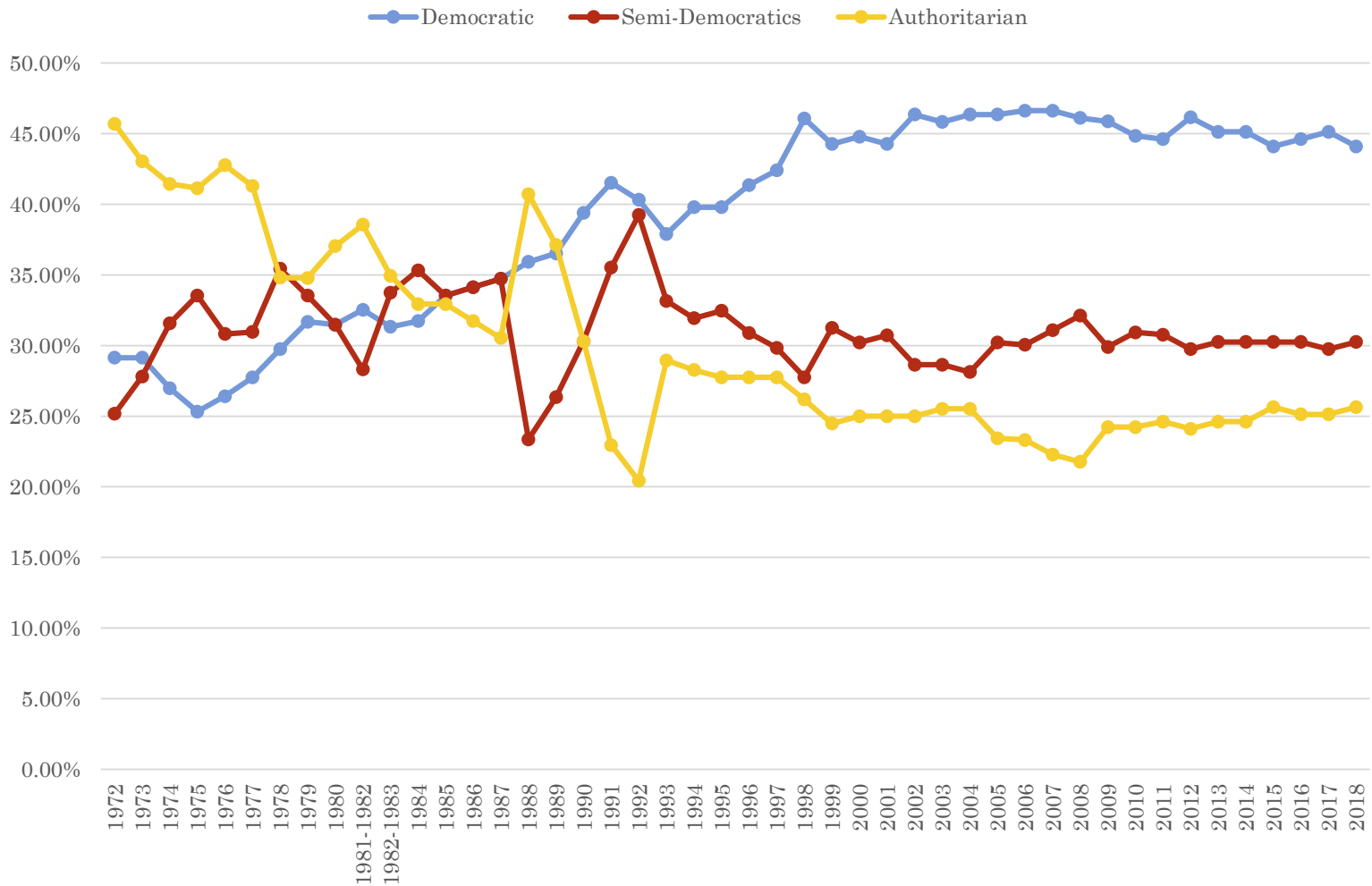


Figure 2. Share of Different Political Regimes in the World



3. State of Political Regimes in Asia

1) Number of Democratic Regimes is small

- In mid 1980s: Japan and India
- Since 1990s: Japan, India, South Korea, Mongolia and Taiwan.
- **It is below 20%.**

2) Some partial democratization?

- Number and share of **authoritarian regimes have gone down** from around 2005.
- Number and share of **semi-democratic regimes have expanded** from around 2005.

Figure 3. Number of Different Political Regimes in Asia

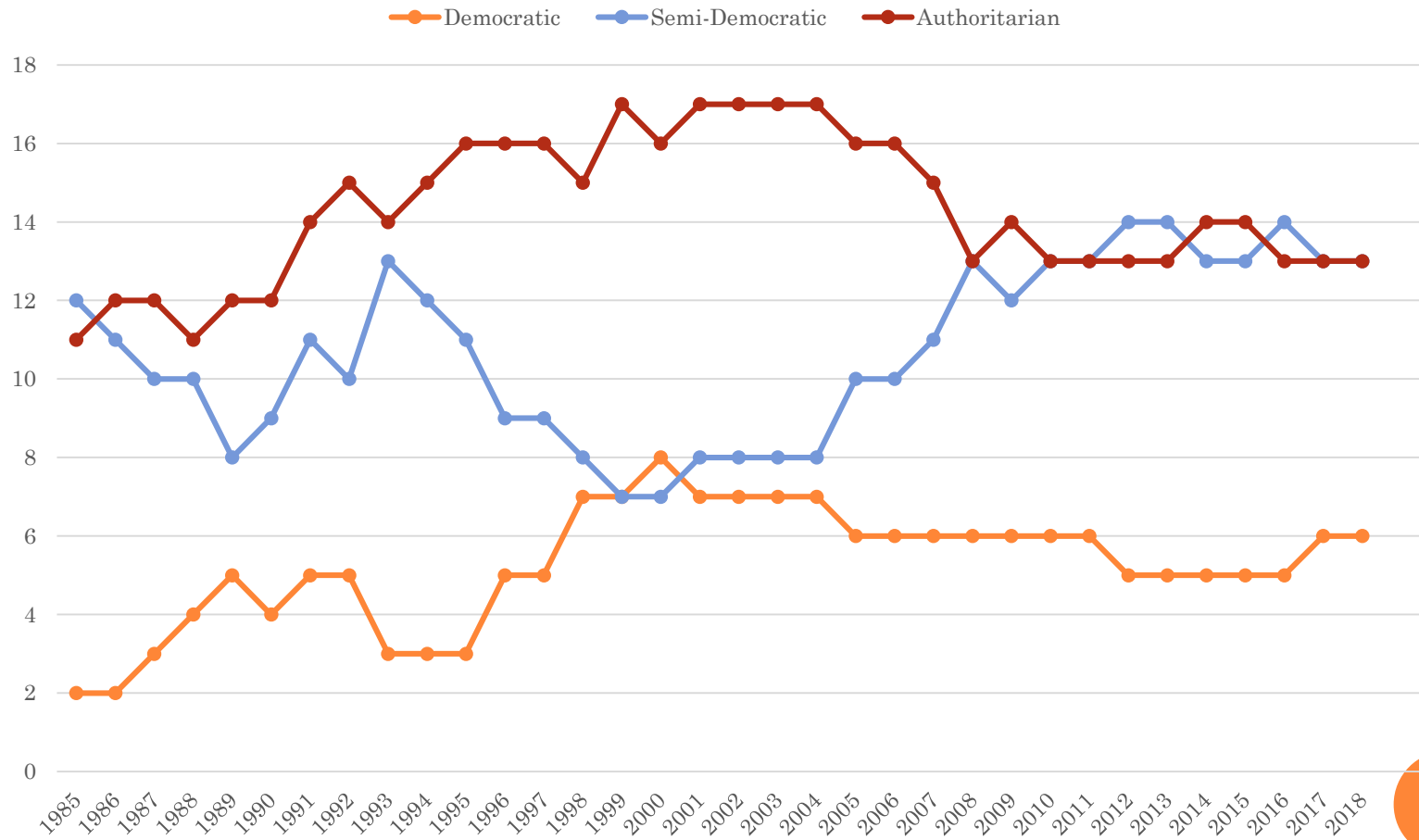
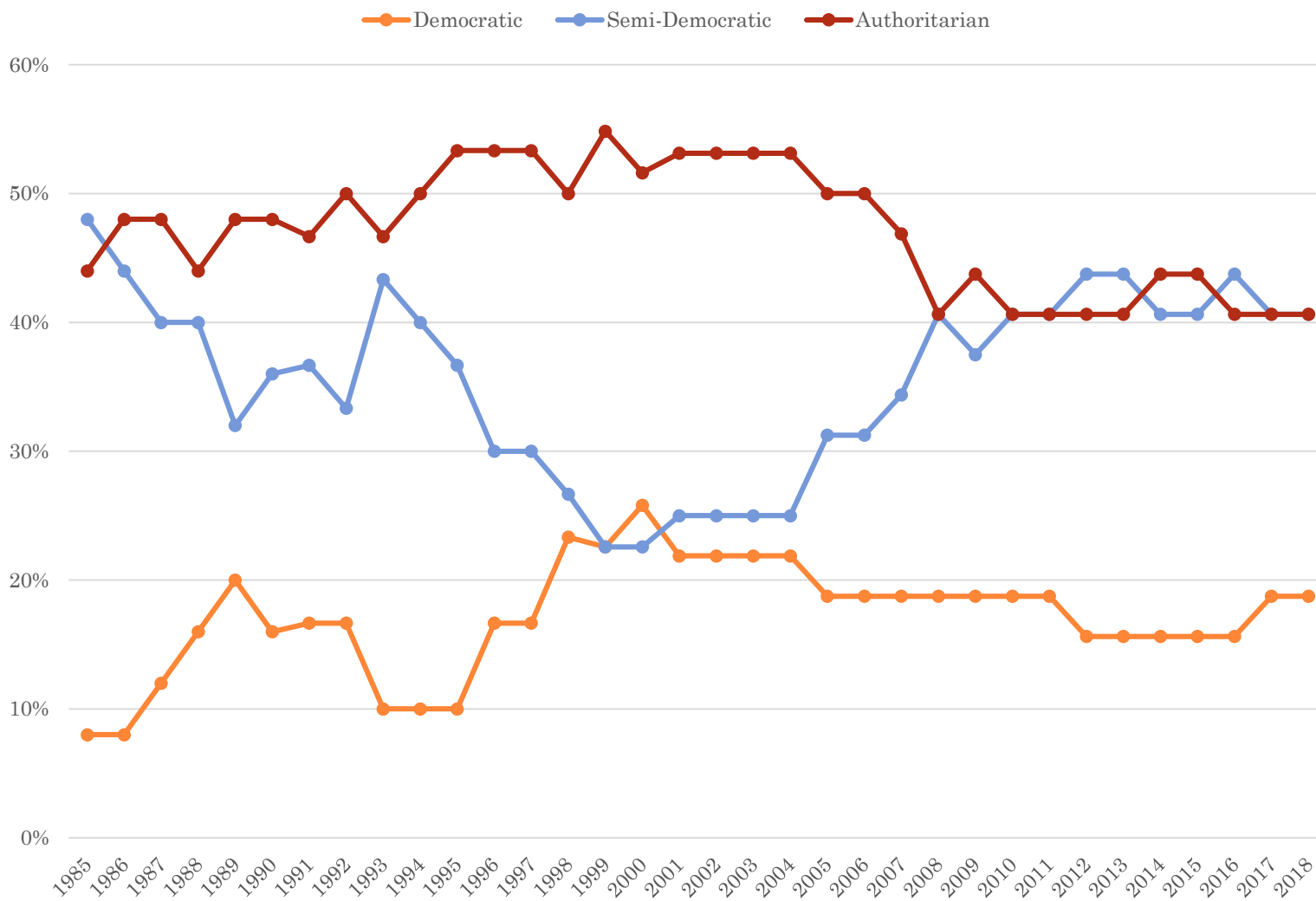


Figure 4. Share of Different Political Regimes in Asia



IV. FACTORS RELATED TO REGIME CHANGES

1. Democratization

- **Poor performance (economic crisis and Military defeat)**
- **Split among the elite**
- **External factors (sanctions, diffusion)**

2. Democratic breakdown

- **Poor performance (corruption and economic policy failures)**
- **Semi-loyalty (Civilians knocking the barracks of the military for their short term interests)**
- **Strong president (political institution)**

3. Persistence of authoritarian regimes

- **Economic development**
- **Organized political parties**
- **Collective action problem for oppositions**

V. CASES

	Patterns of Changes (and no change)
China	Authoritarian
Indonesia	Authoritarian → Democratic
Myanmar	Authoritarian → Semi-Democratic
Philippines	Authoritarian → Democratic → Semi-Democratic → Democratic → Semi-Democratic
Malaysia	Semi-Democratic → ?
Thailand	Democratic → Authoritarian
Cambodia	Semi-Democratic → Authoritarian

1. China

1) Authoritarian

2) Some expectations (Rowen 1996) → **They were so wrong.**

3) Secretary Generals

- Jiang Zemin 1989-2002
- Hu Jintao 2002- 2012
- Xi Jinping 2012-
 - 2018 constitution amendment no more term limit to the position of the president.

4) Recent trend

5) Factors

- Economic development
- Political performance (much more “free”)
- Organized and cohesive party
- Collective action problem

Figure 5. China Economy

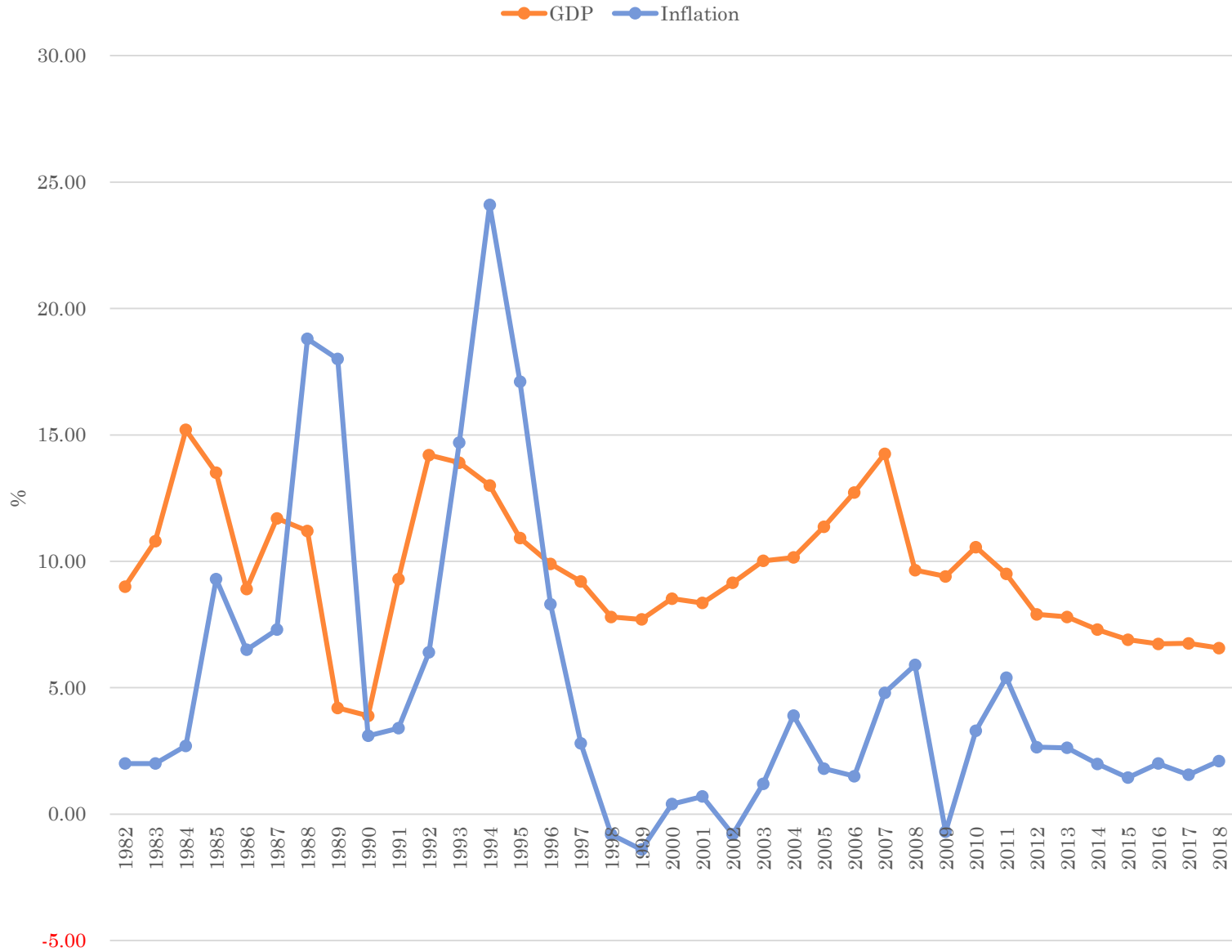
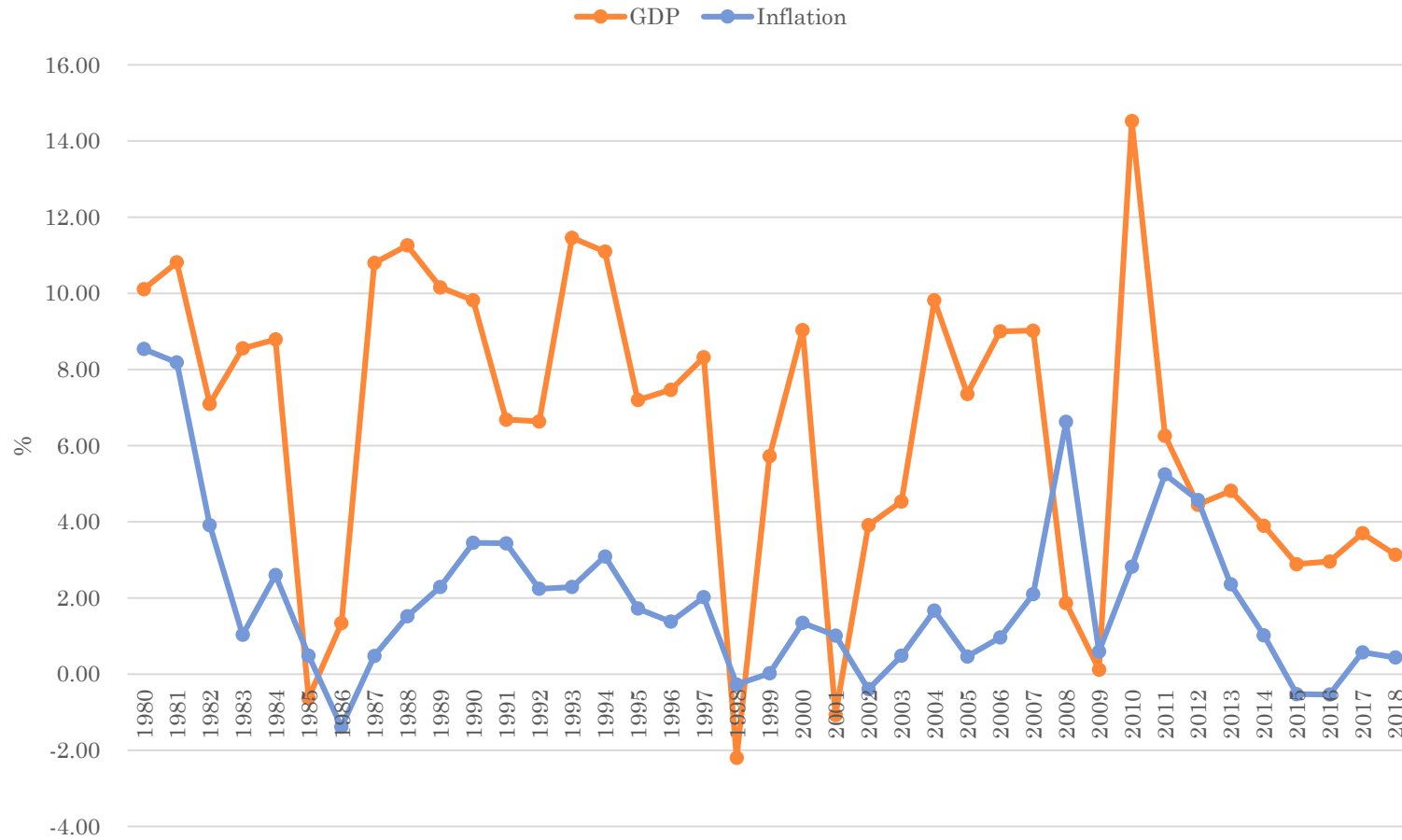


Figure 6. The Singaporian Model?



2.Indonesia

1) Authoritarian until 1998, Democratic since 2004

2) Economic crisis in 1998 trigger transition

3) Carefully designed constitution (weak president) contributes to endurance of democracy

3. Myanmar

1) Authoritarian until 2016, SemiDemocratic since 2016

2) Economic crisis in 2007 triggers revolt.

3) Economic sanctions promote transition from 2008.

4. Malaysia

- 1) Semi-Democratic, but chances for democratization since 2018**
- 2) Split among the political elite
(PM Najib vs former PM Mahathir)**
- 3) Classic case of modernization theory?**

5. Philippines

- 1) Authoritarian until 1987, Democratic between 1987 and 2001, Semi-Democratic between 2001 and 2010, Democratic between 2010 and 2016, Semi-Democratic since 2016**
- 2) Strong president, corruption**

6. Thailand

1) Democratic between 2001 and 2006, Authoritarian 2006, Semi-Democratic between 2006 and 2014, Authoritarian from 2014

2) Corruption

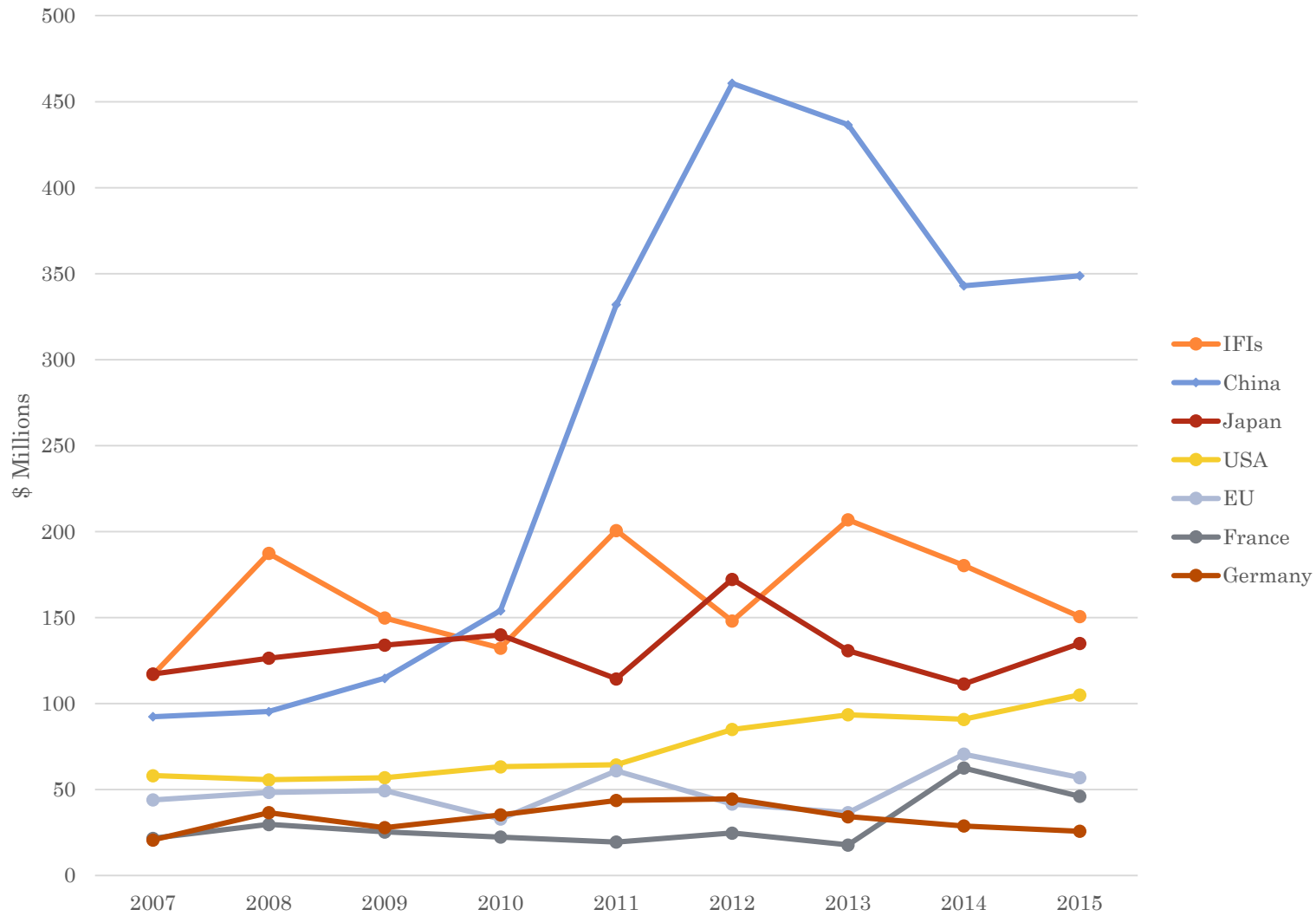
3) Semi-loyalty (mass media tolerant of military intervention, an opposition leader against Thaksin encouraging the military to come in)

7. Cambodia

**1) Semi-Democratic between 1993 and 2015.
Authoritarian since 2017.**

**2) External factors (Direct projection of
power by the West in 1990s. Western
countries have lost leverage in recent years.)**

Figure 7. Cambodia, Assistance



VI. IMPLICATIONS

1. Importance of some factors

- 1) Corruption → Democratic breakdown
- 2) External factors → Transition as well as breakdown

2. Where are democratic countries ?

- 1) Losing interests.
- 2) Waning influence.

3. More needs for cooperation among democratic countries.

1) Should tell dictators they watch what they are doing → Economic sanctions ?

2) More incentives (Similar to Millennium Corporation)

- Democratic elements in governance

3) Realistic option → Reduction of **corruption** as conditionality

4) More assistance to democratic countries

3. International financial institutions

1) Should be more aware of political implications of their provision of financial resources

2) Policy options

- Resort to sanctions.
- Provision of more incentives for expansion of democratic elements in governance

3) More realistic? → further emphasis on **reduction of corruption with incentives**

4) More disbursement to democratic countries

•Loans from IBRD (Commitment base)

2013		2014		2015		2016					
1	Brazil	2760.0	1	China	2215.0	1	Egypt, Arab Rep.	2450.0	1	Peru	2850.0
2	Indonesia	1869.9	2	Ukraine	2182.0	2	Ukraine	2104.7	2	India	2350.0
3	China	1540.0	3	India	1975.0	3	India	1448.0	3	China	2282.0
4	Turkey	1301.0	4	Turkey	1696.8	4	Morocco	1405.0	4	Indonesia	1816.5
5	Morocco	1133.7	5	Philippines	1696.3	5	China	1371.5	5	Colombia	1500.0
6	Colombia	1020.0	6	Colombia	1600.0	6	Argentina	1336.8	6	Kazakhstan	1080.0
7	Philippines	900.0	7	Romania	1287.1	7	Colombia	700.0	7	Argentina	1000.0
8	Egypt, Arab Rep.	585.4	8	Morocco	1213.8	8	Tunisia	700.0	8	Philippines	950.0
9	Ecuador	305.0	9	Brazil	1110.2	9	Indonesia	500.0	9	Brazil	908.0
10	India	277.7	10	Indonesia	1047.4	10	Mexico	500.0	10	Turkey	846.9



- Loans from ADB(Regular and concessionary loans combined, Commitment base)

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