

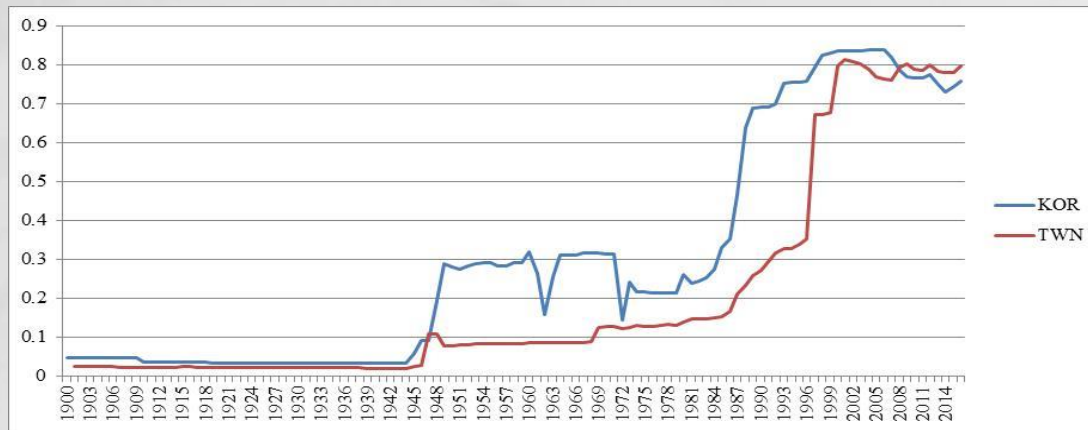
# Week 6: Culture and Asian Democracy

**Government and Politics in Northeast Asia**

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# I. Democracies and Values

- Authoritarianism, Democratic Transition, and Democratic Consolidation (V-Dem indicators)



**Colonial Time:** ~1945 Korea, Japan, Taiwan

**Democratic Transition:** 1987 in Korea, 1992 in Taiwan, and 1945 in Japan

**Democratic Consolidation** (Huntington's Two-turnover test): early 1990s in Japan, and 2008 in Korea and Taiwan

# I. Democracies and Values

## ○ Values?

- Latent, unobservable constructs of what is regarded a desirable state of affairs over against another state of affairs
- Guiding principles for action: influence “the selection of modes, means, and ends of action”
- Stable and durable: do not disappear when situation changes (<-> attitudes, opinions, etc.)
- Most ideal to compare cultures (over time)

## ○ Global Value Surveys?

- Global: ISSP, International Social Survey Programme, WVS, World Values Survey
- Asia: AB, Asia Barometer , EAVS, East Asia Value Survey

# Democracy and Values?

- Confucian welfare state (Jones, 1990)
  - Confucian values such as self-reliance, filial piety, respect for seniors, paternal benevolence, and placing group before the individual
  - Put the caring burden on the shoulder of the family instead of the state and, in a similar vein, companies were seen as a family writ-large

# Democracy and Values?

- Confucian welfare state (1990, 1993)
  - Gender implication? Women-promoting or not?
  - The Confucian legacy influences women's position in society by emphasizing the virtue in obeying one's father, husband, and son.
    - Taiwan men have decision-making power over the domicile, surnames, parental rights, and property rights (Wu 2007)
    - the Ho-Ju system (a civil law) protects the right of men to be the "head of family" (which appears in any family-related official documents)

# I. Democracies and Values

- Relevant debates... “Asian Values” and “Democracies”
  - YouTube 1: <https://youtu.be/vYPuHRlNsjE>
  - YouTube 2: <https://youtu.be/Zsi4oppBavY>
- Your thoughts?
  - Binary: Asian/Islam values compatible with democracies?
  - Continuous: Judeo-Christian values lend themselves better to democracy than Asian/Islam values?

# I. Democracies and Values

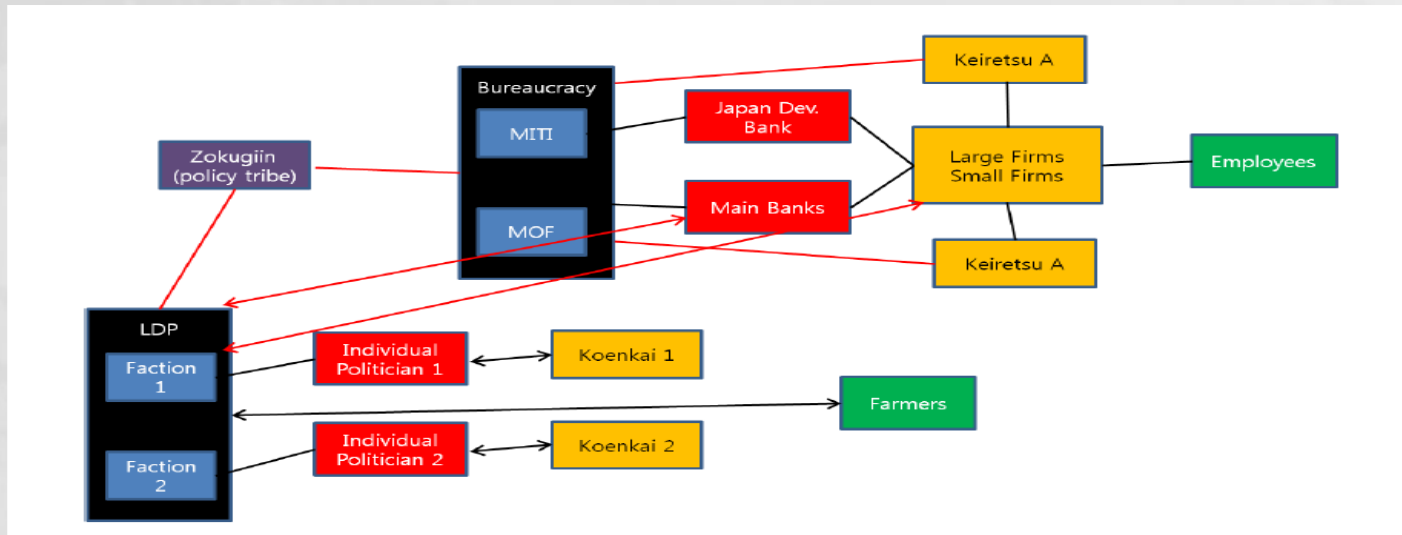
## o Pros 1?

- Economic success of certain Asian societies, credit must be given to the role of these 'Asian values'
- Flying geese patterns & developmental state model



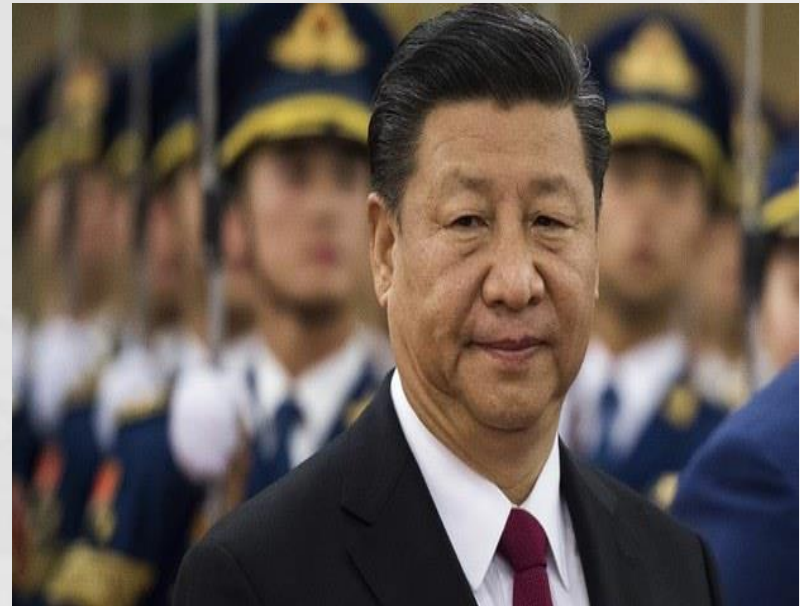
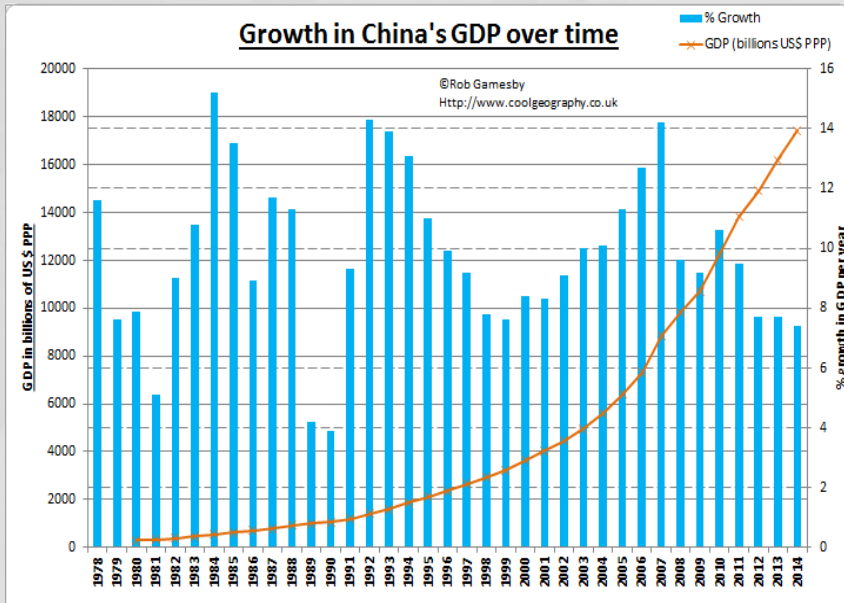
# I. Democracies and Values

- Developmental state mode? Economic structure = family-writ-large?



- Asian Financial Crisis... reversed interpretation!!!





# I. Democracies and Values

## ◉ **Pros 2?**

- Western values place too much emphasis on the individual rather than the community
- West is experiencing social decay
  - Increases in antisocial behavior, such as crime, drug use, and general violence in society
  - The breakdown of family life, including increased divorce rates, increased illegitimacy, a rise in the number of teenage pregnancies
  - A decline in social capital, the rise of personal indulgence and hedonism

# I. Democracies and Values

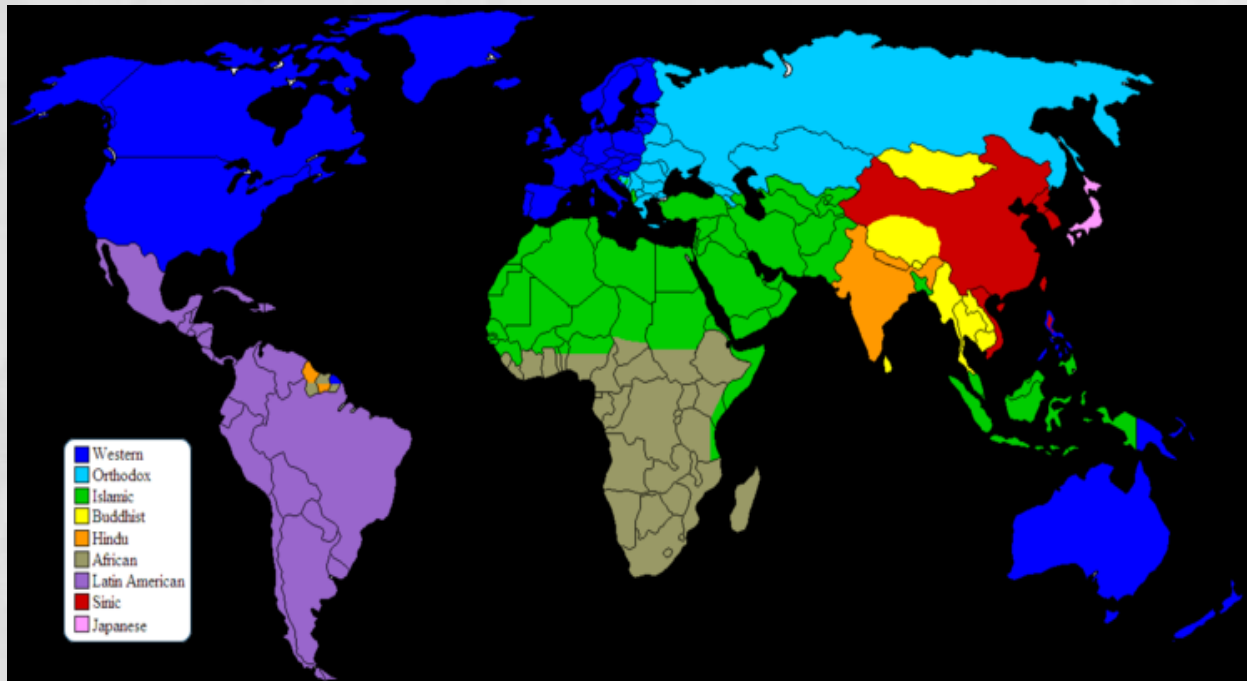
## ◦ Cons 1?

- Asia is too diverse to be bundled under one “Asian Value”..
  - Long-standing religious (Islamic, Buddhist, Confucian, Catholic, Protestant, Hinduism)
  - Diverse language
  - Diverse colonial legacies
  - Etc...

# I. Democracies and Values

## o Cons 1?

- Samuel Huntington, for example, argues that Asia contains five different civilizations.



# I. Democracies and Values

## o Cons 2?

- Core of the Asian value “Confucianism” is a broad concept .. Which is often designed for political purposes
  - **Cultures are contingent:** Culture and communism?
  - Case 1: The first Chinese specifically to advocate ‘socialism’ and ‘communism’ was the revolutionary nationalist leader Sun Yat-sen (1866–1925), who in 1905 formulated his ‘Three People’s Principles’, a political programme that would influence Chinese politics for the next half-century. In addition to ‘nationalism’ and ‘people’s rights’, the third principle was the ‘people’s livelihood’, which was formulated as a result of Sun’s awareness of the social question that was plaguing Europe and the USA. For Sun, ‘people’s livelihood’ was equivalent to ‘socialism’ and ‘communism’.

# I. Democracies and Values

## o Cons 2?

- Case 2: Mongolian culture is pro-democratic? Sabloff (2002) points out that Mongolian culture of liberal democracy precedes 20th-century Western influence. He says it is derived from their nomadic, tribal ancestors and from their great leader Genghis Khan and it is a logical outgrowth of their history and political culture. Sabloff argues Genghis Khan coded parts of all pillars of liberal democracy—independence and sovereignty, literacy, participatory government, rule of law, equality of citizens, equality through meritocracy, respect for women
- Case 3: Korea was heavily influenced by the Chinese Confucianism since the Chosun Dynasty (1392-1897). . From ancient times philosophers such as Laozi, Zhuangzi, and Mozi had advocated the equal division of inherited property, the removal of class constraints and distinctions between rich and poor, and the promotion of officials according to merit via the imperial examination system.

# Democratic Values.. Universal?

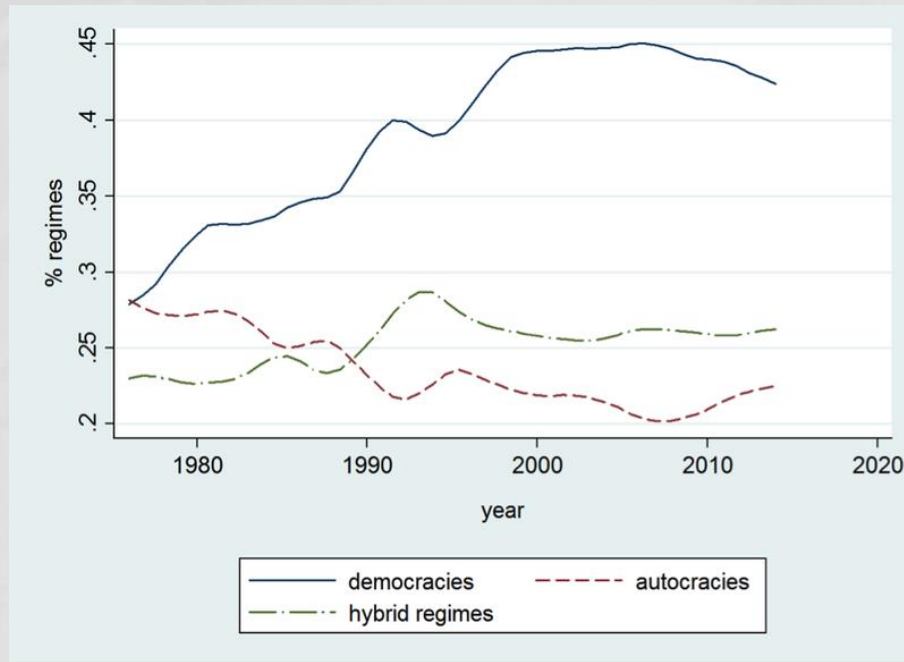
- *The End of History (Fukuyama, 1992)*
- *The advent of Western liberal democracy may signal the endpoint of humanity's sociocultural evolution and the final form of human government*
- *Contradicts that of Karl Marx, who predicted that communism would displace capitalism*

Francis Fukuyama

THE END  
OF HISTORY  
AND  
THE  
LAST  
MAN

# Democratic Backsliding....

## ● Globally?





# V. Democracy and Outcomes?

- OK, democracies... So what?
  - Democracies have better human rights records than non-democracies.
  - Democracies have higher living standards than non-democracies.
  - Democracies are more economically productive than non-democracies.
  - Democracies do not fight wars against each other.
  - Democracies do not experience famines.
  - Democracies do not commit democide.