Online Appendix: The Limits of Borrowed Legitimacy

Military Trust Collapse in Thailand, 2001–2022

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This appendix presents supplementary analyses referenced in the main text. All models control for age (centered), gender, education (standardized), and urban residence unless otherwise noted.

1 A1. Variable Descriptions

Table A1 describes the key variables used in the analysis, their original scales, and any transformations applied.

Table A1: Variable descriptions and transformations

Variable	Source	Original Scale	Transformation	Analysis Scale
trust_national_government	ABS Q7	1–4 (none – a great deal)	None	1–4 (higher = more trust)
trust_military	ABS Q7	1–4	None	1–4 (higher = more trust)
trust_police	ABS Q7	1–4	None	1–4 (higher = more trust)
trust_parliament	ABS Q7	1–4	None	1–4 (higher = more trust)

(continued)

Variable	Source	Original Scale	Transformation	Analysis Scale
trust_courts	ABS Q7	1–4	None	1–4 (higher = more trust)
trust_political_parties	ABS Q7	1–4	None	1–4 (higher = more trust)
trust_political (composite)	Derived	—	Mean of govt, parliament, parties	1–4
trust_nonpolitical (composite)	Derived	—	Mean of courts, military, police	1–4
military_rule	ABS Q130	1–4 (strongly disapprove – strongly approve)	None	1–4
reject_military	Derived	—	5 – military_rule	1–4 (higher = more rejection)
strongman_rule	ABS Q131	1–4	None	1–4
reject_strongman	Derived	—	5 – strongman_rule	1–4 (higher = more rejection)
single_party_rule	ABS Q132	1–4	None	1–4
reject_single_party	Derived	—	5 – single_party_rule	1–4 (higher = more rejection)
reject_authoritarian (composite)	Derived	—	Mean of reject_military, reject_strongman, reject_single_party	1–4 (higher = more rejection)
dem_always_preferable	ABS Q98	1–3 (1 = democracy always preferable, 2 = authoritarian sometimes OK, 3 = doesn't matter)	None	1–3

(continued)

Variable	Source	Original Scale	Transformation	Analysis Scale
dem_commitment_01	Derived	—	Rescaled from dem_always_preferable: 1 = always prefer democracy, 0.5 = sometimes OK with authoritarian, 0 = doesn't matter	0–1 (higher = stronger democratic commitment)
dem_vs_econ	ABS Q119/Q126	1–5 (1 = economy definitely more important, 2 = economy somewhat, 3 = democracy somewhat, 4 = democracy definitely, 5 = both equally)	None	1–5 (non-ordinal; 5 = midpoint)
dem_priority_01	Derived	—	Rescaled from dem_vs_econ: 0 = economy definitely, 0.25 = economy somewhat, 0.5 = both equally, 0.75 = democracy somewhat, 1 = democracy definitely	0–1 (higher = stronger democracy priority)
democracy_satisfaction	ABS Q1	1–4 (not at all – very satisfied)	None	1–4 (higher = more satisfied)
political_interest	ABS Q22	1–4 (not at all – very interested)	None; centered for interactions	1–4 (higher = more interested)
pol_discuss	ABS Q24	1–4 (never – frequently)	None; centered for interactions	1–4 (higher = more frequent)
econ_national_now	ABS Q3	1–5 (very bad – very good)	None	1–5 (higher = better evaluation)
age_centered	ABS	Years	Centered at sample mean	Continuous
female	ABS	1 = male, 2 = female	Recoded: 1 = female, 0 = male	Binary

(continued)

Variable	Source	Original Scale	Transformation	Analysis Scale
education_z	ABS	Years of education	Standardized (z-score)	Continuous
is_urban	ABS	1 = urban, 2 = rural	Recoded: 1 = urban, 0 = rural	Binary

2 A2. Non-Linear Time Specifications

The main text models trust as a linear function of wave. Here we test whether non-linear specifications better capture Thailand's trajectory, using two approaches: piecewise period dummies aligned with Thailand's political timeline, and quadratic time trends.

2.1 Piecewise Period Models

We define three political periods: pre-coup (Waves 1–2, 2001–2008), coup era (Waves 3–4, 2010–2016), and protest era (Waves 5–6, 2018–2022). These periods correspond to distinct phases of Thailand's political trajectory described in the main text.

Table A2: Piecewise period models. Reference period: pre-coup (Waves 1–2); reference country: Thailand. Weighted OLS with survey weights; SEs are heteroskedasticity-consistent. N = 21,036 (government), 21,049 (military).

Outcome	Term	Estimate	SE	p
Government Trust	periodcoup_era	-0.214	0.028	0.000
Government Trust	periodprotest_era	-0.443	0.028	0.000
Government Trust	country_namePhilippines	-0.398	0.028	0.000
Government Trust	country_nameTaiwan	-0.354	0.029	0.000
Government Trust	periodcoup_era:country_namePhilippines	0.252	0.036	0.000
Government Trust	periodprotest_era:country_namePhilippines	0.930	0.036	0.000
Government Trust	periodcoup_era:country_nameTaiwan	0.097	0.035	0.006
Government Trust	periodprotest_era:country_nameTaiwan	0.455	0.036	0.000
Military Trust	periodcoup_era	0.038	0.029	0.186
Military Trust	periodprotest_era	-0.602	0.030	0.000
Military Trust	country_namePhilippines	-0.416	0.029	0.000
Military Trust	country_nameTaiwan	-0.171	0.030	0.000
Military Trust	periodcoup_era:country_namePhilippines	0.156	0.038	0.000
Military Trust	periodprotest_era:country_namePhilippines	1.265	0.038	0.000
Military Trust	periodcoup_era:country_nameTaiwan	-0.294	0.037	0.000
Military Trust	periodprotest_era:country_nameTaiwan	0.630	0.038	0.000

Table A2 reveals a clear pattern of acceleration. For government trust, the coup-era decline relative to the pre-coup baseline (b = -0.214) is substantially smaller than the protest-era decline (b = -0.443). For military trust, the asymmetry is even more striking: the coup era shows a modest decline (b = 0.038), while the protest era produces a much larger drop (b = -0.602). The country interactions confirm that this acceleration pattern is Thailand-specific.

2.2 Quadratic Specifications

Table A2b: Quadratic time specification with country interactions. Weighted OLS with survey weights; SEs are heteroskedasticity-consistent. N = 21,036 (government), 21,049 (military).

Outcome	Term	Estimate	SE	p
Government Trust	wave_num	0.214	0.027	0.000
Government Trust	I(wave_num^2)	-0.048	0.004	0.000
Government Trust	country_namePhilippines	-0.060	0.058	0.305
Government Trust	country_nameTaiwan	0.167	0.058	0.004
Government Trust	wave_num:country_namePhilippines	-0.316	0.038	0.000
Government Trust	wave_num:country_nameTaiwan	-0.461	0.037	0.000
Government Trust	I(wave_num^2):country_namePhilippines	0.076	0.005	0.000
Government Trust	I(wave_num^2):country_nameTaiwan	0.084	0.005	0.000
Military Trust	wave_num	0.724	0.028	0.000
Military Trust	I(wave_num^2)	-0.131	0.004	0.000
Military Trust	country_namePhilippines	0.185	0.060	0.002
Military Trust	country_nameTaiwan	0.867	0.061	0.000
Military Trust	wave_num:country_namePhilippines	-0.677	0.040	0.000
Military Trust	wave_num:country_nameTaiwan	-1.042	0.039	0.000
Military Trust	I(wave_num^2):country_namePhilippines	0.145	0.006	0.000
Military Trust	I(wave_num^2):country_nameTaiwan	0.175	0.005	0.000

The quadratic specifications (Table A2b) confirm that Thailand's trust trajectory is not purely linear. For both government and military trust, the quadratic term and its country interactions suggest accelerating decline in later waves. However, the quadratic specification does not capture the period-specific dynamics as cleanly as the piecewise model, likely because the 2020–2021 disruption represents a discrete shock rather than a smooth acceleration.

3 A3. Subgroup Analyses

To rule out the possibility that the aggregate patterns are driven by compositional shifts across waves—for example, if later waves disproportionately sampled younger, more urban, or more educated respondents who tend to report lower trust—we estimate the baseline model separately for demographic subgroups.

Table A3: Thailand's per-wave trust slope by demographic subgroup. All models include country × wave interactions; the reported slope is Thailand's (reference category). Weighted OLS with survey weights; SEs are heteroskedasticity-consistent. N ranges from 7,411 to 13,124 depending on subgroup.

Subgroup	Institution	N	Slope	SE	p
Age: Middle	Government	8124	-0.107	0.010	0
Age: Middle	Military	8124	-0.146	0.011	0
Age: Old	Government	8124	-0.087	0.011	0
Age: Old	Military	8124	-0.156	0.011	0
Age: Young	Government	8125	-0.162	0.010	0
Age: Young	Military	8125	-0.220	0.011	0
Education: High	Government	7411	-0.164	0.012	0
Education: High	Military	7411	-0.261	0.013	0
Education: Low	Government	7412	-0.070	0.009	0
Education: Low	Military	7412	-0.119	0.009	0
Education: Medium	Government	7412	-0.120	0.015	0
Education: Medium	Military	7412	-0.128	0.015	0
Rural	Government	11322	-0.096	0.008	0
Rural	Military	11322	-0.154	0.008	0
Urban	Government	13124	-0.147	0.011	0
Urban	Military	13124	-0.202	0.012	0

Table A3 confirms that the military-government differential holds across all demographic subgroups. In every subgroup, the military trust slope is more negative than the government trust slope. Several patterns merit note:

- *Age*: Younger respondents show the steepest declines for both institutions, but the military-government gap is present across all age terciles.
- *Urbanization*: Urban respondents decline more steeply than rural respondents, consistent with the urban character of the 2020–2021 protests. However, rural respondents also show significant declines.
- *Education*: The most educated respondents show the steepest military trust decline (b = -0.261), consistent with educated citizens being more attentive to democratic norms and more critical of military intervention.

The consistency of the pattern across subgroups rules out compositional explanations and strengthens the inference that the military-government differential reflects a genuine shift in public attitudes.

4 A4. Philippines: Coercive Trust Under Duterte

The Philippines provides a useful contrast case. Under Rodrigo Duterte (2016–2022), the government pursued a highly visible drug war that relied heavily on police and military enforcement. If citizens who support a coercive policy agenda maintain trust in the institutions that implement it, we should observe stable or rising coercive trust during the Duterte period.

Table A4: Philippines trust trends during the Duterte period (Waves 4–6 only). Wave coefficient captures per-wave change. Weighted OLS with survey weights; SEs are heteroskedasticity-consistent. N = 3,517–3,571 depending on institution.

Institution	Wave slope	SE	p
Military	0.168	0.017	0
Police	0.189	0.017	0
Government	0.182	0.017	0

Table A4 shows that during the Duterte period, Philippine military trust trends slightly positive ($b = 0.168$, $p = 0$), and police trust shows a similar direction ($b = 0.189$, $p = 0$). This pattern is consistent with a preference-alignment mechanism: when the political leadership endorses coercive institutions and a substantial portion of the public supports the associated policy agenda, trust in those institutions can remain stable even during periods of democratic backsliding.

The contrast with Thailand is instructive. In Thailand, the military's political role generated mass opposition and targeted trust erosion. In the Philippines, the coercive institutions operated with at least partial popular support for their core mission (anti-drug enforcement), insulating them from the kind of backlash observed in Thailand.

5 A5. Taiwan: Military Depoliticization

Taiwan presents the opposite theoretical case: a successfully depoliticized military. Following democratization in the 1990s, the Taiwanese military transitioned from a party-state instru-

ment to a professional defense force under firm civilian control. If depoliticization insulates military trust from political volatility, we should observe a flat trajectory.

Table A5: Taiwan military trust model (all waves). Weighted OLS with survey weights; SEs are heteroskedasticity-consistent. N = 7,930. F-test for wave coefficient = 0: p = 0.329.

Term	Estimate	SE	p
(Intercept)	2.715	0.029	0.000
wave_num	-0.005	0.005	0.329
age_centered	0.003	0.001	0.000
female	-0.064	0.018	0.000
education_z	-0.051	0.012	0.000
is_urban	-0.066	0.022	0.003

Table A5 confirms the depoliticization prediction. The wave coefficient for Taiwan's military trust is near zero (b = -0.005) and not statistically significant ($p = 0.329$). An F-test fails to reject the null hypothesis that the wave effect equals zero ($p = 0.329$). Taiwan's military trust is essentially flat across two decades, despite substantial political turbulence (cross-strait tensions, party alternation, pandemic governance debates).

This stability contrasts sharply with Thailand and supports the theoretical claim that the military's *political role*, rather than general political instability, drives targeted trust erosion. Where the military remains above the political fray, its institutional trust is insulated from the partisan dynamics that corrode trust in elected institutions.

6 A6. Full Secondary Institution Results

Table A6: Country × Wave interaction models for secondary trust measures (courts, police, parliament, political parties). Thailand is the reference category. Weighted OLS with survey weights; SEs are heteroskedasticity-consistent. N ranges from 20,630 (courts) to 21,465 (police).

Institution	Term	Estimate	SE	p
Courts	wave_num	-0.042	0.006	0.000
Courts	country_namePhilippines	-0.729	0.035	0.000
Courts	country_nameTaiwan	-0.565	0.035	0.000
Courts	wave_num:country_namePhilippines	0.135	0.009	0.000
Courts	wave_num:country_nameTaiwan	0.013	0.008	0.135
Police	wave_num	-0.074	0.006	0.000
Police	country_namePhilippines	-0.517	0.034	0.000
Police	country_nameTaiwan	-0.341	0.034	0.000
Police	wave_num:country_namePhilippines	0.217	0.009	0.000
Police	wave_num:country_nameTaiwan	0.161	0.008	0.000
Parliament	wave_num	-0.056	0.006	0.000
Parliament	country_namePhilippines	-0.539	0.033	0.000
Parliament	country_nameTaiwan	-0.765	0.033	0.000
Parliament	wave_num:country_namePhilippines	0.146	0.008	0.000
Parliament	wave_num:country_nameTaiwan	0.107	0.008	0.000
Political Parties	wave_num	-0.042	0.006	0.000
Political Parties	country_namePhilippines	-0.481	0.032	0.000
Political Parties	country_nameTaiwan	-0.389	0.032	0.000
Political Parties	wave_num:country_namePhilippines	0.142	0.008	0.000
Political Parties	wave_num:country_nameTaiwan	0.037	0.008	0.000

Table A6 reports the full interaction models for the four secondary trust measures. Several patterns are worth noting. First, Thailand's decline is significant for all four institutions, but

the magnitudes are substantially smaller than for military trust (main text, Table 7). Second, the Philippines and Taiwan interaction terms are generally positive, confirming Thailand's exceptionalism extends beyond the two primary institutions. Third, political parties and parliament show the smallest declines, possibly because these institutions already had lower baseline trust levels, leaving less room for erosion.

7 A7. Institutional Breadth: NGOs, Local Government, National Government, and Military

To evaluate whether preference falsification inflates Philippine trust during the Duterte era, or whether Thailand's trust collapse is targeted at specific institutions rather than systemic, we compare trust in four institutional categories across all six waves.

Table A7: Mean trust in NGOs, local government, national government, and military by country and wave. Scale: 1 (none at all) to 4 (a great deal). Descriptive means (unweighted). N is the total number of respondents per country-wave cell; item-level missingness varies slightly across institutions.

Country	Wave	NGOs	Local Govt	Nat'l Govt	Military	N
Philippines						
Philippines	1	2.53	2.60	2.49	2.58	1200
Philippines	2	2.61	2.65	2.26	2.49	1200
Philippines	3	2.70	2.67	2.40	2.66	1200
Philippines	4	2.57	2.71	2.38	2.75	1200
Philippines	5	3.16	3.18	2.99	3.30	1200
Philippines	6	2.89	2.96	2.75	3.13	1200
Thailand						
Thailand	1	2.66	2.84	2.85	3.07	1546
Thailand	2	2.59	2.90	2.72	2.99	1546
Thailand	3	2.60	2.94	2.56	2.89	1512
Thailand	4	2.59	2.67	2.71	3.27	1200
Thailand	5	2.94	2.99	2.86	3.27	1200
Thailand	6	2.09	2.18	1.89	1.62	1200

Table A7 shows that in the Philippines, the Wave 5 trust surge is uniform across all four institutional categories, including NGOs and local government, which are not politically sensitive in the same manner as the national government and military. This uniformity is inconsistent with a preference falsification account, which would predict selective inflation of sensitive measures only. In Thailand, Wave 6 trust erosion is similarly broad-based: NGOs and local government decline alongside national government and military trust, indicating systemic rather than institution-specific disillusionment.

8 A8. Philippines: Formal Test of Coercive vs. Non-Coercive Trust (H3)

Table A8 presents the stacked model comparing coercive (military, police) and non-coercive (national government, NGO) trust within the Philippines across Waves 4–6. If the preference-alignment mechanism specifically elevates coercive trust during the Duterte era, the wave × coercive interaction should be positive.

Table A8: Philippines coercive vs. non-coercive trust, Waves 4–6. Stacked OLS with government, military, police, and NGO trust as outcomes; Coercive = 1 for military and police. Respondent-clustered SEs. N = 14,183.

Term	Estimate	SE	Statistic	p
Wave	0.169	0.014	12.234	0.000
Coercive	0.159	0.085	1.876	0.061
Wave × Coercive	0.009	0.017	0.564	0.573

A positive `Wave × Coercive` interaction would indicate coercive institutions trending upward relative to non-coercive institutions during the Duterte period, consistent with H3. The individual per-institution wave slopes are also reported below for completeness.

Table A8b: Per-institution wave slopes, Philippines Waves 4–6. Weighted OLS with survey weights; SEs are heteroskedasticity-consistent.

Institution	Wave slope	SE	p
Military	0.168	0.017	0
Police	0.189	0.017	0
National Government	0.182	0.017	0
Ngos	0.157	0.017	0

9 A9. Difference-in-Differences Robustness: Wave 6 Cross-Section

The main text DiD model defines the post-period as Waves 5–6. Table A9 presents the Wave 6 cross-section as a robustness check, estimating the military × Thailand interaction in a single-wave sample where the linear time trend cannot confound the estimate.

Table A9: Wave 6 cross-sectional robustness check for DiD. Military × Thailand interaction tests whether Thai military trust is disproportionately lower in Wave 6 relative to all other country–institution combinations. Respondent-clustered SEs.

Term	Estimate	SE	p
Military	0.285	0.019	0
Thailand	-0.647	0.037	0
Military × Thailand	-0.549	0.030	0

10 A10. Weighted vs. Unweighted Comparison

Waves 1–2 of the ABS do not provide sampling weights and are treated as self-weighting in the main analysis. Table A10 compares key wave slope estimates with and without survey weights across all six waves to confirm this assumption does not materially affect the results.

Table A10: Weighted vs. unweighted comparison of key wave slopes. Columns show estimates from survey-weighted and unweighted OLS; Waves 1–2 are self-weighting.

DV	Specification	Term	Estimate	SE	p
Military	Unweighted	Wave	-0.171	0.006	0
Military	Weighted	Wave	-0.171	0.006	0
Military	Unweighted	Wave × Philippines	0.320	0.009	0
Military	Weighted	Wave × Philippines	0.317	0.009	0
Military	Unweighted	Wave × Taiwan	0.171	0.009	0
Military	Weighted	Wave × Taiwan	0.170	0.009	0
National Government	Unweighted	Wave	-0.116	0.006	0
National Government	Weighted	Wave	-0.115	0.006	0
National Government	Unweighted	Wave × Philippines	0.215	0.008	0
National Government	Weighted	Wave × Philippines	0.211	0.008	0
National Government	Unweighted	Wave × Taiwan	0.118	0.008	0
National Government	Weighted	Wave × Taiwan	0.120	0.008	0

11 A11. Predicted Probabilities from Ordered Logit

Figure A1 translates the ordered logit coefficients (main text, Table 8) into predicted probabilities of reporting "no trust at all" (trust = 1) across waves, holding demographic controls at sample means. This provides a more intuitive representation of the Wave 6 collapse than log-odds coefficients.

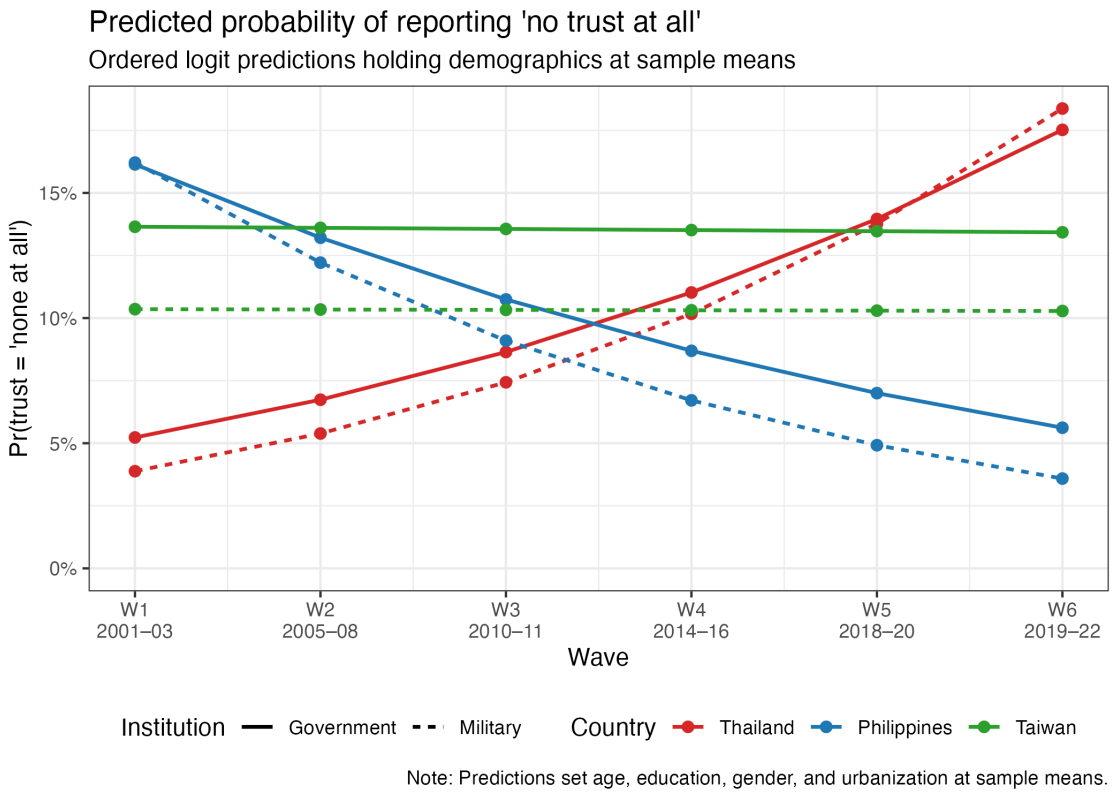

Figure 1: Figure A1: Predicted probability of reporting 'no trust at all' in military and government trust, by country and wave. Ordered logit predictions from models in Table 8; demographics held at sample means.

12 A12. Democratic Commitment Scale Reliability

The democratic commitment index combines rejection of military rule, strongman rule, and single-party rule. Table A12 reports Cronbach's alpha and mean inter-item correlations by

country and wave to verify the scale behaves consistently across contexts.

Table A12a: Democratic commitment scale reliability by country (all waves pooled). Alpha = standardized Cronbach's alpha (k = 3). r_avg = mean pairwise inter-item correlation.

Country	N	r(mil, strongman)	r(mil, single-party)	r(strongman, single-party)	Mean r	Alpha
Thailand	7173	0.447	0.414	0.536	0.465	0.723
Philippines	7048	0.293	0.357	0.433	0.361	0.629
Taiwan	8286	0.447	0.572	0.553	0.524	0.768

Table A12b: Democratic commitment scale reliability by country-wave.

Country	Wave	N	Mean r	Alpha
Thailand	1	1521	0.304	0.567
Thailand	2	1353	0.579	0.805
Thailand	3	1356	0.380	0.648
Thailand	4	1014	0.473	0.729
Thailand	5	908	0.590	0.812
Thailand	6	1021	0.596	0.816
Philippines	1	1200	0.261	0.515
Philippines	2	1132	0.349	0.617
Philippines	3	1174	0.349	0.616
Philippines	4	1184	0.464	0.722
Philippines	5	1176	0.360	0.628
Philippines	6	1182	0.374	0.642
Taiwan	1	1164	0.410	0.676
Taiwan	2	1430	0.540	0.779
Taiwan	3	1491	0.509	0.757
Taiwan	4	1554	0.529	0.771
Taiwan	5	1162	0.537	0.777
Taiwan	6	1485	0.578	0.805

13 A13. Institutional Breadth Sensitivity-Gradient Formal Tests

The main text argues that in Thailand, trust erosion is broad-based (not institution-specific) and in the Philippines, the Wave 5 trust surge is uniform (not limited to politically sensitive

institutions). Table A13 formalizes these claims with stacked interaction models.

Table A13: Institutional breadth sensitivity-gradient tests. Thailand: Post-W5 × Sensitive tests whether national government and military (protest targets) decline more than NGOs and local government in Wave 6. Philippines: Wave × Coercive tests whether military and police trend higher than national government and NGOs during the Duterte period. Respondent-clustered SEs.

Sample	Term	Estimate	SE	p
Thailand W5–6	Post-W5	-0.791	0.033	0.000
Thailand W5–6	Sensitive	0.090	0.025	0.000
Thailand W5–6	Post-W5 × Sensitive	-0.467	0.034	0.000
Philippines W4–6	Wave	0.169	0.014	0.000
Philippines W4–6	Coercive	0.159	0.085	0.061
Philippines W4–6	Wave × Coercive	0.009	0.017	0.573

14 A14. Democratic Commitment and Military Trust Decline

Table A14 presents models testing whether democratic commitment moderates trust erosion. Models 1 and 1b examine the interaction between wave and democratic commitment (centered) for military and government trust in Thailand. Model 2 uses a stacked outcome (military and government trust) to test whether the commitment effect differs across institution type. Model 3 reports a Wave 6 cross-sectional model predicting military trust from democratic commitment and political interest. Model 4 tests the three-country interaction.

Table A14: Democratic commitment and institutional trust decline. Democratic commitment is a composite index (0–1) of democratic preference, democratic priority over economic development, and rejection of authoritarian alternatives, centered at the sample mean for interaction models (Models 1, 1b, 2, 4). All models are weighted OLS with survey weights; SEs are heteroskedasticity-consistent except Model 2 (respondent-clustered SEs). N: Model 1 = 5,947; Model 1b = 5,889; Model 2 = 11,836 (stacked); Model 3 = 1,082; Model 4 = 21,261.

Model	Dependent Variable	Key Coefficient	b	SE	p
1	Military trust (Thailand)	Democratic commitment	-0.581	0.169	$< .001$
1	Military trust (Thailand)	Wave × Commitment	0.066	0.040	0.095
1b	Government trust (Thailand)	Democratic commitment	-0.501	0.156	0.001
1b	Government trust (Thailand)	Wave × Commitment	0.123	0.036	$< .001$
2	Stacked trust (Thailand)	Wave × Commitment × Military	-0.047	0.041	0.248
3	Military trust, W6 (Thailand)	Democratic commitment	-0.589	0.124	$< .001$
3	Military trust, W6 (Thailand)	Political interest	-0.023	0.029	0.424
4	Military trust (three-country)	Wave × Commitment × Philippines	-0.169	0.047	$< .001$
4	Military trust (three-country)	Wave × Commitment × Taiwan	0.042	0.045	0.346