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CONCLUSION

Values, Regime Performance, and Democratic Consolidation

Yun-han Chu, Larry Diamond, and Andrew J. Nathan

IF ASIA'S DEMOCRACIES ARE in trouble today, the lesson is not that this form of government cannot find cultural roots in the region, but that democratic governments must win citizens' support through better performance. The Asian cultures that we studied are open to democracy, but not committed to it. This shows that consolidation is a longer process than many third-wave optimists foresaw, and its success is not a foregone conclusion.

Our surveys took place against the background of political strife, bureaucratic paralysis, and economic distress in the region's five new democracies. In Taiwan and the Philippines, the results of presidential elections had been challenged by the losers. In the Philippines the president had recently been forced out of office. In South Korea (hereafter Korea) the incumbent president was crippled by domestic challenges. Mongolia was mired in party stalemate. Even the region's oldest democracy, Japan, found itself rudderless, with a stream of prime ministers resigning amid economic and political turmoil. Throughout the region economic growth had slowed as a result of the financial crisis of 1997 and 1998—except in authoritarian China.

Distrust of democratic institutions was widespread. As we have seen in the chapters in this volume, majorities of respondents in every country ex-

cept Thailand and China expressed distrust for political parties. Majorities distrusted parliament in Taiwan, the Philippines, Korea, and Japan. Corruption was described as pervasive at either the local or the national level, or at both levels, by majorities in Japan, the Philippines, Taiwan, and Mongolia. Table 10.1 reminds us that seven of the eight publics (excluding Hong Kong) acknowledged that their new regimes were doing better than the old regimes in measures of democratic performance, that is, in providing political freedoms and opportunities for public influence. But only four of the publics gave positive evaluations of their new regimes' performance in dealing with the policy issues we asked about—corruption, law and order, economic development, and equity—and of these, only the Thai public saw more than modest improvement.

Authoritarianism remained a strong competitor to democracy in the region. Non- and semidemocratic regimes govern much of East Asia and have displayed greater resilience than their newly democratized neighbors. Over recent decades, China in particular has made a smooth transition from a rigid older form of authoritarianism to a new, adaptive form that by comparative Asian standards scored high levels of public support in the EAB survey. China's model—labeled "resilient authoritarianism" by one of us (Nathan 2003)—has been studied by socialist and authoritarian siblings like Vietnam, Laos, Myanmar (Burma), and to some extent, North Korea. Unless China embarks on a path of democratization, the

TABLE 10.1 AVERAGE PDI OF PERCEIVED PERFORMANCE OF CURRENT AND PAST REGIMES

	DEMOCRATIC PERFORMANCE	POLICY PERFORMANCE
Japan	60.8	15.2
Hong Kong	-24.1	1.3
Korea	31.5	-23.1
China	53.1	-8.2
Mongolia	51.8	-16.8
Philippines	26.8	8.9
Taiwan	50.0	-11.1
Thailand	69.7	57.3

Note: Based on "Perceived Performance of Current and Past Regimes" tables in each chapter.

prospects for democratic breakthroughs in the recalcitrant states in its orbit appear to be dim.

The East Asia Barometer surveys underscore that the new democracies in Asia experienced slow and uneven growth in democratic legitimacy. While an average of 88% of respondents across the five new democracies surveyed (Taiwan, Korea, Mongolia, Thailand, and the Philippines) deemed democracy to be "desirable for our country now," only an average of 59% considered it "preferable to all other kinds of government" and an average of 35% said it was "equally or more important than economic development" (cf. chapter 1, table 1.8).

Democracy is a good word across the region—a label claimed by even authoritarian regimes—but fundamental democratic values have fragile support. The theory of Asian values promoted by authoritarian leaders in the region, privileging economic development and social harmony over Western-style civil and political freedoms, showed broad appeal to scholars, activists, and social movement leaders (Bauer and Bell 1999). Our surveys revealed that it also appeals to ordinary citizens, although to differing degrees in different countries. An average of 35% of respondents across seven of the eight publics (excluding China) disagreed with view that the government should not disregard the law. In all eight surveys, an average of 40% did not agree that government leaders should follow procedure. In addition, an average of 49% agreed with the proposition that judges should accept the view of the executive in deciding important cases, and an average of 57% agreed with a similar proposition opposing a legislature that checks the executive (based on chapter 1, table 1.13).

EAST ASIAN VIEWS IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

East Asia, however, is not alone in its publics' ambivalent support for democracy. We are able to compare East Asian attitudes toward democracy with those in several other regions thanks to the recent emergence of parallel efforts to assess attitudes and values toward democracy in Latin America (the Latinobarómetro), Africa (the Afrobarometer), and the postcommunist states of Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union (the New Europe Barometer). For this comparison we narrow the focus to the six democracies in East Asia—the five new democracies plus Japan—leaving out China and Hong Kong as less relevant for this purpose. This renders our analysis comparable with the regional barometers in the other regions,

which have surveyed countries that are electoral democracies or at least have regular, multiparty elections.

Before proceeding, it is important to stress a methodological caveat. As we have seen throughout this study, measured levels of public support for democracy and evaluations of how well it works depend on how a question is worded and the response options that people are given. It is hard enough to compare national responses to questions that are identically worded but then must be translated into a number of different languages—and, underlying them, into quite different cultural contexts as well. Throughout this project, we struggled with the challenge of achieving a sufficiently high degree of standardization in questionnaire design and administration so that the answers would be comparable across our eight East Asian societies. But if this is difficult across countries within one regional survey, it is even more challenging across the different regional barometers, despite growing efforts to standardize questions and methods. Understanding how sensitive public responses can be to differences in question wording and design, we try as much as possible to confine our comparative treatment to more or less identical items.

Support for democracy. Compared to levels of democratic support in other regions, our six East Asian democracies appear about average. When asked whether democracy is always preferable to any other type of regime, the mean support across the EAB's six democratic regimes was 60%.[1] This is only slightly lower than the 62% recorded in Africa in 2002 and 2005,[2] the same proportion as in the five South Asian countries surveyed in 2004,[3] and higher than the mean level in Latin America (53%; Latinobarómetro 2005:56) and Eastern Europe (also 53%; Rose 2005:68).[4]

Other measures, however, indicate a more positive East Asian view of democracy. More than three-quarters of the respondents in every democracy in the EAB study thought democracy was "suitable" for their society, except for Taiwan; even there the suitability assessment rose from 59% in 2001 to 67% in 2005. (In the Philippines, however, reflecting the country's woes in the years after our first-round survey, the suitability figure dropped from the 80% revealed in the EAB survey to 57% in a survey conducted in 2005.) Likewise, most East Asians thought democracy could be "effective" in solving the problems of their society: nine of ten Thais, seven of ten Koreans and Mongolians, six of ten Japanese and Filipinos—but again, only slightly less than half the public in Taiwan. On average, over two-thirds of people in our six East Asian democracies (68%) thought that democracy could be effective in solving the problems of society, compared to an average of only about half of Latin Americans[5] (see table 10.2).[6]

TABLE 10.2 REGIONAL DIFFERENCES IN DEMOCRATIC ORIENTATIONS

Percent of respondents

QUESTION	AFRICA			EAST ASIA	SOUTH ASIA	LATIN AMERICA		EASTERN EUROPE		EU 15
	2000	2002	2005	2002[a]	2004–2005	2000	2005	1995	2004	2006
Democracy always preferable	69	62	62	60	64	57	53	—	53	—
Reject all 4 auth. options	48	—	—	48	—	—	—	—	59	—
Reject all 3 auth. options	—	—	—	53	—	—	—	67	67	—
Reject military rule	82	78	73	83	60	—	—	—	—	—
Reject 1-party rule	—	71	71	71	—	—	—	—	—	—
Reject strongman		78	73	73	33					
System efficacy: democracy can solve problems	—	—	—	68	—	48[b]	53	—	—	—
Satisfaction with democracy	58	52	45	61	48	36	31	—	38[c]	66[d]
Trust in:										
National govt.	—	—	—	46	69		36	—	—	—
Courts	—	—	62	57	72	—	31		26	—
Parliament		—	56	36	59	—	28	—	16	—
Parties	—	—	46[e]	29	48	—	19	—	10	—
Military	—	—	65	64	81	—	42	—	42	—
President	—	—	64	—	—	—	43	—	51	—

[a] East Asia percentages are for the six democratic countries, excluding China and Hong Kong.
[b] This figure is from the 2002 Latinobarómetro.
[c] 2006 Eurobarometer average for eight new East European members of EU, plus Romania and Bulgaria.
[d] Figure for the original fifteen EU members.
[e] This is an average of 56% approval of the ruling party and 36% approval of the opposition parties.

Regime evaluations. Another important dimension of public opinion of democracy is how citizens evaluate the performance of their democratic system. A question in many regional barometers asks, "How satisfied are you with the way democracy works in our country?" By this measure, on average six in ten citizens in East Asian democracies were satisfied. Only in Japan and Taiwan was the proportion satisfied below half (about 45%), although in Taiwan it rose to 56% by 2005.

This is slightly better than in Europe, where the Eurobarometer finds that satisfaction has oscillated in recent years in the neighborhood of 56% (the average level among the European Union member states in 2006). In South Asia, democratic satisfaction averaged 51% across the three democracies in the region (India, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh). In Africa, across the twelve countries surveyed in all three iterations of the Afrobarometer, the overall percentage satisfied with the way democracy works dropped from 58% in 2000 to 45% in 2005. The Latinobarómetro finds Latin Americans persistently dissatisfied with the performance of their democracies, with mean levels of satisfaction among countries in the region oscillating between 25% and 40% over the last decade. In 2005, the average among regional countries was less than a third (31%), with majorities satisfied only in Uruguay and Venezuela. In Peru, Ecuador, Nicaragua, and Paraguay, fewer than a fifth of citizens were satisfied; in Mexico and Brazil, fewer than a quarter.[7]

Authoritarian detachment. An even more encouraging indicator of democratic legitimacy in East Asia in comparative perspective is the degree to which democracy is preferred to authoritarian alternatives. As we saw in chapter 1, large majorities of East Asians rejected the authoritarian options they were asked about. In each of the six EAB democracies, over 80% opposed military rule, save for the Philippines, where the proportion was 63%. Over three-quarters of Thais, Koreans, and Japanese, seven of ten respondents in the Philippines and Taiwan, and six out of ten Mongolians rejected a surrender of government to a "strong leader." The pattern was roughly similar for the option of a one-party system. In each of the six democracies, at least seven out of ten citizens (and over eight of ten in Korea and Japan) opposed letting "experts decide everything," save in Mongolia, where the proportion was two-thirds.

Again in this respect, East Asians appear similar to Africans. On average in the eighteen African countries in 2005, 73% opposed military rule, compared to 83% in the six East Asian democracies. In both East Asia and Africa, averages of about seven in ten opposed the option of one-party rule, and about three-quarters (slightly more in Africa) rejected the option of rule

by an authoritarian strongman. By the most demanding standard of rejecting all four authoritarian options (including traditional rule in Africa and technocratic rule in Asia), the average proportion drops to just below half (48%) in both Africa and East Asia.

Across the ten democracies of postcommunist Europe (surveyed in late 2004 and early 2005), on average 59% of the public rejected all four proffered authoritarian options (army rule, communist rule, a dictator, or suspending parliament and elections in favor of a strong leader), a figure higher than in Africa or East Asia (Rose 2005:19). But a pattern of intraregional divergence is apparent. In the eight states which acceded to EU membership on May 1, 2004 (the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Poland, Slovenia, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania), an average of 61% of the public rejected all four authoritarian alternatives. Likewise, in Romania, which (with Bulgaria) joined the EU in January 2007, 64% rejected all authoritarian alternatives. By contrast, publics in the former Soviet republics of Ukraine, Russia, and Belarus were relatively welcoming of authoritarian options. Only 45% in Ukraine, 27% in Russia, and 23% in Belarus rejected all four. Nearly half of Russians said they could support suspension of parliament and elections, and over 40% endorsed a return to communist rule, while nearly two-thirds in Belarus endorsed the option of a dictator. Also in Bulgaria only 46% rejected a return to autocracy in some form.

On the only partially comparable item we have for Latin America, respondents were asked in 2005 if they would "support a military government to replace the democratic government if the situation got very bad"; on average 62% in the region said no (Latinobarómetro 2005:51).[8]

Of all the regions, South Asia displayed the weakest resistance to authoritarian rule. Only about a quarter of South Asians rejected the option of a strong leader (and even if the large number of nonresponses to the question is discarded, the proportion rises only to a third). Even in long-democratic India, which voted overwhelmingly in 1977 to bring down the authoritarian emergency rule of Indira Gandhi, only about half (52%) of those with an opinion opposed the option of a "strong leader who does not have to bother about elections."[9] About half of South Asians overall (and 62% who answered the question) rejected military rule, but only small percentages rejected rule by a king.

Assessing Past, Present, and Future Regimes. A final way to compare how citizens feel about their democracy is to assess how far they feel their regime has come as a democracy, and how far they expect it may go. On our survey's 10-point scale of degree of democracy, citizens of the six East Asian

democracies rated their past regimes on average at 3.8, their present regimes at 7.1, and their expectations for the regimes of the future at 7.9. In other words, each East Asian public saw its old regime as clearly authoritarian, the new regime as well past the midpoint of 5 on the democracy scale, and the future regime as expected to demonstrate some degree of progress. Only the Japanese expressed little expectation of future progress, not surprisingly since their regime has already been democratic for half a century.

There are no directly comparable data from the other regional barometers, but we can place East Asian attitudes in perspective by examining the New Europe Barometer's "heaven-hell" scale of approval and disapproval of past, present, and future regimes, which ranges from +100 to –100. Among the eight postcommunist states that entered the EU in 2004, publics saw not much difference between the old regime (which had an average approval of +12 points) and the current one (+11 points), but expressed a clear sense of optimism about the future, with a mean expected approval level of +29 points (Rose 2005:47–51). Put otherwise, Asians saw the trajectory from the past to the future regime as traversing, on average, 41% of the 10-point scale from authoritarian to democratic, while postcommunist publics saw the distance traveled as 8.5% of a 200-point disapproval-approval scale. While the two scales are too different to permit strict comparison, the contrast seems striking enough to justify the conclusion that the political mood in East Asia was relatively optimistic, despite the region's travails.

The cross-regional comparisons suggest that if democracy is in trouble in Asia, it also suffers serious, and in some respects more acute, vulnerabilities in other regions. But an alternative reading is possible: perhaps we should not be too quick to take alarm at public discontent and value ambivalence in Asia or elsewhere. After all, democracy has survived for over half a century with modest levels of support in Japan. To clarify our data's meaning for democratic consolidation, we will have to situate them in a broader framework of analysis.

CONSOLIDATION IN MULTIDIMENSIONAL AND DYNAMIC PERSPECTIVE

We argued in chapter 1 that public attitudes work in combination with other normative and behavioral factors to determine the fragility or robustness of democratic regimes (see table 1.1). The EAB surveys examined what ordinary people believe and value without investigating the attitudes and

behaviors of other key actors such as political elites and organizations. Thus it should not be completely surprising that a coup occurred in Thailand, even though our survey showed that the broad public supported democratic norms and values. Thai democracy fell short of consolidation at the elite not the mass level: significant leaders neither believed in democracy nor constrained their behavior by its principles.

Yet the domain of mass norms and beliefs is crucial to consolidation. Absent deep and resilient public commitment, a democratic regime is vulnerable to decay in the other five consolidation domains. Thus, although survey data cannot tell us whether a given democracy will certainly survive, they can alert us to whether the mass base provides the support necessary for consolidation across the other five domains or instead is dangerously fragile. Specifically, as one of us has argued elsewhere, democracy can be considered normatively consolidated at the mass level if at least 70% of the public believe that democracy is preferable to any other form of government *and* is suitable for the country, and if no more than 15% prefer an authoritarian alternative (Diamond 1999:68).

By this standard, at the time of the EAB survey democracy fell short of consolidation by considerable distances in all five new democracies, and even in the old democracy of Japan. Five of the six cases exceeded the 70% threshold for democracy's suitability; the exception was Taiwan where only 59% of the population considered democracy suitable now. However, the percentage preferring democracy to all other kinds of government topped the benchmark 70% only in Thailand (see chapter 1, table 1.8). On the authoritarian alternatives measure, each of the EAB democracies had significant proportions above 15% supporting at least two of the authoritarian alternatives. Indeed, each of the first three authoritarian options (leaving aside "experts decide everything") attracted more than 30% support in the Philippines, while 36% of Thais endorsed a one-party system and 40% of Mongolians embraced rule by a strong ruler (see chapter 1, table 1.9).

In these respects, once again, East Asia is not alone. The same exercise conducted across the Latino-, Afro-, and New Europe barometers produces similar results. With respect to authoritarian options, for example, an average of 30% of Latin Americans in 2005 said they "would support a military government if things get bad" (Latinobarómetro 2005:50). Among the eight postcommunist countries admitted to the EU in 2004, an average of 27% support getting rid of parliament and elections and having "a strong leader who can quickly decide everything," while 26% support suspending

parliament and elections, and 15% favor a return to communist rule (Rose 2005:19). In the 2005 Afrobarometer, 15% or more of the population favored abolishing elections and parliament in four of eighteen countries surveyed, 15% or more favored army rule in seven of the countries, and 15% or more favored single party rule in ten of the countries (Afrobarometer 2006:table 1). At least one authoritarian option received support from at least 15% of the population in thirteen of the eighteen countries surveyed. Thus, by the standards of table 10.3, democracy remains attitudinally unconsolidated throughout all the regions where it was established since the 1970s except Western Europe.

But there is more. The definition proposed in table 10.3 stipulates that democracy is not attitudinally consolidated until the benchmark levels of support have been maintained "over some period of time" (Diamond 1999:68). To be sure that democracy is consolidated, one would want to see evidence of broad support for democracy and low levels of endorsement of authoritarian alternatives, sustained consistently in public opinion surveys for at least a decade. Although the data reported in this book are of course single-time snapshots of attitudes in each political system, the EAB country teams have accumulated some longitudinal data as well, partly from surveys conducted before the EAB joint project, and partly from surveys conducted after the EAB survey under the umbrella of the Asian Barometer (described in chapter 1). This body of data reveals that public attitudes toward democracy in Asia are labile, fluctuating dramatically over relatively short periods of time. There is evidence of this phenomenon in the other Global Barometer Surveys as well, as suggested by information provided in the preceding section of this chapter.

Support for democracy can rise dramatically in a short time. For example, as shown in the preceding section, the assessment of democracy's suitability rose from 59% in 2001 in Taiwan to 67% in 2005. But democratic support does not benefit from a ratchet effect. It declines readily and sometimes dramatically in response to unfavorable events. For example, in Korea, the preference for democracy fell from 69%, just before the East Asian financial crisis, to 54% in 1998 and 45% in 2001, before recovering to 49% in 2003, and then to 58% in 2004 (Shin and Lee 2006). In the Philippines, as a result of protracted political polarization and crisis, the assessment of democracy's suitability declined from 80% in 2002 to 57% in 2005, while preference for democracy fell from 64% in 2001 to 51% in 2006. Democratic preference fell more modestly in Thailand, from an exceptionally high level of 83% in 2002, to 71% in 2006.

These data come from too short a time frame to allow full understanding of the dynamics of democratic support. We cannot yet judge whether there are unseen barriers beyond which measures of democratic support do not normally move. Nor do we know where the thresholds lie at which changes in mass public support have effects in the other five consolidation domains. We need to sustain comparative research over a period of time to discover answers to these questions.

It is not too early, however, to ask what forces generate the observed ups and downs in public support. The chapters in this book focused on the factors that affect democratic support in the short term; the EAB data, however, will also make possible further investigation of the factors that affect the growth (or decline) of deeper democratic values in the long term. What we have shown in this volume is that regime performance produces rapid ups and downs in attitudinal support for democracy. What remains to be more fully examined is how at the same time, but on a longer timeline, socioeconomic modernization affects the prevalence of fundamental democratic values.

In every political system that we surveyed, East Asian publics told us that they recognized democratic progress. They assessed their current regimes as markedly more democratic than the previous ones (chapter 1, table 1.6). As seen earlier in table 10.1, they acknowledged the current regimes' performance in providing rights and freedoms. Yet when it came to the new regimes' policy performance, our respondents' evaluations in the six democracies were weak or negative (again table 10.1). In addition, publics withheld trust from core democratic institutions like parties and parliaments, and told us that they perceived high levels of corruption in their central and/or local governments.

How do the two kinds of perceived performance affect support for new democratic regimes? Earlier studies suggested that both kinds of performance matter, but that democratic performance matters more than policy performance in building support for democracy (Diamond 1999:192–196). Table 10.3 supports this conclusion. The table describes the impact in six of our survey sites of perceived democratic performance and perceived policy performance on the key measures of democratic support and authoritarian detachment we have been discussing in this chapter, when several other relevant variables are controlled in a regression equation. In general, both kinds of performance affect democratic support, although in different ways in different countries. Overall, democratic performance matters more; it has statistically significant effects in fourteen of the possible eighteen cells

compared to eleven of eighteen cells for policy performance, and its effects are more often statistically significant at the demanding .000 level.

The greater effect of democratic performance is particularly marked for the variable we call authoritarian detachment. If respondents think a regime performs well in providing democratic rights and freedoms, then in every location except the Philippines they reduce their support for authoritarian alternatives. But the impact of policy performance on democratic support is less distinct. Respondents reward the regime for improved policy performance with increased authoritarian detachment in only one of the six political systems, Thailand. In two countries perceived policy performance has no statistically significant effect on authoritarian detachment. In three countries (Korea, Mongolia, and the Philippines) it even has a negative effect. Our provisional interpretation of this finding, yet to be fully tested, is that the citizens who most firmly reject authoritarian alternatives are also likely to be most critical of a regime's policy performance, regardless of the type of regime, while those who are more open to authoritarian options are also likely to be more deferential to the regime's policy actions, regardless of the type of regime.[10] In any case, the big picture is that regime performance increases support for democracy. Citizens have an opinion about whether their democratic regime is doing a good job, and if they think it is they give it more support.

The cross-regional perspective reveals that these patterns are again not unique to Asia. In Africa, appreciation of progress in providing democratic freedoms generates public attitudes in support of democracy. Support for democracy rises after free, competitive elections and declines linearly, according to Michael Bratton, "the farther back in the past an electoral alternation (or failing that, a transition to competitive elections) had occurred" (2004:155). Corruption, on the other hand, "is corrosive … to citizen acceptance of democracy."[11] And on average, Africans think that the majority of their elected representatives are corrupt.

Likewise, in Latin America, large proportions of the public (between 75% and 90%) say each year that corruption has increased in the past five years. More than nine in ten Latin Americans (most recently 97% in 2001) say the problem of corruption is serious or very serious. Less than one out of three of Latin Americans (30% in 2005) perceive at least "some" progress in reducing corruption in their country. The four countries in which the proportions are 40% or higher—Chile, Venezuela, Uruguay, and Colombia—are the places where support for democracy has been strong or increasing in recent years. Trust in politicians is a casualty of these perceived

TABLE 10.3 IMPACT OF REGIME POLICY PERFORMANCE ON SUPPORT FOR DEMOCRACY

(Standardized regression coefficient)

	TAIWAN		KOREA		MONGOLIA		THAILAND		PHILIPPINES		JAPAN	
	Democ	**Policy**	**Democ**	**Policy**	**Democ**	**Policy**	**Democ**	**Policy**	**Democ**	**Policy**	**Democ**	**Policy**
Democracy desirable for our country now[a]	**.154**	**.143**	**.188**	*.068*	*.108*	*-.098*	*.088*			*.097*	**.158**	
Democracy suitable for our country now[a]	**.177**	**.173**		**.173**	*.108*		*.086*			*.079*	**.162**	
Authoritarian detachment[b]	**.182**		*.064*	**–.176**	**.217**	**-.227**	**.150**	**.187**		**–.136**	**.184**	

Notes: Entries are the standardized regression coefficients (betas) in an ordinary least squares regression in which the dependent variable is the measure of democratic support indicated in the left column, and the other independent variables controlled for are age group, years of education, and urban or rural residence.

Democ = perceived democratic performance. Policy = perceived policy performance. These are operationalized as the average improvement or decline perceived by each respondent in government performance on the five measures of democratic performance and four measures of policy performance respectively.

Entries in boldface are significant at the .000 level. Those in italics are significant at the .05 level or higher. In empty cells the coefficient is not statistically significant.

[a] Six or above on a 10-point dictatorship-democracy scale of where the country should or could be now.

[b] The number of authoritarian options the respondent rejects, ranging from 0 to 4.

failures. While 71% of Latin Americans surveyed trust the church and 55% trust radio, trust for the military, the president, and television average only slightly over 40%. Barely a quarter of Latin Americans trust the congress and only a fifth trust political parties (Latinobarómetro 2005:61).

As in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, newly democratized publics in Eastern Europe also perceive that they have greater freedom while condemning their governments for poor policy performance. When asked if they felt freer than before the fall of communism to say what they think, join organizations, take an interest in politics or not, and choose in religious matters, 63% answered yes to all four questions; 79% saw greater freedom of speech, and 81% greater freedom of association. More than half (52%) thought the government had some or a lot of respect for human rights, although here there was unusually wide variation, from 76% in Hungary to 30% in Romania. At the same time, however, nearly three-quarters of citizens (72%) in these ten democracies believed that half or "almost all" officials are corrupt, and roughly the same proportion think the government treats them "definitely" or "somewhat" unfairly. And more citizens in these ten countries approved of the old economic system (69%) than the new one (57%). Moreover, nowhere are levels of trust in parties and representative institutions lower than in the postcommunist states, where citizens had their fill of "the party" by the time the Berlin Wall came down. Parties are trusted on average by just 10% in the new democracies of the region, and are actively distrusted by three-quarters of the population.[12] Parliament fares little better (16% trust, 63% distrust). The postcommunist malaise is also apparent in the comparison between the average level of satisfaction with the way democracy works in the original fifteen (West European) EU members—66% in 2006—and satisfaction in the typical postcommunist state—38% across the eight new East European members, plus Romania and Bulgaria.

Previous research has shown that these political assessments have important consequences for commitment to democracy in postcommunist states. Trust in institutions and the perceptions of increased political freedom, greater fairness, and increased citizen ability to influence government have independent and significant positive effects on support for the current system of democratic government. The perception of greater political freedom also increases the rejection of authoritarian alternatives (as does patience with the new regime). The objective reality also appears to matter independently; increased freedom (as measured by Freedom House) significantly increases levels of regime support, while higher levels of corruption (by independent expert assessments) bring about significantly higher

levels of support for authoritarian alternatives (Rose, Mishler, and Haerpfer 1998:158, 193).

While perceived regime policy performance helps explain short-term ups and downs in regime support, we believe a long-term evolution is also taking place in deeper democratic values under the influence of forces of economic and social change that are at work across the Asian landscape. Since value evolution has not been a major theme of this book, we will discuss the subject only briefly here. As we saw in chapter 1, citizens in most countries in East Asia are supportive of most of the rule-of-law values we asked about (chapter 1, table 1.13).[13] Our evidence suggests that this level of value support is likely to increase so long as Asia continues to modernize. Table 10.4 dramatizes the point by displaying the impact in each of six survey sites of education and urban residence—variables whose levels in a society increase with modernization—on respondents' commitment to rule of law, controlling for age group.[14] Education has strong positive effects on commitment to rule of law everywhere except Thailand. Urbanization has positive effects in Taiwan, Korea, and Thailand. The negative correlation in Mongolia may reflect the concentration of the old communist elite and state bureaucracy in the capital city, Ulaanbaatar.

That this should be so is not surprising: the power of modernization to change values is well established in the literature (Lipset 1959; Inkeles and Smith 1974; Diamond 1992; Inglehart and Welzel 2005). Of course, modernization does not work in an invariant way across all societies. We suspect that East Asia's democracies will be slower to develop value commitments to democracy than the new democracies of Western Europe (Diamond 1999:chap. 5). Portugal, Spain, and Greece had the advantages of having experienced democracy in earlier historical periods, of being located in an overwhelmingly liberal and democratic region, and of being spurred by the (then) European Community to fulfill demanding democratic conditions as a condition for entry. The democracies of East Asia (save for Japan and the Philippines) went through transitions to democracy without much prior experience of this form of government, in a less-supportive regional environment, and with fewer material enticements for democratic consolidation. Nonetheless, as these Asian societies become more highly educated and more urbanized we expect their citizens' values to change. Much research remains to be done, however, to determine *how* modernization acts upon values in Asia. Among other questions, we need to explore whether the move toward prodemocracy attitudes under conditions of modernization is invariant in direction, how much variation can be

TABLE 10.4 IMPACT OF MODERNIZATION ON COMMITMENT TO RULE OF LAW

(Standardized regression coefficient)

	TAIWAN	KOREA	MONGOLIA	THAILAND	PHILIPPINES	JAPAN
Education	**.261**	*.072*	**.156**	—	**.114**	**.230**
Urban residence	*.060*	**.105**	**-.123**	*.091*	—	—

Notes: Entries are the standardized regression coefficients (betas) in an ordinary least squares regression in which the dependent variable is the number of liberal responses, from 0 to 4, given to questions testing whether the respondent believes in rule of law; the other independent variable controlled for is age group.

Entries in boldface are significant at the .000 level. Those in italics are significant at the .05 level or higher. In empty cells the coefficient is not statistically significant.

observed in the strength of the association between modernization and value change in different countries and under different types of regimes, and how long-term changes in democratic values interact with short-term changes in democratic support.[15]

We cannot, however, expect citizens' growing empathy for democratic values to translate directly into steady regime support. What we have seen instead in this volume is that independently of the public's value commitments, support for democratic regimes fluctuates widely in sensitive response to changing perceptions of these regimes' performance, levels of corruption, and the trustworthiness of their political institutions. Asian publics are open to democracy and we expect they will grow more open to it over time. But they are not captive to its charms. In politics as in daily life they are skeptical consumers. They must be shown that democracy works, and for the time being many of them doubt that it does.

CONCLUSION

In East Asia and elsewhere, we have learned a lot about the health of new democracies by listening to the people. Ultimately, if democracy is to be consolidated, it must work to improve people's material lives, advance economic development, and provide good governance. Several East Asian democracies climb a steep hill of expectations in this regard because the economic and

administrative performance of the previous authoritarian regimes was relatively successful. But in the near term, what people expect at a minimum is that democracy will work to deliver fair, honest, and responsive government, with greater freedom. To the extent that democracy works to provide the political substance people expect of it—individual freedom, accountability, free and fair elections, a rule of law, and some degree of fairness to all citizens—people will come to value it, even if somewhat hesitantly, and will resist the temptation to embrace alternative forms of government.

Unfortunately, there remains too much in East Asia of what Diamond (1999:49) calls "hollow, illiberal, poorly institutionalized democracies." At the time of our surveys the Philippines had suffered serious challenges to civil liberties, good governance, and the rule of law; Thailand struggled with ongoing problems of corruption and vote buying; and in Taiwan, political polarization was manifested in deep divisions not only over policies but also over the meaning of the constitution itself and whether it should be fundamentally changed, a debate that signified a lack of institutional consolidation and of elite agreement on the rules of the democratic game. While Taiwan and Korea made remarkable progress in civil and political freedom and the rule of law in the decade prior to our surveys, they were markedly less successful in producing accountable government and finding a satisfactory balance between the extremes of imperial presidential power and opposition legislative obstruction (Chu and Shin 2005). Democracy is not merely about elections, but involves multiple and finely graded degrees of quality that, our studies suggest, are visible to the public. In East Asia's democratic regimes, a critical mass of citizens wants not just democracy as such but more and better democracy: more accountability, more responsiveness, more transparency, and less corruption.

The consolidation of democracy in East Asia will require steps to make democratic systems more effective, responsible, and democratic. Among the priorities are reforms to develop structures of horizontal accountability, including legislative capacity and oversight, judicial competence and independence, and economic scrutiny and regulation; to monitor, deter, and punish corruption; and to improve party and campaign finance so as "to arrest the encroachment of money into politics" (Chu and Shin 2005:209). In some countries constitutional reforms may be necessary to repair the recurrent tendency of presidential systems toward polarization and deadlock. While citizens in the region are unlikely to see again the phenomenal rates of economic growth of the previous generation, consolidation will be aided if economies continue to produce at least moderately good records of economic growth and distribution while adapting to changing international market conditions.

East Asian democratic regimes face these challenges in a difficult global context. The world appears to have entered (dating perhaps as far back as the Pakistani coup in 1999) a period of "democratic recession," in which setbacks to democracy are offsetting, and at this writing even outnumbering, advances (Diamond 2008). Not only has democracy broken down in Pakistan and Thailand, but it has been slowly strangled in Russia and Venezuela, and it is stalled and performing poorly in a number of African and Latin American countries. The rapid and seemingly confident rise of China suggests that authoritarian regimes remain formidable competitors for legitimacy, if they themselves can continue to deliver.

Yet, our findings also provide reasons to be hopeful. East Asian publics do anticipate democratic improvement, and they should know better than we do the likely trajectories of their regimes. They expect democratic deepening, not backsliding, and presumably are prepared to reward parties and politicians who deliver it. The Hong Kong survey shows that people who do not live under a democratic regime would like to have one, for all its flaws. The China survey shows that residents in the world's largest authoritarian system share a concept of democracy that overlaps considerably with those of neighboring democracies and that they value it highly.

Democracy in Korea and Taiwan has shown resilience despite hard challenges. In the face of scandals and political deadlock under each of Korea's four presidents of the democratic era, spanning a twenty-year period from Roh Tae Woo to Roh Moo Hyun, Korea's democratic system has endured and in many respects has become more democratic. Taiwan has gone through an even deeper political trauma, involving debilitating conflict between president and assembly, intense polarization over the twin issues of state and national identity, a bitterly disputed presidential election in 2004 that led the opposition to challenge the legitimacy of the incumbent president, Chen Shui-bian, and grave charges of corruption in the presidential family that generated calls for President Chen's resignation. Yet here, too, the future of democracy as a system of government does not appear to be in serious doubt.

Our data affirm that in each political system, high levels of authoritarian detachment make any overthrow of the formal structures of democracy improbable. While contending elites in Korea and Taiwan have not shown a steadfast commitment to the rules and spirit of democracy, neither do they challenge its desirability. The case of Japan shows that democracy can survive over a long period of time with low levels of public enthusiasm, in part due to the lack of support for nondemocratic alternatives. This point, however, does not apply uniformly throughout the region. In the Philippines and, as events

have shown, in Thailand, military intervention remains a plausible alternative partly because of the stated preferences of a significant minority of the public and partly because of elites' willingness to consider authoritarian options.

Democracy in East Asia thus stands in a twilight zone. Citizens do not want authoritarian rule, but in the crucial domain of public attitudes democracy has not yet earned consistently strong support. Those who interpreted the third wave as a decisive historic victory for democracy spoke too soon. The easy optimism of the end of history was premature. Yet we should also let go of the pessimistic view that democratic values are only Western and have no appeal in the East (Sen 1999). If democracy is in trouble in Asia, it is not in worse shape than in other developing regions. And, most encouraging and discouraging at the same time, its troubles are not undeserved; ambivalent support is a response to mixed performance. Democracy in Asia has yet to earn its way.

NOTES

1. The number 59% was for the five new democracies; the change of one percentage point is attributable to the addition of Japan to the set of countries being described.
2. Unless otherwise stated, data from the most recent Afrobarometer (Round 3) are drawn from Afrobarometer 2006. Round 3 was conducted in 2005 and 2006; for brevity we refer to it as the 2005 survey. We appreciate the cooperation of Michael Bratton and Carolyn Logan of the Afrobarometer in providing us with selected additional data.
3. Those five countries were India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Nepal. Pakistan, of course, has not been a democracy since 1999, and Nepal was undergoing monarchical-dominated autocratic rule and Maoist insurgency at the time of the survey.
4. This mean figure is for the eight postcommunist democracies admitted in 2004 to the European Union—Hungary, Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania—plus Bulgaria and Romania. With regard to the results for Latin America, a new and different regional survey, the Latin American Public Opinion Project (LAPOP), has recently found consistently higher levels of public support for democracy in the Americas. This may because of a more systematic effort to capture rural respondents in proportion to their actual share of the population, and perhaps to other differences in sampling and implementation. Rural respondents are less educated and less critical, and may tend to be more supportive of the current system. Overall, the thirteen-country mean for democratic preference in the 2006 LAPOP survey was 67%, versus 51% for the same thirteen countries in the 2005 Latinobarómetro. The Latinobarómetro figures may therefore be seen as low-end estimates, and quite possibly underestimates, of democratic

support. For further information on LAPOP, see http://sitemason.vanderbilt.edu/lapop.

5. The Latinobarómetro question was worded slightly differently, however: "Some people say democracy solves problems we have in [country name]. Others say democracy does not solve these problems. Which statement is closer to your view?" The proportion viewing the democratic system as capable in this way has oscillated around half: 50% in 1995, 48% in 2002, 53% in 2005. See Latinobarómetro 2005:49.
6. Throughout this chapter, the regional averages we provide represent the simple means of all the country percentages within a region. None of these means is weighted for country size, and therefore none represents an average of all people in a region or set of countries. Rather, each regional average is the mean of the different national response rates. When we say only half of Latin Americans, on average, thought democracy could be effective, this indicates that the mean of the country percentages on this item is about 50%.
7. Here again, however, the recent LAPOP survey finds a dramatically more positive picture, with a mean level of democratic satisfaction of 48% in the thirteen countries surveyed in 2006, compared with a Latinobarómetro mean of 28% in the same thirteen countries. In seven of the thirteen countries, the LAPOP survey found levels of democratic satisfaction more than twice as high as the Latinobarómetro found (e.g., 54% vs. 24% in Bolivia, 49% vs. 24% in Mexico).
8. The higher level of openness to military rule than in Africa or East Asia may have been prompted by the caveat, "if the situation got very bad."
9. About a quarter of Indians had no opinion, so the absolute level of opposition was only 38%.
10. We noted in chapter 1 that authoritarian detachment and citizens' positive orientations toward democracy are not always closely correlated.
11. "Explaining Trends in Popular Attitudes to Democracy in Africa: Formal or Informal?" Michael Bratton, Afrobarometer presentation, October 2006.
12. The methodology for this survey was different from the others in that it provided respondents with a 7-point scale from distrust to trust, and thus allowed a neutral, midpoint answer.
13. Data from other EAB value batteries not discussed in this book show patterns similar to those described in this paragraph.
14. Younger people in every society tend to be more prodemocratic, but Inglehart argues and we agree that this is contingent on modernization; if younger generations experienced harder rather than easier material lives their values might change in the opposite direction.
15. These issues can be explored using questionnaire items on traditional social values and democratic values that were included in the EAB survey but which we have not analyzed in this volume.