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INTRODUCTION

Comparative Perspectives on Democratic Legitimacy in East Asia

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EAST ASIAN THIRD-WAVE DEMOCRACIES are in distress. From Bangkok to Manila, Taipei, Ulaanbaatar, and Seoul, democratically elected governments have been embroiled in political turmoil. Most East Asian third-wave democracies have suffered inconclusive or disputed electoral outcomes, incessant political strife and partisan gridlock, and recurring political scandals. Frustrated citizens in Manila and Taipei more than once lost confidence in the efficacy of democratic procedures to the point where they tried to bring down incumbent leaders through the extraconstitutional means of "people's power." In Thailand in 2006, a crippling political crisis triggered a military coup.

Democracies in Asia are in trouble because they suffer from fragile foundations of legitimation. Nostalgia for the authoritarian past shadows these new democracies, many of which succeeded seemingly effective progrowth soft-authoritarian regimes. In Thailand, the Philippines, and Taiwan, a significant number of citizens harbor professed reservations about democracy and lingering attachments to authoritarianism. In the eyes of many citizens, the young democracies have yet to prove themselves. Even in Japan, the region's oldest democracy, citizens show low enthusiasm for the political system. If Japanese democracy is secure, it owes more to a lack of support for

less democratic alternatives—what we call authoritarian detachment—than to positive feelings about the performance of democracy itself. Such lukewarm support for its own system prevents Japan from promoting the soft power of democracy effectively in the region. Instead, paradoxically, it is the confident regime of authoritarian China whose public seems satisfied.

Many forces affect the emergence and stability of democracy. Among them are elite interactions, economic development, and the international environment. But popular attitudes are a crucial factor. Beliefs and perceptions about regime legitimacy have long been recognized as critical influences on regime change, with particular bearing on the maintenance or breakdown of democracy (Dahl 1971; Linz 1978). As early as the late 1950s, Lipset presented evidence demonstrating a strong positive relationship between economic development and democracy. He also showed that political beliefs, attitudes, and values were important intervening variables in this relationship (Lipset 1981). The path-breaking work of Almond and Verba and Inkeles and Smith showed that countries differ significantly in their patterns of politically relevant beliefs, values, and attitudes and that within nations these elements of political culture are shaped by life experiences, education, and social class (Almond and Verba 1963; Inkeles 1969; Inkeles and Smith 1974). In 1980, Inkeles and Diamond presented more direct evidence of the relationship between a country's level of economic development and the prevalence among its people of such democratic cultural attributes as tolerance, trust, and efficacy (Inkeles and Diamond 1980). Subsequently, Inglehart showed that life satisfaction, interpersonal trust, and rejection of revolutionary change are highly correlated not only with economic development but also with stable democracy. He thus argued that "political culture may be a crucial link between economic development and democracy" (Inglehart 1988, 1990; Inglehart and Welzel 2005).

Theorists of the 1960s and early 1970s took political culture seriously as an autonomous factor shaping democracy's evolution, while emphasizing the formative role of elite patterns and decisions in the early phases of system evolution or transition. Dankwart Rustow was the pioneer of his generation in advancing our understanding of the genesis of democratization and its stages. In his now classic model of democratic transition, Rustow identified four phases. His model begins with one prerequisite condition—national unity—founded on a widely shared allegiance to a given political community. Second, the democratization process is set off by a prolonged, inconclusive struggle over important socio-economic-political cleavages. What follows is a decision phase, which results in the institutionalization of

some crucial aspect of democratic procedure. The last phase is habituation, during which elites and citizens both submit to the democratic rules of contestation (Rustow 1970). Progress in the habituation phase—subsumed under the concept of consolidation in most present-day democratization literature—is gauged by the strengthening of the normative commitment of elites and citizens to democratic procedures. Rustow's seminal work, although not immediately influential among his contemporaries, paved the way for the second generation of theory on democratic transition that emerged a quarter century later.

Political and intellectual trends in the social sciences during the 1970s and 1980s challenged or dismissed political culture theory. Most political scientists writing at that time placed emphasis on social structure, elite transactions, and political institutions. For example, in his work on the authoritarian turn of Latin America, Guillermo O'Donnell (1973) pointed to the structural connection between the deepening of late industrialization and what he called bureaucratic authoritarianism, arguing that the experiences of many Latin American countries directly challenged earlier predictions that modernization would entail parallel processes of economic development and democratization. Other analysts of regime transition, such as Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan (1978), challenged the determinacy of these structural models and applied elite-actor models to analyze the uncertainty surrounding democratic breakdowns. Other scholars followed the lead of Samuel Huntington's *Political Order in Changing Societies* (1968) to explore the role of political institutionalization in shaping dynamics in developing countries. This second generation of democratic-transition theory, led by the multivolume work of O'Donnell, Schmitter, and Whitehead and the writings of Adam Przeworski, stressed the analysis of choices and strategic interactions among contending elites within both the authoritarian regime and its democratic opposition (O'Donnell, Schmitter, and Whitehead 1986; Przeworski 1991).

Only in the 1990s with the surge of theoretical and empirical attention to the process of democratic consolidation—and the growth of mass belief in democratic legitimacy as the core element of this process—has political culture recovered a central place in the comparative study of democracy. Among recent scholars writing on democratic transition and consolidation, Linz and Stepan stand out for their appreciation of the importance of mass-level changes in political culture and their efforts to link the elite and mass levels of behavior and belief (Linz and Stepan 1996a; also see Gunther et al. 1995).

To be sure, public attitudes are not the sole determinant of the fragility or robustness of democratic regimes, but work in combination with other factors. One of us has suggested viewing the complex process of democratic consolidation in terms of six domains (Diamond 1999:68–69; also see Linz and Stepan 1996a:5–7). The argument is summarized in table 1.1.[1] Consolidation takes place in two dimensions—normative and behavioral—and at three levels—political elites, organizations (such as parties, movements, and civic organizations), and the mass public. Although it is but one of six domains, the domain of mass norms and beliefs is crucial to consolidation. No democratic system can be secured that does not command long-term deep support at the mass level. Without such support, the regime is vulnerable to decay in the other five domains and then to collapse. It is in this sense that "the core process of consolidation is legitimation" (Diamond 1999:21).

Democracies therefore become consolidated only when both significant elites and an overwhelming proportion of ordinary citizens see democracy, in Linz and Stepan's incisive phrase, as "the only game in town" (1996a:15). The consolidation of democracy requires "broad and deep legitimation, such that all significant political actors, at both the elite and mass levels, believe that the democratic regime is the most right and appropriate for their society, better than any other realistic alternative they can imagine" (Diamond 1999:65).

Thus the state of normative commitment to democracy among the public at large is crucial for evaluating how far the political system has traveled toward democratic consolidation (Chu, Diamond, and Shin 2001). Regardless of how international donors or academic think tanks rate the extent of democracy in a given country, this form of regime will consolidate only if the bulk of the public believe that democracy is the best form of government for their society, and that democracy of an acceptable quality is being supplied. The citizens are the final arbiters of democracy's legitimacy.

In response to the third-wave transitions and associated developments in theorizing about democracy, a new generation of public opinion studies has arisen. Three large-scale regional survey projects came into being during the 1990s: the Latinobarómetro, launched by Marta Lagos; the Afrobarometer, co-led by Michael Bratton and Robert Mattes; and the New Europe Barometer (formerly the New Democracy Barometer), launched by Richard Rose.[2] In the late 1990s, a global network of comparative surveys of attitudes and values toward politics, governance, democracy, and political reform began to take shape. Increasingly, the regional barometers have cooperated with one another to standardize questions and response formats in order to achieve global comparability.[3]

TABLE 1.1 INDICATORS OF DEMOCRATIC CONSOLIDATION

	NORMS AND BELIEFS	BEHAVIOR
Elite	Most significant leaders of opinion, culture, business, and social organizations, and all major leaders of government and politically significant parties, believe that democracy is the best form of government, and that the constitutional system merits support.	Leaders of government, state institutions, and significant political parties and interest groups respect each other's right to compete peacefully for power, eschew violence, and obey the laws, the constitution, and mutually accepted norms of political conduct.
Organizations	All politically significant parties, interest groups, and social movements endorse (or at least do not reject) in their charters and statements the legitimacy of democracy, and of the country's specific constitutional rules.	No politically significant party, interest group, movement, or institution seeks to overthrow democracy or employs violence or antidemocratic methods to pursue power or other political goals.
Mass Public	More than 70% of the mass public consistently believes that democracy is preferable to any other form of government, and that the democracy in place in the country is the most suitable form of government for the country. No more than 15% of the public actively prefers an authoritarian form of government.	No antidemocratic movement, party, or organization enjoys a significant mass following, and ordinary citizens do not routinely use violence, fraud, or other illegal or unconstitutional methods to express their political preferences or pursue their political interests.

Source: Adapted from Larry Diamond, *Developing Democracy: Toward Consolidation* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), table 3.1, p. 69.

Parallel to this emerging global network is the World Values Surveys (WVS), developed by Ronald Inglehart of the University of Michigan and other social scientists around the world, which assesses the sociocultural, moral, religious, and political values prevalent in many cultures. The WVS focuses on changing patterns of mass belief systems and examines their economic, political, and social consequences from the perspective of modernization theory (Inglehart and Welzel 2005). During the past decade, the WVS has extended its coverage to a number of emerging democracies in Eastern Europe, Latin America, and Asia.

The East Asia Barometer (EAB), launched in 2000, was this region's first collaborative initiative toward a network of democracy studies based on surveying ordinary citizens.[4] The regional initiative was built on a substantial base of completed scholarly work in a number of East Asian localities (for examples, Chu and Hu 1996; Kuan and Lau 1988; Shin 1999; Shi 1997). Between June 2001 and February 2003, the EAB implemented its first-round comparative survey in eight political systems that have experienced different trajectories of regime evolution or transition: Japan, South Korea, Mongolia, Taiwan, the Philippines, Thailand, Hong Kong, and China.[5] The EAB was the region's first systematic and most careful comparative survey of attitudes and values toward politics, governance, democracy, reform, and citizens' political actions. Table 1.2 and appendices 1 through 4 provide more details about the individual surveys.

In 2005 the East Asia Barometer began a second cycle of surveys. During the second wave, the project expanded to include Indonesia, Vietnam, Cambodia, Malaysia, and Singapore. In addition, the EAB formed a collaboration with a similar project coordinated by the New Delhi–based Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, which aims to assess the state of democracy in five South Asian countries: India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Nepal. The Asia-wide network of thirteen East Asian and five South Asian countries took the name Asian Barometer Survey of Democracy, Governance, and Development (ABS). The Asian Barometer Survey stands as the largest link in the global survey network for the study of democracy, covering eighteen political systems, more than 48% of the world's population, and the bulk of the population living in the developing world.

TABLE 1.2 SURVEY SCHEDULES AND SAMPLE SIZES OF FIRST-WAVE EAB

LOCATION	SURVEY SCHEDULE	VALID CASES
Taiwan	Jun–Jul 2001	1415
Hong Kong	Aug–Oct 2001	811
Thailand	Oct–Nov 2001	1546
Philippines	Mar 2002	1200
China	Mar–Jun 2002	3183
Mongolia	Oct–Nov 2002	1144
Japan	Jan–Feb 2003	1418
South Korea	Feb 2003	1500

Note: Ns (sample size) in some tables and figures vary because of the effects of weighting.

The first-wave eight-regime study reported in this volume permits a series of nested comparisons. The data from South Korea, Mongolia, Taiwan, the Philippines, and Thailand allow us to compare the popular legitimation of democracy across the region's five new democracies. Data collected from Japan, Hong Kong, and China throw light on popular beliefs and attitudes in societies living under different kinds of regimes: the only long-established democracy in the region; a former British colony that has enjoyed the world's highest degree of economic freedom but witnessed its momentum of democratic transition slow after retrocession to Chinese control in 1997; and a one-party authoritarian system wrestling with the political implications of rapid socioeconomic transformation while resisting a fundamental change of political regime. Thanks to the existence of comparable data from other regional barometer surveys, we are also able to compare patterns of mass attitudes toward democracy in our region with those in other regions, as examined in the conclusion to this volume.

As we conduct these multilevel comparisons, we focus on the following questions. What do citizens of East Asia think of the state of their political regimes today? How is the current regime in each society perceived in comparison to the system of the past? To what extent do citizens in each society support or demand democracy as a system of government? Is the embrace of democratic legitimacy backed up by beliefs in fundamental liberal-democratic values? How many people in these societies still consider authoritarian arrangements as desirable alternatives? Do attachment to democracy and detachment from authoritarianism reinforce each other, yielding a coherent attitudinal foundation for sustainable democracy? What are the constituencies for and against democracy? Do they come predominantly from rural or urban areas, higher-income or lower-income strata, more- or less-educated sectors of the population, or younger or older generations?

The EAB survey looks more closely at attitudes toward democracy than other surveys that have been conducted in the region. As a consequence, it is able to treat popular support for democracy as a dynamic phenomenon with multiple dimensions and levels. Support for democracy is dynamic because citizens of new democracies compare the current regime with the previous one and often shift their views of democratic politics as they gain knowledge and experience. It is multidimensional because it involves beliefs about democracy's preferability, efficacy, and suitability and also rejection of nondemocratic alternatives. It is multilevel because most citizens simultaneously evaluate democracy as both an ideal political system and a system in practice. With questionnaire batteries designed to test each of these attitudes toward democracy, the EAB surveys

offer the most comprehensive analysis of the depth and dynamics of popular support for democracy among East Asian citizens.

The methodological challenge of establishing comparability in any cross-national survey is formidable. We are comparing national responses to questions that are identically worded but must be translated into a number of different languages and administered in different cultural and institutional contexts. 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 countries. As Gary King and his colleagues have pointed out (2004), standardization by itself does not solve the problem of cross-cultural validity.[6] Our analyses take this issue into consideration by striking a balance between generalizing cross-national comparisons and contextualizing the meaning and significance of our data in their specific cultural and political settings.

This introductory chapter presents some highlights in comparative perspective across the region as well as some comparisons with other regions of the world. The following eight chapters interpret the findings for each political system in historical and institutional context, in order to assess how much progress has made toward consolidating democracy and what challenges it faces to reach that goal. The conclusion reviews the state of democratic consolidation in the region in comparison with regions where the other third-wave democracies are clustered, and probes more deeply into the theoretical relationship of mass public attitudes to regime consolidation.

EAST ASIAN DEMOCRACIES IN GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE

East Asia presents five major puzzles to students of democratization. First, the region has partially defied the global movement toward democracy. Since the current wave of democratization began in 1974, more than eighty countries have made significant progress toward democracy by expanding political freedoms and holding competitive elections (Diamond and Morlino 2004). During the same period in East Asia, however, the movement toward democracy has remained limited (Chu 2006). According to Freedom House's standards of political rights and civil liberties, in 2005 only six of the eighteen sovereign states and autonomous territories in the region were ranked "free" (Freedom House 2005). Among the six, only five—the Philippines, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, and Mongolia—became democratic in the time span typically referred to as the third wave. (All are included in the East Asia Barometer

survey.) The region's remaining authoritarian and semidemocratic regimes seem well positioned for an extended lease of life.

Second, the region presents a perplexing juxtaposition for modernization theory. On the one hand, it delivers two of the most compelling cases, Taiwan and South Korea, in support of the claim that modernization is a coherent process that produces a certain uniformity of economic and political institutions across different regions and cultures (Fukuyama 1998:224–225). On the other hand, the region contains some of the most prominent cases—in particular, Malaysia and Singapore—that challenge such predictions (e.g., Boix and Stokes 2003). Indeed, Singapore is the most economically developed authoritarian state ever. And China appears poised to join the list of developed countries with large middle classes and nondemocratic regimes.

Third, authoritarianism remains a fierce competitor to democracy in East Asia. In the ideological arena, East Asia and the Islamic world remain the two notable exceptions to the general observation that "the democratic ideal has become the 'spirit of the times'" (Linz and Stepan 1996a:74–76). The sustained interest in the "Asian values" debate among elites suggests that liberal democracy has not yet established itself as "the only game in town." While the region's new democratic regimes struggle with governance challenges of disputed elections, partisan gridlock, corruption scandals, slow growth, and weak economic outlooks, the region's resilient authoritarian and semiauthoritarian regimes, such as Singapore, Malaysia, and China, seem capable of coping with complex economies, diverse interests, and globalization.

Fourth, few of the region's former authoritarian regimes were thoroughly discredited before they fell. Many of our respondents remember the old regimes as having delivered social stability and economic growth and as being less susceptible to money politics than the new regimes. During the authoritarian years, most of the countries that later became East Asia's new democracies experienced limited pluralism, including some forms of electoral contestation as well as the existence of some form of opposition. As a result, citizens in many new East Asian democracies did not experience as dramatic an increase in the area of political rights and freedom as did citizens in many other third-wave democracies.

Last but not least, with the shift of the center of regional economic gravity from Japan to China, East Asia is becoming one of the few regions in the world where the characteristics of political systems pose no barrier to trade and investment, and perhaps the only region in the world where newly

democratized countries become economically integrated with and even to some extent dependent on nondemocratic countries. The region's emerging multilateral institutions are increasingly orbiting around China. For its socialist neighbors, China is seen as having demonstrated a viable path for growing out of a planned economy and as showing how sequencing political and economic change makes possible a transition from communism to postcommunist authoritarianism. The adaptability and resiliency of China's communist regime has made the region's overall environment much more hospitable for nondemocratic regimes.

The above analyses lend some support to the idea of "Asian exceptionalism" (Fukuyama 1998). The region's unique history of political development carries important implications for the growth of democratic legitimacy in emerging democracies. Citizens in democratic parts of East Asia tend to compare their current regimes with two readily available benchmarks: either with progrowth soft-authoritarian regimes that they experienced in their lifetimes or with prosperous nondemocratic neighbors. Either way, these region-specific benchmarks tend to generate dauntingly high expectations for the performance of democratic systems. Thus, while East Asian democracies are endowed with many favorable socioeconomic conditions (such as sizable middle classes, well-educated populations, and highly internationalized economies) that should promote the growth of democratic legitimacy, the region's culture, political history, and the overall geopolitical configuration put a drag on the development of a robust democratic culture.

POPULAR UNDERSTANDING OF DEMOCRACY

The starting point of our analysis concerns the people's conception of "democracy," a cognitive issue that has been taken for granted by most students of democratization. We do not assume that ordinary citizens share one common understanding of democracy or conceive of democracy in the same way as political scientists do. Before we can make sense out of our data about people's attitudes and orientations toward "democracy," we need to explore how people understand the concept.

Previous survey studies showed that democracy is a contested concept that means different things to different people (Miller, Hesli, and Reisinger 1997; Shin 1999; Bratton, Mattes, and Gyimah-Boadi 2005). In distinguishing democracy from nondemocracy, ordinary citizens often disagree over

the specific characteristics of political and social life that they take into account. The particular characteristics or terms they emphasize most are likely to serve as the main standards for their appraisal of how well the current democratic political system performs and their decision to support or not to support it on a continuing basis (Shin et al. 2003).

To explore respondents' understanding of democracy, the EAB survey employed an open-ended question: "What does democracy mean to you?" This question encouraged respondents to think about their own notions of democracy and allowed them to name up to three elements of democracy in their own words. For the sake of presentation, we condense the various verbal answers down to eight substantive categories, a residual category, and a Don't Know/No Answer (DK/NA). The frequency distributions are displayed in table 1.3.

A large majority in every survey was able to offer some sort of meaningful answer. This is probably due to the fact that the rhetoric of democracy has been pervasive in the political life of every East Asian society, including China, for a century. In most countries, the percentage of DK/NA responses ranged from 10% to 25%, which is not high for this cognitively demanding question. There were three notable exceptions. In Japan, China, and Mongolia, the figures were all above 30%. The reasons for this are quite different among the three. In China and Mongolia, the high percentage of DK/NA responses is related to the higher illiteracy rate and the limited exposure to national media in the countryside. In Japan, it reflects the self-effacing character of Japanese people when they are asked to express opinions.[7]

Across East Asia citizens conceive democracy in positive rather than negative terms. Few anywhere associate democracy with chaos, corruption, violence, or inefficiency. Respondents also regard democracy in both procedural and substantive terms. A procedural perspective emphasizes attributes like civil rights, freedom, political institutions, and process. A substantive view emphasizes social justice, good governance, general welfare, and government "by and for the people."

In the majority of societies, citizens most frequently associate democracy with "freedom and liberty." This is comparable to what the Afrobarometer has found among Africans (Bratton, Mattes, and Gyimah-Boodi 2005:68). In the age of globalization there is a floor of shared understanding across cultures. However, the divergence both within each country and across nations remains great. In Thailand, Mongolia, Taiwan, and even China, many people are capable of defining democracy in Schumpe-

TABLE 1.3 MEANING OF DEMOCRACY

(Percent of total sample mentioning this meaning)

CATEGORIES	CHINA	HONG KONG	TAIWAN	KOREA	MONGOLIA	THAILAND	PHILIPPINES	JAPAN
Freedom and liberty	25.4	34.1	29.9	59.5	58.9	35.0	48.2	29.9
Political rights, institutions, and processes	24.3	16.9	18.6	11.0	25.2	27.1	4.9	8.7
Market economy	0.1	0.0	1.4	9.9	7.0	0.0	0.0	2.1
Social equality and justice	4.4	10.7	6.3	34.0	33.4	10.4	4.0	17.5
Good government	2.7	0.5	3.2	4.7	11.6	1.3	1.2	1.8
By and for the people	28.8	5.4	17.1	5.1	7.5	6.6	1.8	5.9
In general positive terms	8.0	6.0	24.1	25.5	20.3	26.4	16.3	18.1
In negative terms	0.0	5.3	5.2	0.5	4.8	0.1	2.1	3.4
Other	7.1	9.3	8.2	7.0	1.7	2.1	3.9	5.9
Don't know/No answer	34.7	21.3	17.0	1.5	31.4	20.2	26.7	35.5
N =	3183	811	1415	1500	1144	1546	1200	1418

Note: Totals exceed 100% because respondents could give up to three meanings.

terian terms (i.e., associating democracy with "political rights, institutions, and processes"), but this type of answer is relatively scarce among Filipino and Japanese respondents.[8] On the other hand, many respondents in Mongolia and South Korea associate democracy with "social equality and justice." A large percentage of the answers offered by our respondents in China do not fit into any of our categories and are placed in the residual category of "Others." As we will explore in chapter 9, because Chinese live under a political regime that promotes its own conception of "socialist democracy," they adhere to distinctive ideas that are not part of the conventional understanding.[9]

It is also interesting to notice what kind of answers are missing. In all eight political systems, few respondents associate democracy with the market economy or private property. This is in contrast with Eastern Europe where many citizens view democratization and market-oriented economic reform as synonymous. Overall, the East Asians we have interviewed seem to conceive democracy as a system based on a mixture of liberal, participatory, and populist elements. Except for the Chinese, their conceptions of democracy are compatible with the views held by citizens on other continents, rather than being Asia-specific.

POLITICAL EFFICACY

Effective democratic governance depends not only on the presence of formal rules and structures but also on effective citizenship. In a democracy, an effective citizen is expected to take an interest in public affairs and to possess a sense of "internal political efficacy"—i.e., "beliefs about one's own competence to understand and to participate effectively in politics" (Niemi, Craig, and Mattei 1991:407). Many studies show that a subjective sense of confidence propels people to join voluntary organizations, contribute to communal projects, and vote in local and national elections (Seligson 1980).

Do East Asian citizens believe that they have the capacity to understand and participate in politics? Some answers can be gleaned from a pair of items that the EAB survey employed to probe respondents' internal efficacy.[10] The first asked if the respondent agreed with the statement, "Sometimes politics and government seem so complicated that a person like me can't really understand what is going on"; the second asked for agreement or disagreement with the statement, "I think I have the ability to participate in politics."

Table 1.4 presents the percentage of respondents with different levels of subjective sense of self-confidence in each regime. The level of internal efficacy among East Asians is relatively low as compared with comparable figures from the established democracies (Pharr and Putnam 2000). In all the regimes we surveyed except Mongolia, fewer than 18% of the respondents felt that they were capable of both understanding and participating in politics. In Hong Kong, China, Taiwan, and Japan more than half of the respondents believed that they had neither the ability to understand nor to participate in politics. Hong Kong registered the lowest level of internal efficacy, with less than 2% believing that they were both cognitively and behaviorally capable and more than 82% believing that they lacked both the ability to understand politics and the capacity to take part.

There are some exceptions to this pattern. Thais were distinguished by an extraordinary level of confidence in their active participatory capacities. Mongolians were also more optimistic about their political efficacy than other East Asians. In both cases, we ran into many more citizens with a sense of political self-confidence than we found in the socioeconomically more advanced societies of Japan, Taiwan, and Hong Kong. This suggests that the perceived characteristics of political institutions are more important in setting the tone of citizens' orientations toward the state than the level of social modernization.

EVALUATION OF REGIME TRANSITION

The eight regimes in the EAB project had followed different trajectories of development at the time of our surveys. We wanted to know how much progress citizens thought each political system had made in the direction of democratic change. The survey asked respondents to compare the level of democracy of the old regime and that of the current regime on a scale of 1 to 10, where 10 represents complete democracy and 1 represents complete dictatorship. The old regime was defined as the last authoritarian regime. For the Japanese it was the prewar military regime, for Koreans the military regime under Chun Doo Hwan before 1987, for residents of Taiwan the one-party hegemony before the lifting of martial law in 1988, for Filipinos the Marcos regime, for Thais the military regime before 1992, and for the Mongolians the communist regime before 1991. For Hong Kong, the old regime was defined as the British colonial administration before the 1997 handover.

TABLE 1.4 CITIZEN EMPOWERMENT

(Percent of respondents)

	CHINA	HONG KONG	TAIWAN	KOREA	MONGOLIA	THAILAND	PHILIPPINES	JAPAN
Neither	63.3	82.5	60.8	38.5	21.0	37.5	12.9	59.2
Can understand politics	9.9	13.9	11.4	36.3	16.9	31.6	2.8	16.9
Can participate in politics	19.1	2.1	17.7	7.3	32.7	17.7	71.7	13.8
Both	7.4	1.5	10.0	17.8	29.4	13.2	12.5	10.2
N =	3184	811	1415	1500	1144	1203	1544	1419

For China, it was defined as the system before the start of Deng Xiaoping's economic reforms in 1979. For the sake of presentation, we grouped the scores that respondents gave the two regimes into four categories: 1–2 stands for very dictatorial, 3–5 somewhat dictatorial, 6–8 somewhat democratic, and 9–10 very democratic. The rating for the old regime is presented in table 1.5 and that for the current regime in table 1.6.

In all societies, more than two-thirds of respondents were capable of rating their past and current regimes with this numerical yardstick. The fact that some of the respondents did not personally experience the old regime did not dissuade them from offering their opinion. The DK/NA responses increase only slightly when the question is shifted from rating the current to the old regime. The highest proportion of DK/NA (32%) is found in China. This is consistent with our earlier finding that a large number of Chinese respondents do not possess a basic awareness of democracy.

Table 1.5 shows that across East Asia a majority of the citizens considered their respective old regimes either somewhat dictatorial or very dictatorial with the exception of Hong Kong, where most citizens believed that the former system was somewhat democratic. In Taiwan, South Korea, Mongolia, and China, majorities viewed the old regime as somewhat dictatorial, while in Japan, Thailand, and the Philippines there were almost as many people who considered the old regime as very dictatorial as those who believed it was only somewhat dictatorial.

In a similar vein, citizens in most East Asian countries considered the current system to be somewhat democratic as opposed to very democratic (see table 1.6). In Japan, only 12.4% of the respondents believed that their current regime was very democratic, significantly lower than what we observed in some new democracies, such as Taiwan, Thailand, and the Philippines. It is clear that when evaluating democratic changes, most East Asian citizens subscribe to a subjective benchmark based on country-specific historical experiences as well as their own expectations. In a maturing democracy like Japan, a demanding electorate has probably raised the bar for evaluating the system as "very democratic." In the emerging democracies, the euphoria surrounding the dawning of a new political era may have prompted some citizens to give the new system high marks.

The same logic helps explain why, in China, the popular tendency to associate democracy with freedom and the dramatic improvement in living conditions brought about by economic reform, induced close to 60% of the citizens to view their system as "somewhat democratic," and almost a quarter to believe that they live under a "very democratic" system. In contrast,

TABLE 1.5 PERCEPTIONS OF THE PAST REGIME

(Percent of valid sample)

RATING	CHINA[a]	HONG KONG	TAIWAN	KOREA	MONGOLIA	THAILAND	PHILIPPINES	JAPAN
Very dictatorial (1–2)	14.0	3.1	15.3	16.5	32.3	48.4	34.0	41.9
Somewhat dictatorial (3–5)	54.2	23.4	60.0	55.0	51.4	42.6	39.2	48.3
Somewhat democratic (6–8)	25.4	63.8	22.1	27.6	14.5	6.2	18.8	9.1
Very democratic (9–10)	6.3	9.7	2.6	0.9	1.8	2.9	8.1	0.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
DK/NA	31.6	12.5	17.7	0.2	4.4	14.7	0.6	16.4
N=	3184	811	1415	1500	1144	1544	1203	1419

Notes: Scale runs from 1, "complete dictatorship," to 10, "complete democracy."
DK/NA = Don't know/no answer, percent of total sample.
[a] Past regime defined as before 1979.

TABLE 1.6 PERCEPTIONS OF THE CURRENT REGIME

(Percent of valid sample)

RATING	CHINA	HONG KONG	TAIWAN	KOREA	MONGOLIA	THAILAND	PHILIPPINES	JAPAN
Very dictatorial (1–2)	1.6	6.1	1.5	0.5	0.5	0.7	4.6	0.5
Somewhat dictatorial (3–5)	14.6	53.6	14.9	17.8	17.8	6.4	25.7	14.9
Somewhat democratic (6–8)	59.3	37.4	60.9	79.5	79.5	47.3	47.3	72.2
Very democratic (9–10)	24.5	2.9	22.7	2.3	2.3	45.7	22.5	12.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
DK/NA	25.1	12.1	12.9	0.0	2.6	4.9	0.2	9.1
N=	3184	811	1415	1500	1144	1544	1203	1419

Notes: Scale runs from 1, "complete dictatorship," to 10, "complete democracy."
DK/NA = Don't know/no answer, percent of total sample.

Hong Kong people today enjoy substantially more civil liberty and political rights than citizens in the Chinese mainland. But the popular perceptions in the two Chinese societies are reversed. In this sense, the legitimacy crisis the Hong Kong government faces today is more serious than that of the communist regime.

In table 1.7, we have identified six patterns of perceived change based on the difference between the respondent's rankings of the current and past regimes. Across East Asia most citizens recognize that their country has undergone a "moderate change to democracy." A majority do not see the transition as a quantum leap. Most believe that the old regime was somewhat dictatorial rather than highly repressive, and that the new system is only somewhat democratic rather than very democratic. Only in Thailand are almost as many people recognizing "dramatic change to democracy" as those perceiving moderate change.

This means that most East Asian citizens believe there is still ample room for their current system to improve. Hong Kong is again the outlier against this regional upward trend. Forty percent of our Hong Kong respondents felt that there had been backsliding in the level of democracy after the 1997 handover. In contrast, in China 44.5% of our respondents believed that their country had made a moderate change to democracy while 14.1% perceived "dramatic change." This again reflects the fact that Chinese citizens evaluate the trajectory of their political system in light of their country's history of totalitarian rule.

In every country there are significant minorities who hold very different views about the nature of past and current regimes. In Taiwan and South Korea, 19.2% and 25% of our respondents respectively fell into the category of "continuing democracy," meaning that they believed their old regimes were already democratic and perceived no significant difference between the past and the current regime. This attitude is a symptom of authoritarian nostalgia, reflecting the fact that both countries enjoyed miraculous records of economic growth during the authoritarian years.

POPULAR SUPPORT FOR DEMOCRACY

One of the central tasks of the EAB survey was to measure the extent to which East Asian democracies have achieved broad and deep legitimation, such that all significant political actors, at both the elite and mass levels, believe that the democratic regime is the most desirable and suitable for their society and

TABLE 1.7 PERCEIVED CHANGE FROM PAST TO CURRENT REGIME

(Percent of valid sample)

REGIME CHANGE	CHINA	HONG KONG	TAIWAN	KOREA	MONGOLIA	THAILAND	PHILIPPINES	JAPAN
More dictatorial	5.7	40.3	5.2	3.5	4.2	0.8	10.4	0.9
Equally dictatorial	4.4	16.8	7.4	6.2	7.9	1.1	9.1	3.5
Less dictatorial	5.3	2.6	3.7	8.6	15.3	4.4	10.7	11.0
Moderate change to democracy	44.5	6.0	48.4	55.6	51.6	44.0	36.4	64.3
Dramatic change to democracy	14.1	0.9	16.0	1.1	8.9	41.5	16.9	11.7
Continuing democracy	25.9	33.5	19.2	25.0	12.1	8.1	16.5	8.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
DK/NA	32.1	15.3	19.7	0.2	5.9	15.4	0.8	18.6
N=	3184	811	1415	1500	1144	1544	1203	1419

Notes: Entries are the percent of respondents perceiving the given kind of change from the past to the current regime. Regime categories are based on the respondent's ranking of the current and the past regime on a scale from 1, "complete dictatorship," to 10, "complete democracy." Scores of 5 and below are degrees of dictatorship and scores of 6 and above are degrees of democracy. Where C = score of current regime and P = score of past regime, "more dictatorial" means C≤5 and P≥6; "equally dictatorial" means C and P are both ≤5 and C-P<2; "less dictatorial" means that C and P are both ≤5 but C-P>2; "moderate change to democracy" means P<6 and 6≤C≤8; "dramatic change to democracy" means P≤5 and C≥9; "continuing democracy" means both C and P≥6.

DK/NA = Don't know/no answer, percent of total sample.

better than any other realistic alternative. We employed a set of five questions to estimate the level of support for democracy. These questions address democracy's desirability, suitability, efficacy, preferability, and priority.

We measure the "desirability" dimension by asking respondents to indicate on a 10-point scale how democratic they want their society to be, with 1 being "complete dictatorship" and 10 being "complete democracy." The first row of percentages in table 1.8 shows that in most societies, except China and Taiwan, overwhelming majorities (87% or higher) expressed a desire for democracy by choosing a score of 6 or above. In Taiwan, 72.2% of the electorate expressed their desire for democracy, which is not a very impressive ratio in comparison with South Koreans' near unanimity (95.4%). On this score, Taiwan trails behind not only all East Asian democracies, but also Hong Kong.[11]

Next, respondents were asked to rate the suitability of democracy for their society on a 10-point scale, 10 being perfectly suitable and 1 being completely unsuitable. The second row of table 1.8 indicates that in most East Asian societies at least 75% of respondents considered democracy suitable. The gap between the desirability and suitability measures suggests that there are many East Asians who in principle desire to live in a democracy, but who do not believe that their political system is ready for it. Taiwan again fares unimpressively on this measure, with only 59% of the respondents looking favorably on the suitability issue, trailing behind Hong Kong's 66.8% and China's 67%. It may not be coincidence that a sizable minority is skeptical about the suitability of democracy in all three culturally Chinese societies. This reflects the lingering influence of their common cultural values, which privilege order and harmony.

The EAB survey asked respondents whether they believed that "democracy is capable of solving the problems of our society." East Asians hold divergent views on this efficacy question. When sampled in late 2001, Thais overwhelmingly (89.6%) believed that democracy is capable of addressing their problems, while only 39% of Hong Kong respondents answered the question in the affirmative. In most regimes, a majority expressed their belief in democracy's efficacy for solving their societies' problems. Nevertheless, across all eight of these cases, the proportion of people who registered their doubt about democracy's problem-solving potential was substantially higher than those questioning democracy's desirability or suitability. This suggests many East Asians attached themselves to democracy as an ideal, but not as a viable political system.

The EAB survey also included a widely used item for measuring popular support for democracy as a preferred political system.[12] Respondents were

TABLE 1.8 SUPPORT FOR DEMOCRACY

(Percent of respondents)

DEMOCRACY IS....	CHINA	HONG KONG	TAIWAN	KOREA	MONGOLIA	THAILAND	PHILIPPINES	JAPAN
Desirable for our country now[a]	72.3	87.6	72.2	95.4	91.6	93.0	88.1	87.1
Suitable for our country now[a]	67.0	66.8	59.0	84.2	86.3	88.1	80.2	76.3
Effective in solving the problems of society[b]	60.5	39.0	46.8	71.7	78.4	89.6	60.7	61.4
Preferable to all other kinds of government[c]	53.8	40.3	40.4	49.4	57.1	82.6	63.6	67.2
Equally or more important than economic development[d]	40.3	19.6	23.5	30.1	48.6	51.3	21.8	44.0
None of the above	13.6	7.2	13.0	0.7	1.4	0.5	1.5	5.7
All of the above	17.8	7.0	7.4	15.7	25.9	35.6	6.7	23.4
Mean number of items supported	2.9	2.5	2.4	3.3	3.6	4.0	3.1	3.4

[a] Six or above on a 10-point dictatorship-democracy scale of where the country should or could be now.
[b] Dichotomous variable.
[c] Trichotomous variable recoded into a dichotomous variable.
[d] Five-way variable recoded into dichotomous variable.

asked to choose among three statements: "Democracy is always preferable to any other kind of government," "Under some circumstances, an authoritarian government can be preferable to a democratic one," and "For people like me, it does not matter whether we have a democratic or a nondemocratic regime." It turns out that popular belief in the preferability of democracy is lower in East Asia than in other third-wave democracies. In Spain, Portugal, and Greece, more than three-quarters of the mass public say democracy is always preferable in survey after survey (Dalton 1999:69). In East Asia, only Thailand (82.6%) had reached that threshold. In Japan, only 67.2% of respondents said they always prefer democracy to other forms of government, lower than the average (above 70%) of the twelve sub-Saharan countries surveyed by Afrobarometer around 2000 (Bratton, Mattes, and Gyiman-Boadi 2005:73). In Taiwan and South Korea, more than half of those surveyed either supported a possible authoritarian option or showed indifference to the form of government, pushing the support level down to 40.4% and 49.4% respectively. Outside East Asia, such low levels of support are found only in some struggling Latin American democracies such as Ecuador (Latinobarómetro 2005). This low level of popular support in the two East Asian tigers in spite (or because) of their higher level of socioeconomic development underscores the point we have already made: in societies where people have experienced a variant of soft authoritarianism that was efficacious in delivering social stability and economic development, democracy will have a difficult time winning people's hearts.

To measure the priority of democracy as a societal goal, the EAB survey asked, "If you had to choose between democracy and economic development, which would you say is more important?" Across the region, democracy lost to economic development by a wide margin. Only about one-third of Japanese respondents and slightly over a quarter of Mongolian respondents favored democracy over economic development, while fewer than one-fifth of respondents felt that way in Hong Kong, Taiwan, South Korea, and the Philippines. On this score, East Asians and Latin Americans look very much alike, despite the fact that most East Asian countries have enjoyed an extended period of rapid economic expansion. According to the 2001 Latinobarómetro, 51% of Latin Americans believed that economic development was more important than democracy; 25% thought democracy was more important; and 18% stated that both are equally important.[13] One possible reason for an overwhelming emphasis on the priority of economic development in East Asia is the psychological impact of the region's financial crisis of 1997 and 1998. In the aftermath of this economic shock, most

East Asian citizens no longer took sustained growth for granted. In China and Mongolia, the two countries that were relatively insulated from the financial meltdown, more people were willing to put democracy before economic development than elsewhere.

To summarize the overall level of attachment to democracy, we constructed a 6-point index ranging from 0 to 5 by counting the number of prodemocratic responses on the five items discussed above. On this 6-point index, Japan registered the highest level of overall support with an average of 3.4, while Taiwan and Hong Kong registered the lowest, with 2.4 and 2.5 respectively. Across East Asia, few people gave unqualified support for democracy. Even in Japan, only around 19% of respondents reached the maximum score of 5. This suggests that East Asia's democracies have yet to prove themselves in the eyes of many citizens.

Our findings make clear that normative commitment to democracy consists of many attitudinal dimensions and the strength of citizens' attachment to democracy is context-dependent. The more abstract the context, the stronger the normative commitment; the more concrete the context, the weaker the commitment. The conclusion will develop this point further on the basis of the country chapters: citizens' commitment to democracy responds sensitively to the democratic regime's perceived performance—its ability to deliver political goods. Democracy as an abstract idea was widely embraced. But not so many people endorsed it as the preferred form of government under all circumstances, and few preferred it to economic development.

DETACHMENT FROM AUTHORITARIANISM

While we did not find a full-blown democratic culture in most of our surveys, this does not mean that democracy is in imminent danger. Richard Rose and his colleagues have put forward an argument about the competitive justification of democratic regimes. Referring to Winston Churchill's famous line "Democracy is the worst form of government except all those others that have been tried from time to time," they argued a democracy may survive not because a majority believes in its intrinsic legitimacy, but because there are no viable alternatives (Rose, Mishler, and Haerpfer 1998:31). This suggests that authoritarian detachment is as important as democratic commitment in sustaining the legitimacy of a democratic regime.

TABLE 1.9 AUTHORITARIAN DETACHMENT

(Percent of respondents)

ITEM	CHINA	HONG KONG	TAIWAN	KOREA	MONGOLIA	THAILAND	PHILIPPINES	JAPAN
Reject "strong leader"[a]	—	71.5	68.3	84.4	59.2	76.6	69.4	79.1
Reject "military rule"	61.4	85.7	81.6	89.8	85.8	81.2	62.7	94.4
Reject "no opposition party"[a]	—	62.4	70.3	86.7	72.4	61.3	69.6	66.7
Reject "experts decide everything"	74.5	73.5	71.3	82.3	66.1	77.7	76.8	85.4
Reject all authoritarian options	57.9[b]	49.4	50.0	65.1	37.0	43.1	35.6	54.3
Reject no authoritarian options	22.0[b]	9.0	10.1	0.9	4.0	5.5	4.1	3.6
All of the above	17.8	7.0	7.4	15.7	25.9	35.6	6.7	23.4
Mean number of items rejected (0 to 4)	2.7[c]	2.9	2.9	3.4	2.8	3.0	2.8	3.3

[a] Not asked in China.
[b] Based on two questions.
[c] Mean score multiplied by two for comparison with other countries.

To assess East Asian citizens' antipathy for authoritarian alternatives, the EAB survey asked respondents whether they would favor the return to any of the four likely authoritarian alternatives: strongman rule, military rule, single-party rule, and technocratic rule.[14] As shown in table 1.9, a greater than two-thirds majority in each political system except Mongolia rejected the idea of replacing democracy with strongman rule. Military rule was rejected even more vigorously, at levels over 80%, everywhere except the Philippines and China. Rejection of single-party rule was less emphatic but still exceeded two-thirds in five regimes. Finally, at least two-thirds in every political system rejected the option of technocratic rule.

The survey identified pockets of authoritarian inclination among the populace in most countries. In Mongolia, the yearning for a return to strongman rule remains, with only 59.2% of respondents opposing it. In the Philippines, fewer than two-thirds of the people rejected military rule. Also, there was substantial support for single-party rule in Hong Kong and Thailand.

When all four measures are considered jointly, the aggregate picture raises some cause for concern. In only three political systems—Korea, Japan, and Taiwan—did more than half the people reject all four alternatives. In Mongolia and the Philippines, fewer than 40% of respondents

TABLE 1.10   CORRELATION BETWEEN AUTHORITARIAN DETACHMENT AND SUPPORT FOR DEMOCRACY

	PEARSON CORRELATION	N
Hong Kong	0.424**	811
Japan	0.414**	1419
Korea	0.205**	1500
Mongolia	0.305**	1144
Philippines	0.044	1203
Taiwan	0.400**	1415
Thailand	0.152**	1546
China	N/A	N/A
East Asia	0.321**	12219

$*<.05; ** <.01$

Note: The support for democracy scale was the sum of agreement to: democracy is desirable for our country now, suitable for our country now, effective in solving the problems of society, preferable to all other kinds of government, equally as or more important than economic development. Authoritarian detachment was measured by the number of authoritarian options rejected of a possible four.

rejected all four authoritarian options. This makes the average (48%) of our seven survey sites (excluding China) identical to that reported by the New Europe Barometer covering nine Central and Eastern European new democracies (Rose, Mishler, and Haerpfer 1998:116). This is not reassuring, considering that most postcommunist countries suffered much more severe and protracted economic turmoil during the transition to democracy than East Asian countries did, even taking into account the Asian financial crisis of 1997 and 1998.

To estimate overall levels of detachment from authoritarianism, we combined the responses into a 5-point scale, with 4 meaning complete detachment and 0 meaning full attachment to authoritarian rule. The last row of table 1.9 reports the mean score in each regime. The cross-country variation is not as great as that in support for democracy. However, the two summary measures do tend to move in tandem. A correlation analysis at the level of the individual respondent (reported in table 1.10) shows that growth in citizens' positive orientations toward democracy goes along in most countries with a decline in their attachment to authoritarianism. Only in the Philippines were these two indexes not correlated at a statistically significant level. However, the correlation is below .50 everywhere. As Doh Chull Shin and Chong-Min Park explicate the issue in the Korean context, for citizens with little experience in democratic politics, both democracy and dictatorship may fail to provide satisfying solutions to their problems. Confronting such uncertainty, some citizens embrace democratic and authoritarian political propensities concurrently (Shin and Park 2003).

LOCATING THE PRINCIPLED BELIEVERS IN DEMOCRACY

A principled believer in democracy not only expresses favorable orientations toward democracy but also rejects authoritarian alternatives. The greater the number of principled believers living under a new democracy, the more robust its foundation of legitimation. In table 1.11, we define a "very strong supporter of democracy" as someone who rejects all four authoritarian alternatives and embraces at least four of the five items measuring support for democracy. At the other end of the spectrum, we identify a "strong opponent to democracy" as someone who agrees with two or more of the authoritarian alternatives and embraces two or fewer of the five prodemocracy items. In between, as shown in the notes to the table, we define several intermediate levels of belief in democracy.

TABLE 1.11 PATTERNS OF COMMITMENT TO DEMOCRACY

(Percent of valid sample)

TYPE	CHINA[a]	HONG KONG	TAIWAN	KOREA	MONGOLIA	THAILAND	PHILIPPINES	JAPAN
Very strong supporters	15.89	—	16.65	33.87	27.07	16.48	35.72	36.52
Strong supporters	21.05	—	20.58	24.73	24.81	22.60	28.65	23.27
Moderate supporters	20.41	34.46	16.46	21.20	16.65	22.57	15.98	15.74
Skeptical supporters	17.14	13.24	18.96	11.40	11.94	16.21	5.18	11.60
Weak opponents	10.07	11.43	8.80	4.33	4.98	7.81	2.30	4.93
Strong opponents	11.45	22.45	14.67	1.00	3.31	2.65	1.38	4.98
Mixed	3.99	18.42	3.88	3.47	11.24	11.68	10.78	2.95
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Notes: Types of supporters and opponents are defined as follows: a very strong supporter has an authoritarian detachment (AD) score of 4 out of a possible 4 and a democratic support (DS) score of 4 or 5 out of a possible 5; for a strong supporter AD = 4 and DS = 3, or AD = 3 and DS = 4 or 5; for a moderate supporter AD = 3 and DS = 3, or AD = 2 and DS = 4 or 5; for a skeptical supporter AD = 4 and DS = 0 or 1, or AD = 3 and DS = 1 or 2; for a weak opponent AD = 3 and DS = 0, or AD = 2 and DS = 1 or 2, or AD = 1 and DS = 2; for a strong opponent AD = 2 and DS = 0, or AD = 1 and DS = 0 or 1, or AD = 0 and DS = 0, 1, or 2; for mixed, AD = 0 or 1 and DS = 3, 4, or 5.

[a] Only two authoritarian detachment questions were asked in China.

As table 1.11 shows, across East Asia only Japan, South Korea, and Thailand enjoy a robust foundation of legitimation in which principled believers in democracy (i.e., the sum of "very strong supporters," "strong supporters," and "moderate supporters") constitute majorities, respectively 75.5%, 79.8%, and 80.4%. In Taiwan, the three categories of clear supporters constitute barely above 55% of the sample, suggesting a weak cultural foundation for democracy. The comparable figures for Mongolia and the Philippines (68.5% and 61.7%) are in the middle. While Japan has the largest percentage of very strong supporters (36.5%) Taiwan has the largest share of "strong opponents" (14.7%).

In Thailand, Mongolia, and the Philippines, there also exist a large number of disoriented and confused citizens, as defined by the "mixed" category, whose inconsistent political orientations burden their democracies with a fragile foundation of legitimation. Subsequent to our surveys, all three countries experienced various forms of political instability, as described in this volume's country chapters. In Hong Kong the prodemocracy parties faced dwindling support for their agenda of sweeping reform.

Our analysis suggests that except for South Korea and Japan, most East Asian democracies do not enjoy deep legitimation. The young democracies have yet to prove themselves in the eyes of many citizens.

PERCEPTIONS OF THE FUTURE

Even when citizens harbor reservations about democracy, a new democracy may generate such a sense of momentum that it makes other forms of government increasingly unthinkable. To assess whether this bandwagon effect might be occurring in East Asia, we asked respondents where they expected their political system to be in five years on the 10-point scale from complete dictatorship to complete democracy. Based on the difference between respondents' ratings of the future and current regimes, we identified seven patterns of predicted change. These are reported in table 1.12. Across the region citizens are both optimistic and realistic about their countries' futures. On average people anticipate incremental change in the direction of further democratization. Citizens in China, Mongolia, and South Korea are bit more optimistic about the future, with a change in mean score greater than 1.2, while citizens in other societies are more modest. Even in Hong Kong, where many people perceived a political setback after the handover to Chinese rule, citizens are hopeful. The smallest difference in mean scores is found in Japan, where

TABLE 1.12 EXPECTED CHANGE FROM CURRENT TO FUTURE REGIME

(Percent of valid sample)

REGIME CHANGE	CHINA	HONG KONG	TAIWAN	KOREA	MONGOLIA	THAILAND	PHILIPPINES	JAPAN
Authoritarian persistence	2.8	39.3	7.5	2.9	4.4	1.5	9.8	10.6
Authoritarian reversal	0.5	2.4	5.0	2.1	3.5	2.3	7.9	4.4
Limited democratic transition	7.6	19.3	5.3	13.8	16.2	2.6	11.4	4.4
Advanced democratic transition	5.4	2.2	1.9	1.6	6.3	2.4	9.1	0.2
Struggling democracy	17.1	29.7	38.6	54.3	32.2	20.9	29.9	57.7
Developing democracy	43.2	5.4	23.3	23.3	28.2	28.4	17.7	12.3
Consolidating democracy	23.3	1.7	18.5	1.9	9.3	41.9	14.1	10.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
DK/NA[a]	29.8	30.0	32.6	0.3	9.0	8.9	2.0	20.3

Notes: Entries are the percent of respondents expecting the given kind of change from the current to the future regime, defined as the regime five years from now. Categories are based on the respondent's ranking of the current and the future regime on a scale from 1, "complete dictatorship," to 10, "complete democracy." Scores of 5 and below are degrees of dictatorship and scores of 6 and above are degrees of democracy. Where C = score of current regime and F = score of future regime, "authoritarian persistence" means C ≤ 5 and F ≤ 5; "authoritarian reversal" means C ≥ 6 and P ≤ 5; "limited democratic transition" means that C ≤ 5 and 6 ≤ F ≤ 8; "advanced democratic transition" means C ≤ 5 and F ≥ 9; "struggling democracy" means C ≥ 6 and 6 ≤ F ≤ 8; "developing democracy" means 6 ≤ C ≤ 8 and F ≥ 9; "consolidating democracy" means C ≥ 9 and F ≥ 9.

[a] Percent of total sample who answered don't know or no answer to one or both of the regime type questions.

democracy has been established for more than half a century and the momentum for democratic deepening is exhausted. In the three culturally Chinese societies (China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan), significant proportions of respondents did not make any prediction. Since the fate of the three systems is intimately entangled, uncertainty about the future has become contagious.

Citizens in Taiwan, South Korea, and Japan, who gave on average a modest rating of their current regimes, tend to predict a pattern of "struggling democracy," i.e., being stuck in a state of "somewhat democratic," with a rating of between 6 and 8, for the foreseeable future.[15] However, in all five emerging democracies, there are significant numbers of citizens who are more optimistic, predicting a pattern of "developing democracy", i.e., moving up from the state of "somewhat democratic" to "very democratic," reaching a score of 9 or 10. Thailand stood out among the five emerging democracies in having the largest number of citizens who gave a rating of 9 or 10 for their current system and believed (erroneously, as it turned out) that the country would stay at this highly democratic level in five years. In stark contrast, in South Korea only 1.9% of our respondents were equally positive about their country's democracy in either the present or the future. In China, respondents were positive and optimistic, with more than two-fifths predicting a pattern of "developing democracy" for their country.

COMMITMENT TO RULE OF LAW

To probe further popular commitment to democratic legitimacy, it is helpful to employ questionnaire items that avoid the "d" word. In our time the concept of "democracy" has been embraced by virtually all politicians everywhere, including leaders of regimes that are actually nondemocratic. Items carrying the "d" word run the danger of eliciting what survey researchers call socially desirable answers from respondents. The EAB survey therefore included a series of questions that probed respondents' value orientations toward some of the fundamental organizing principles of liberal democracy, including political equality, rule of law, and government accountability. Responses to this battery reveal both the substance and depth of respondents' commitment to democratic values.

To save space, we present only selected items that measure popular commitment to rule of law. We focus on this dimension because according to many works on Asian political culture (Pye 1995; Tu 1998; Ling and Shih 1998; Fukuyama 1995), among all the principles of liberal democracy, Asian

people have the greatest difficulty embracing rule of law. This concept contradicts traditional Asian notions of good governance as rule by benevolent and virtuous leaders. To probe how strongly our Asian respondents believe in rule of law, we used four items that tap different dimensions of the concept. All four statements were worded in the negative direction to avoid acquiescence and impose a higher psychological threshold.

Table 1.13 provides the summary statistics of answers to this four-item battery. Across East Asia, a majority of citizens embraced the idea that government should not disregard the law even if the country is facing a difficult situation. More than two-thirds of the citizens of Hong Kong, Japan, South Korea, and the Philippines and close to three-fifths of the electorate in Taiwan and Mongolia expressed opposition to the arbitrary use of power by the government. However, only half of the citizens in Thailand supported this idea. Next, more than three-quarters of the citizens in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and South Korea, and a majority in the Philippines and Japan believed that a leader should follow procedures. However, only 41% of respondents in Mongolia and 43% in Thailand endorsed this idea. Overall, a robust popular commitment to the liberal constitutionalism of a *Rechtstaat*, a law-bound state (O'Donnell 1996, 1998), is found in only a few East Asian societies, notably South Korea and Hong Kong. It is not widespread or firm elsewhere in the region. The new democracies remain vulnerable to the encroachment of populist leaders.

The remaining two items in our battery are designed to address the notion of separation of power, an important pillar of rule of law. On the issue of judicial independence, we found majority support for the idea that "judges should decide cases independently" in only four of our eight societies: Mongolia, South Korea, Japan, and Taiwan. In the Philippines and Thailand, the level of support for the principle of judicial independence is quite low, and it is still lower in China, where the guiding authority of the Communist Party is enshrined in the constitution.

The notion of legislative supervision over the executive has even fewer subscribers across the region. Only in two countries, South Korea and Japan, did popular endorsement of the idea that "the legislature should check the executive" exceed 50%, though by a thin margin. In Taiwan, the level of popular acceptance was quite low at 24.7%. There are two possible reasons why the notion of horizontal accountability has not gained widespread acceptance in East Asia. First, most East Asian societies inherited a tradition of a strong state, which finds its embodiment in the executive. Next, in most East Asian countries citizens had bad experiences with political gridlock

TABLE 1.13 COMMITMENT TO RULE OF LAW

(Percent of respondents)

ITEM	CHINA	HONG KONG	TAIWAN	KOREA	MONGOLIA	THAILAND	PHILIPPINES	JAPAN
Government should not disregard law[a]	-	69.8	58.3	76.7	59.6	49.2	70.2	72.0
Leader should follow procedure	47.3	76.3	75.5	77.1	41.0	43.4	61.5	54.4
Judges should decide cases independently	30.9	46.7	53.7	69.0	71.0	40.1	38.7	62.2
Legislature should check executive	34.2	46.8	24.7	53.8	38.8	47.4	49.9	50.2
None of the above	36.1[b]	9.4	11.1	2.7	7.2	15.2	7.6	9.9
All of the above	13.0[b]	23.4	15.0	30.1	11.8	8.2	15.0	24.9
Mean level of commitment to rule of law (0–4 scale)[c]	1.5[d]	2.4	2.1	2.8	2.1	1.8	2.2	2.4

[a] Not asked in China.

[b] Based on three questions.

[c] Each item is scored as follows: strongly support or somewhat support the rule of law principle = 1; strongly oppose, somewhat oppose, don't know, or no answer = 0.

[d] Mean score multiplied by 4/3 for comparison with other countries.

between the executive and the legislature. In Taiwan, partisan gridlock virtually paralyzed the DPP government after the 2000 power rotation, as described in chapter 4.

In the last row of table 1.13, we report the mean scores of commitment to rule of law. We combine the responses to the four questions into a 5-point scale from 0 to 4. South Korea registers the highest average score, followed by Japan and Hong Kong. Among the five emerging democracies, Thailand registers the lowest at 1.8. Overall across East Asia, popular commitment to rule of law is weak. The specter of what Fareed Zakaria calls "illiberal democracy" (1997) hangs over most East Asian societies.

This analysis reinforces our earlier finding that liberal democracy enjoys a more robust cultural foundation in South Korea and Japan than elsewhere in the region. Where we found a low level of popular commitment to the rule of law, such as in Thailand and Mongolia, we also found the largest number of opponents to democracy and people holding mixed and incoherent views. In Thailand, strong support for the "d" word (table 1.8) coexists with a weak commitment to liberal democratic values. Thus, a seemingly strong popular base of democratic legitimacy is actually quite shallow because it is not backed by a belief system revolving around democratic values. This helps explain why Thai citizens tend to give their democracy a very generous rating while South Koreans are so critical. In countries where there are many stalwart believers in core democratic values the political system is expected to meet a higher benchmark, while in countries where democracy is a favored label but democratic values are not widely held, even a pseudodemocracy might get wide popular acceptance. On this score South Korea and Thailand represents two polar examples. Japan and Hong Kong come closer to the case of South Korea while Mongolia, Taiwan, and the Philippines are somewhere in between.

In a similar vein, when we evaluate the observed level of support for democracy in China, we have to take into account the fact that respondents in China exhibit the lowest overall level of commitment to rule of law. This suggests that when Chinese citizens express positive orientations toward democracy as an idea, or give generous ratings of the level of democracy of their political system, most are using frames of reference that deviate substantially from what political scientists define as "liberal democracy." To understand what our respondents are saying, we must interpret their responses in context. This is what the country chapters of this volume are meant to accomplish.

ORGANIZATION OF THE BOOK

The chapters that follow are unified by their common research questions, scope, and structure. This uniformity makes possible systematic cross-national comparison. But our interpretations of the findings are contextualized, with each chapter applying expert knowledge of a given society's trajectory of regime transition, evolving institutional setting, changing social and economic conditions, and national political dynamics.

Each chapter is organized into seven sections. The first discusses the historical and institutional characteristics of a given political system's democratization (or regime evolution) to provide background for the interpretation of the EAB survey findings. The second section examines how the citizens in the society understand the meaning of democracy. The third section deals with their perceptions of how far their society has traveled on the road of democratization, based on their ratings of past and current regimes. It also examines how citizens evaluate the characteristics and performance of the current regime in comparison with the old one with respect to major indicators of good governance. The fourth section assesses quality of democracy by exploring respondents' perceptions of their roles as citizens, the responsiveness of government, the extent of corruption, and the trustworthiness of political and government institutions. The fifth section deals with the depth of popular attachment to democracy and the degree of popular detachment from authoritarianism. The sixth section discusses the popular perception of the regime's political future. The seventh and final section of each chapter highlights the key findings of the EAB survey and explores their implications from the perspective of democratic development.

The first five chapters introduce the cluster of new democracies that form the core focus of the EAB survey. We find support for democracy in Korea to be firm but not unconditional. In the Philippines, democracy is deeply challenged by deficiencies in the performance of the new regime. In Taiwan, support for democracy is heavily qualified and has been falling as political turmoil has increased, yet attraction to authoritarian alternatives is not widespread. In Thailand, our survey revealed that the mass public, especially in rural areas, strongly supported democracy, but elite and urban support was weaker, helping to explain the political system's vulnerability to the coup that took place in September 2006. Mongolia is unique among our cases in having made its democratic transition from a communist base, undergoing at once a political transition to democracy and an economic transition to the market economy. With their political system struggling to

meet public expectations, Mongolians showed comparatively low levels of both democratic support and authoritarian detachment. In all, none of the new democracies in East Asia appear firmly consolidated at the level of mass public opinion, and all are vulnerable to public disaffection.

The next three chapters place the new democracies in comparative perspective by focusing on regimes of other types in the same region. Japan is a democracy that has to be considered consolidated in view of the long survival of its democratic institutions, where we nonetheless find that citizens' attitudes are no less critical and sometimes more so than those in their newly democratized neighbors. Hong Kong is a partial democracy where citizens are thoroughly committed to democratic values and chafe under restrictions imposed by Beijing. China is by our definition an authoritarian system, whose citizens nonetheless see much of what goes on as consistent with their own understanding of democracy. These comparative perspectives help reinforce the point that citizens understand democracy differently in different countries (and in various ways within any given country) and that they see both democracy and their own regimes multidimensionally in terms of policy performance and compatibility with various kinds of values.

The conclusion tries to make sense of the patterns we observe within East Asia and to compare these to patterns in other regions of the world where global barometer surveys provide comparable data. Even though mass attitudes toward democracy are only one of a number of domains in which democratic consolidation occurs or fails to occur, we argue that it is a crucial domain with implications for all the rest. Consolidation is a long-term and zigzag process, responding both to public evaluations of regime performance and to the evolution of political values. We find that for now East Asian citizens are favorably disposed to democracy but not irreversibly committed to it. Democracy is a valued idea, but as an actual regime it has to earn support through performance. So far the new democracies in the region have not attained this standard. It would be wrong to view their futures with complacency.

NOTES

1. This argument applies to the consolidation of democratic regimes only. The dynamics of authoritarian regime consolidation are different, involving, among other things, more mobilization from the top down and more intense, deliberate, and openly ideological indoctrination.
2. These regional barometers may be accessed, respectively, at www.latinobarometro .org, www.afrobarometer.org, and (for the New Europe Barometer) www.abdn

.ac.uk/cspp/nebo.shtml. In addition to these three regional barometers and our own East Asia Barometer, a new South Asia Barometer conducted its first wave of surveys in 2004, and an Arab Barometer is now under construction. For information on the South Asia Barometer, see www.asianbarometer.org/newenglish/introduction/. The new Arab Barometer is being coordinated from the University of Michigan and Princeton University with participation from a number of research centers in the Arab world.

3. The survey instrument that has generated the data analyzed in this book drew a number of items from the other barometers. These survey projects have, in turn, borrowed from one another, from the longer-established Eurobarometer, and from some unique questions developed in longitudinal studies of public opinion in Taiwan and Korea. For information about the interaction among the regional barometers in the emerging global barometer of democracy, see www.globalbarometer.net.

4. Besides the Asian Barometer Survey, the region is home to another cross-national public opinion research project which monitors and compares how urban residents live their lives, and what they value and worry about most for themselves their countries. This project is called the AsiaBarometer, and has been conducted since 2002 under the coordination of Professor Takashi Inoguchi and his colleagues at the University of Tokyo (Inoguchi et al. 2005).

5. To avoid overusing terms like "political system," we sometimes refer to the eight survey locales collectively as "countries." In matter of fact, Hong Kong is a Special Autonomous Region of China, and China claims sovereignty over Taiwan. Throughout the volume, China refers to mainland China exclusive of Hong Kong. As noted in appendix 1, the China sample also excludes Tibet owing to its sparse population and difficult terrain.

6. We did not adopt the approach proposed by King and his colleagues known as "anchoring vignettes" for two reasons: it is too costly in terms of questionnaire space and it is difficult to design anchoring vignettes that are themselves free of cultural and institutional embeddedness.

7. Please refer to chapters on Japan and China for elaboration of these points.

8. Typical answers that fall into this category include election, check-and-balance, majority rule, and party competition. Please refer to appendix 3 for details.

9. Please refer to the chapter on China for further analysis.

10. The items the EAB applied to measure internal efficacy are two of the original seven items proposed by Richard Niemi, Stephen Craig, and Franco Mattei (1991).

11. The ratio of "don't know" and "no answer" varies considerably across the seven cases. A higher ratio of DK/NA, which is counted as a non-positive response, brings down the percentage of positive responses shown in our tables. However, this technical reason only partially explains why Taiwan and Hong Kong trail behind other Asian countries on virtually every prodemocracy indicator.

12. This item has been employed by Latinobarómetro, Afrobarometer, and World Values Survey. See Klingemann (1999).

13. See http://www.Latinobarometro.org/uploads/media/2001_01.pdf. Since then more and more Latin Americans (51% in 2003) have agreed with the statement, "I would not mind a nondemocratic government in power if it could solve the economic problems."

14. Because the questions on "strongman" and "single-party rule" were not suitable in the context of China, they were dropped from the China survey.

15. Please refer to the note at the bottom of table 1.11 for the operational definition of each category.