

Democratic Consolidation in Korea: A Trend Analysis of Public Opinion Surveys, 1997–2001

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Surviving a crisis may even deepen confidence in democratic procedures.

Robert A. Dahl, 1997

Democracy will be undermined if it cannot deliver the goods in the economic sphere.

Jon Elster, 1993

The Republic of Korea (Korea hereinafter) has been widely regarded as one of the most vigorous and analytically interesting third-wave democracies (Diamond and Shin, 2000: 1). During the first decade of democratic rule, Korea has successfully carried out a large number of electoral and other reforms to transform the institutions and procedures of military-authoritarian rule into those of a representative democracy. Unlike many of its counterparts in Latin America and elsewhere, Korea has fully restored civilian rule by extricating the military from power. As is the case in established democracies of North America and Western Europe, free and competitive elections have been regularly held at all the different levels of the government. In the most recent presidential election, held in December 1997, Korea also established itself as a mature electoral democracy by elevating an opposition party to political power. In Korea today, there is general agreement that electoral politics has become the only possible political game in town.¹

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¹ According to the latest Korea Democracy Barometer survey conducted during the month of March 2001, 79 per cent are in agreement that 'the best way of choosing our government is an

The successful establishment of electoral democracy, however, cannot be equated with the consolidation of democratic rule. To become consolidated, a new democracy, like the one in Korea, must achieve deep, broad, and unconditional support among the mass public as well as political elites.² Moreover, its performance must be accountable for and responsive to public demands and preferences. The main objective of this paper is to examine how and why the Korean people reacted to democracy during the course of the recent economic crisis. How do ordinary Koreans understand democracy? To what extent are they committed to democracy as a series of political ideals and political practices? How and why has their democratic commitment changed in the wake of the economic crisis? How much progress do they think has been achieved in democratizing their political system? How well or poorly do they judge the performance of their democratic political system? What essential qualities do they think are missing from the current system of democratic governance? These questions are addressed in this paper by means of four parallel public opinion surveys conducted in Korea during the 1997–2001 period.

Premises

In addressing these questions, the current study makes two assumptions. First, all democracies, for their survival and prosperity, are assumed to depend principally on the support of their citizens. Popular support is not only crucial for their legitimacy but also vital to their effective performance (Easton, 1965; Harrison, 2000; Y. Lee, 1998; Mishler and Rose, 1999). As Diamond (1999) and many others (Pharr and Putnam, 2000; Rose, Mishler, and Haerpfer, 1998) point out, the beliefs, values, and attitudes of ordinary citizens structure, as well as limit, the pace and possibilities for democratic change. The political customs, habits, and manners of the mass public are important, especially for the process of democratic consolidation (Auh, 1997; Gibson, Dutch, and Tedin, 1992; Inglehart, 1998, 2000). In furthering democratic consolidation, various changes in the laws, institutions, and other formal rules in the political arena will not matter much without expanding, deepening, structuring, amplifying, and strengthening public support for democracy.

Second, democratic support, as a component of political support, is assumed to be a multi-level phenomenon (Easton, 1965; Shin, 1999). To ordinary citizens who lived most of their lives under authoritarian rule, democracy at one level represents political ideals or values to be fulfilled. At another level, democracy refers to a political regime and the actual workings of the regime itself, which governs their lives on a daily basis. Popular support for democracy, therefore, needs to be differentiated into two broad categories: normative and empirical. The normative level deals with

election that gives every voter a choice of candidates and parties'. See also Choi (1996), Diamond and Kim (2000), and J. Lee (2000).

² Recent review of the empirical and theoretical literature on political culture can be found in Berman (2001), Fromisano (2001), Harrison and Huntington (2000), Inglehart (2000), and Wilson (2000).

democracy-in-principle, while the empirical level is concerned with the various aspects of democracy-in-practice. Support for democracy at the first level, therefore, refers largely to a psychologically loose attachment to the positive symbols which democracy represents in principle. Democratic support at the second level refers to favorable evaluations of the structure and behavior of the existing regime. As empirical research has recently revealed (Mueller, 2000; Rose, Shin, and Munro, 1999), there is a significant gulf between these two levels of democratic support. A full account of democratic support, therefore, can be made only when both levels of support are considered together.

The Korea Democracy Barometer surveys

The basic data for the present study were assembled from the Korea Democracy Barometer (hereinafter the KDB) surveys that were initiated in October 1988, the year when the democratic Sixth Republic was inaugurated. The KDB surveys were designed to monitor and compare the dynamics of democratization in Korea through a strategic alliance with research teams in Africa, Asia, Europe, and Latin America. To monitor democratic changes in Korea, these surveys have been repeated over time using a number of the same items tapping attitudes on democracy and its alternatives; political and economic reforms; consequences of these reforms on the quality of life; and citizen engagement in politics and other public affairs. To compare Korea with other new democracies, the same surveys have also repeated a number of core questions asked in other democracy barometer surveys.³

To focus on the recent short-term dynamics of public orientations to democracy as political ideals and political practices, the present study relied mostly on the four latest KDB surveys conducted during the 1997–2001 period. The Korea Gallup polling organization conducted all these parallel surveys in May 1997 ($N = 1,117$), **October 1998** ($N = 1,010$), November 1999 ($N = 1,007$), and March and April 2001 ($N = 1,006$). The Gallup designed these surveys to reflect the Korean population age 20 and over. The first of these surveys was conducted six months prior to the onset of the November 1997 economic crisis. This particular survey was used as a baseline to ascertain the impact of the crisis on democratic support among the Korean mass public at the aggregate level.

Popular conceptions of democracy

Democracy means different things to different people (Bratton and Mattes, 2001; Camp, 2000; Miller, Hesli, and Reisinger, 1997). What does democracy mean to ordinary Koreans? Do they tend to understand it in political terms? Do they tend to think of it in economic terms? The 1993 KDB survey found that Koreans, as a whole, like their European peers, tend to think of democracy in economic rather than

³ These include the Arobarometer surveys, the Baltic Barometer surveys, the New Democracies Barometer Surveys, the Russia Barometer Surveys, and the Latinobarometer surveys.

political terms. Specifically, Koreans choosing economic values over political values led those emphasizing political values by a margin of nearly two to one (64% versus 34%). This pattern, featuring the preponderance of the former over the latter, was the opposite of what was found in Western European democracies. In those consolidated democracies, democracy was equated mostly with political values (Shin, 1999: 60).

To determine whether Koreans still tend to think of democracy in economic terms, the latest 2001 KDB survey first asked respondents a simpler set of questions and encouraged them to weigh two pairs of values, one political (freedom and participation) and the other economic (prosperity and equality). Then they were asked to choose the two specific values they would consider most important in a democracy. According to the respondents, all of whom chose each of the four values as one of the two most important elements of democracy, economic prosperity is mentioned most frequently by more than two-thirds (68%) of the respondents. This is followed, respectively, by economic equality (47%), political freedom (39%), and political participation (39%). When the four values are grouped into two categories, the economic category leads the political one by 20 percentage points (90% versus 70%). To the Korean people, economic considerations still outweigh political considerations in defining democracy.

A similar pattern of economic preponderance emerges when the percentages choosing both values from one single category are compared. More than one-quarter of the Korean people (27%) are economic democrats who see democracy solely in terms of economic values by choosing both economic prosperity and equality as the two most important constituents of democracy. However, only one-twelfth (8%) are political democrats who see it solely in political terms by choosing both political freedom and participation. A comparison of these figures makes it clear that the Korean people as a whole tend to give a higher priority to economic values than political values by a substantial margin. However, it is even more noteworthy that a large majority (61%) consisted of mixed democrats who emphasize both economic and political values in democracy.

Does the divergent understanding of democracy as ideals or values matter in the real world of political life? The 2001 KDB survey explored this question by asking: 'Between the two national goals of democratization and economic development, which goal do you think is more important? 1. Economic development is more important. 2. Democratization is more important. 3. The two are equally important.' As expected from the economic problems facing the country, economic development was given a top priority over democratization in a greater proportion. By a margin of over 6 to 1 (63% versus 10%), the Korean people chose economic development over democratization. The magnitude of this margin, which measures the preponderance of the former over the latter as a national development goal, varies significantly according to the divergent conceptions of democracy.

Table 1 shows that the percentage of Koreans choosing economic development over democratic reform increases steadily and significantly across three categories of

Table 1 *The divergent conceptions of democracy and the relative priority of democratization and economic development*

Policy priority	Democratic conceptions		
	Political	Mixed	Economic
Democratization (A)	17.3%	10.4%	5.4%
Economic Development (B)	54.3	60.3	69.3
Balance (A–B)	–37.0	–49.9	–63.9

Source: 2001 Korea Democracy Barometer Survey.

democrats; from 54 per cent among political democrats to 60 per cent among mixed democrats to 69 per cent among economic democrats. Alternatively, those choosing democratization over economic development decreases steadily and significantly across the same categories; from 17 per cent among political democrats, through 10 per cent among mixed democrats, to only 5 per cent among economic democrats. As a result of these two mutually opposing patterns of the relationships, the magnitude of policy conflict widens across the three categories of democrats. As the percentage differential index reported in the bottom row of Table 1 shows, the relative priority of economic development over democratization varies from 37 percentage points for political democrats to 64 percentage points for economic democrats. In other words, such priority is 1.7 times higher for the latter than for the former. How the Korean people define and understand democracy determines their perception of the proper role the government should play in the world of democratic politics.

Support for democracy

To assess support for democracy, the Korea Democracy Barometer surveys asked two pairs of questions that have been employed in similar surveys in Western Europe, Latin America, and the former Soviet-Bloc. The first pair, which focuses on democracy-in-principle, consists of two four-point verbal items that tap, respectively, a general belief in the idea of democracy and a personal attachment for the notion of greater democracy. The second pair, which focuses on democracy-in-action, also consists of two four-point verbal scales that measure the general endorsement of democracy as a political regime, and as a method for tackling economic and other serious problems facing the society.

Normative support

The 2001 KDB survey first asked: ‘Let us consider the idea of democracy, not its practice. In principle, how much are you for or against the idea of democracy?’ When combining those who were very much for democracy (46%) with those who were somewhat for it (45%), an overwhelming majority (91%) was in favor. Less than one-tenth (9%) refused to embrace democracy even as an idea. In addition, the same survey asked: ‘How much do you agree or disagree with the statement that our

political system should be made a lot more democratic than what it is now? Significantly, a large majority of nearly four-fifths (78%) endorsed the idea of further democratization with 37 per cent strongly in favor of it, and 41 per cent somewhat in favor of it. When positive responses to the two questions are summed into a three-point index, two-thirds (66%) were fully supportive of democracy-in-principle, and a little over one-quarter (27%) were partially supportive of it. A very small minority (7%) was not at all supportive. When percentages expressing full and no support for democracy-in-principle are compared, it is evident that democrats in a normative sense outnumber non-democrats by a margin of over nine to two.

Empirical support

To what extent do the Korean people support democracy-in-practice? The 2001 KDB survey first asked the question that has been asked most frequently in many other democracy barometer surveys in order to measure what is known as the legitimacy of democracy (Morlino and Montero, 1995). Specifically, the survey asked: 'With which of the following statements do you agree most? 1. Democracy is always preferable to any other kind of government. 2. Under certain situations, a dictatorship is preferable. 3. For people like me, it does not matter whether we have a democratic government or non-democratic government.' Those respondents who find democracy always preferable to its non-democratic alternatives are deemed to endorse the legitimacy of democracy.

By this widely accepted measure, a majority of the Korean people refused to endorse democracy unconditionally as a political enterprise. A plurality (45%) expressed unconditional support for it. This figure appears to be much lower by global standards. It is significantly lower, for example, than the average figure of 58 per cent recorded in the year 2000 for 17 Latin American countries (Lagos, 2001: 139). It is also much lower than the average figure of 75 per cent recorded in 1999 and 2000 for six African countries (Bratton and Mattes, 2001: 109). It is even lower than the figure of 65 per cent recorded in 1995 for six Eastern and European countries.⁴ Equally surprising is the fact that Korea is one of the four third-wave democracies (the others being Brazil, Mexico, and Paraguay), where a majority of the population refused to express unwavering faith in democracy as the most preferred political system. Brazil with 39 per cent is the only country that registers a lower level of democratic faith than Korea. Even with one of the most successful democratic transitions in the third-wave of democratization, Korea has been turned into one of the new democracies with the lowest level of support from the public.

What is more surprising from the latest KDB survey is that nearly two-fifths (37%) of ordinary Koreans entertain the possibility that an authoritarian regime might sometimes be preferable to democracy. Even in such deeply troubled Latin American countries as Brazil, Columbia, and Venezuela, no more than a quarter of

⁴ Cited in Mishler and Rose (1999).

the public is willing to consider the authoritarian option. Even in the midst of an economic crisis that resembles the recent one in Korea, only one in four (24%) Brazilians believes that the authoritarian option is sometimes preferable. In terms of such affinity for authoritarian rule, Korea ranks second only after Paraguay, where 39 per cent are sometimes in favor of it. When these two types of regime preferences – democratic and authoritarian – are considered together, Korea emerges as the only known third-wave democracy where unconditional supporters of democratic rule lead those willing to welcome back authoritarian rule by less than 10 percentage points.

Support for democracy-in-action among the Korean public becomes more dismal when it is compared with what is known in such consolidated third-wave democracies as Spain, Greece, and Portugal. In these Southern European countries, more than three-quarters have unconditionally embraced democracy for many years. During the same period, only one-tenth or less of their mass publics has expressed the desire to welcome back authoritarian rule. By this yardstick of democratic support, Korea is far from being a consolidated democracy.

To measure accurately the level of empirical support among the Korean mass public, the 2001 KDB survey asked another question: ‘When comparing democracy and dictatorship, which one is better for dealing with economic problems? Is it democracy, dictatorship, or are they much the same?’ Unlike the first question tapping the legitimacy of democracy, this item was intended to measure its efficacy by focusing on the capacity to fix economic problems widely known to affect the ultimate fate of new democracies (Elster, 1993; S. Lee, 1999; Przeworski *et al.*, 1996). Once again, a majority of the Korean people refused to embrace democracy unconditionally. As the best method of managing economic problems, a small minority of nearly two-fifths (38%) were committed to democracy. More surprising is that almost as many (37%) opted for dictatorship. And one-fifth (21%) were noncommittal to either method of managing economic affairs. To a majority, democracy does not constitute the best method of managing economic affairs.

As in measuring normative support, responses affirming democratic legitimacy and efficacy are combined into a three-point index in order to estimate the overall level of empirical support. On this index, a score of 0 means no support while scores of 1 and 2 mean, respectively, partial and full support for democracy as an actual system of governance. A plurality (43%) of Koreans fell into the category of no support. Non-supporters were followed, respectively, by partial supporters (31%) and full supporters (26%). Among the Korean masses, non-supporters of democracy-in-action are the most numerous and full supporters are the least numerous. The higher the level of support is, the fewer the number of supporters. This pattern of empirical democratic support contrasts sharply with that of normative democratic support in which full supporters are the most numerous and non-supporters are the least numerous.

Among the Korean people, empirical support is far more lacking than normative

Table 2 *Contours of democratic support*

Support type		Normative support			
		None	Some	Full	(marginal)
Empirical	None	5.3%	15.4%	22.3%	43.0%
	Some	1.2	7.0	23.0	31.1
Support	Full	.3	4.9	20.7	25.9
	(marginal)	6.8	27.3	66.0	

Source: 2001 Korea Democracy Barometer Survey

support. Table 2 shows that two-thirds (66%) were fully supportive of democracy as an ideal political system, but only one-quarter (26%) were equally supportive of democracy as a real system of governance. Among those who are fully supportive of democracy-in-principle, only 31 per cent support democracy-in-action fully, 35 per cent support it partially, and 34 per cent do not support it at all. As a result, only one-fifth (21%) of the Korean people as a whole were genuinely committed democrats who are fully supportive of democracy both normatively and empirically. Equally many (22%), on the other hand, remain merely normative democrats who fully support democracy as a desirable ideal, but reject it as a workable, collectively attainable system (see Table 2). Evidently, support for democracy is widespread, but it is very shallow. This is another notable characteristic of Korean support for democracy.

Opposition to non-democratic alternatives

Popular opposition to non-democratic regimes is often employed as an additional measure of support for democracy-in-action (Rose, Mishler, and Haerpfer, 1998). The 2001 KDB survey asked a set of three related questions that have been regularly asked in Eastern and Central Europe. Respondents were told: 'Our present system of government is not the only one that this country has had, and some people say that we would be better off if the country was governed differently. How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following in light of their views: 1. The army should govern the country. 2. Better to get rid of Parliament and elections and have a strong leader decide everything. 3. The most important decisions about the economy should be made by experts and not the government and Parliament.' A clear pattern of opposition to the first two non-democratic alternatives appears when preferences for those alternatives are probed this way. Although the current system of electoral democracy may not offer effective solutions to the problems facing the country, Koreans as a whole desire to retain it rather than restore the military or civilian dictatorship under which they once lived.

When asked about military rule, about four-fifths (79%) rejected it either

strongly (53%) or somewhat (26%). While one-seventh (14%) approved of it somewhat, a very small minority (3%) was strongly in favor of replacing the current democratic regime with the authoritarian regime controlled by the military. With respect to civilian dictatorship, three-quarters (76%) opposed it either strongly (47%) or somewhat (29%), while one-fifth favored it either strongly (4%) or somewhat (16%). The proportion (20%) supportive of rule by a civilian dictator was higher than that for the Czech Republic (13%), Slovenia (13%), and Hungary (17%), but it was significantly lower than what was known in all other post-Communist countries in Europe (Rose, 2001: 99). When responses to these two non-democratic alternatives were considered together, a clear majority of 71 per cent rejected both alternatives to democracy. Yet, it should be noted that more than one-quarter have yet to appreciate the virtues of democratic rule and embrace it as the most viable political regime.

The extent of democracy and democratic progress

How democratic do the Korean people think the current political system is? How much progress do they think has been made in democratizing the authoritarian institutions and procedures that lasted nearly three decades? To explore these questions, the 2001 KDB survey asked respondents to rate their current and the past authoritarian political system on a ten-point scale (see Appendix A for the wording of these questions). This scale allows participants to respond according to their own understanding of democracy and dictatorship. A score of 1 on this scale indicates 'complete dictatorship' while a score of 10 indicates 'complete democracy'. Responses to this question, as reported in Figure 1, provide two important pieces of information concerning the perceived character of the old authoritarian and new democratic systems. For the two systems, Figure 1 provides the percentage of respondents who chose each of the ten positions or steps on the ladder scale. As the data in this table reveal, a vast majority (85%) rated the past regime as undemocratic by placing it at 5 or below. In sharp contrast, a substantial majority (68%) rated the current regime as democratic by placing it at 6 or above. These percentage figures, when compared, make it clear that the military authoritarian rule of three decades has been relinquished in favor of a democracy.

Figure 1 also gives the average ratings on this ten-point scale for the current democratic and past authoritarian systems. Like the percentage ratings, the average ratings for the current system are indicative of the extent to which the mass public embraces it as democratic. The average rating of the past regime was 3.7; for the present regime, however, the average increased to 6.2. This shift in the mean ratings confirms considerable progress in institutional democratization in the wake of the democratic regime change in 1988. The mean rating of 6.2 for the present system on a ten-point scale, however, suggests that Korean democracy is far from a complete democracy; it remains a partial democracy even after more than a decade of democratic rule (Choi, 1996; J. Lee, 2000; Shin, 1999).

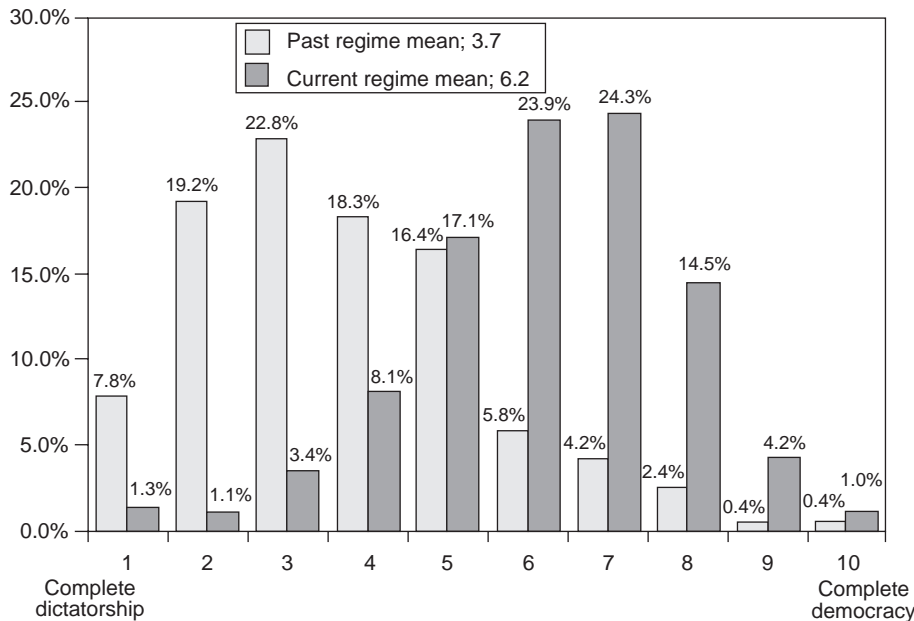


Figure 1 Perceptions of the Past and Present Regimes on a 10-point

The quality of democracy

Having established the presence of democracy in Korea, we sought to determine how well the current political regime has performed as a democracy. Based on President Abraham Lincoln's simple and elegant notion of democracy that emphasizes it as government by the people and government for the people, the 2001 KDB survey posed two questions, one on the empowerment of ordinary citizens, and the other on the responsiveness of a political system to their preferences.

Specifically, respondents to the 2001 survey were asked: 'How much influence do you think the votes of people like yourself have on the way our country is governed: a lot, some, a little, or none?' 'To what extent do you think government leaders take the interests and opinion of people like yourself into account when making important decisions: a lot, some, a little, or none?' On the basis of responses to these questions, we can determine how positively respondents feel about themselves as citizens of a democratic state, and how positively they feel about their own state as a democracy.

A slight majority (59%) reported feeling at least some amount of empowerment under the present system of electoral democracy. This suggests that Koreans tend to feel that they have a way to express their opinions and promote their interests under the present system. Unfortunately, a larger majority (69%), nonetheless, reported that the system is only a little, or not at all, responsive. This suggests that, although the people have the ability to express their opinions, they do not perceive the government as being responsive to them.

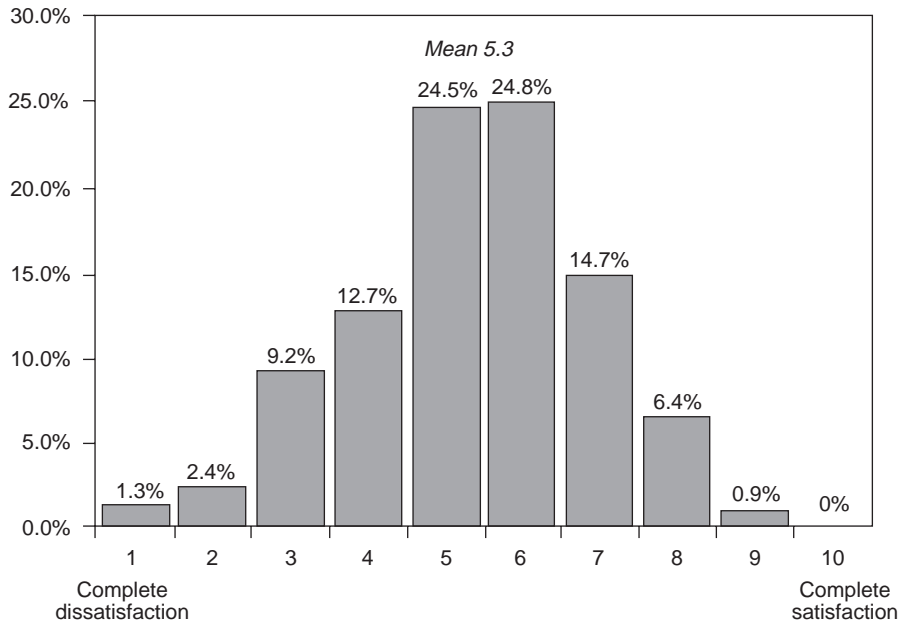


Figure 2 Evaluations of the Performance of the Present Political System

Four different levels of democratic experiences are collapsed into two broad categories, one affirming and the other denying the experience of those two substantive qualities of democratic governance. By jointly considering these two categories of empowerment and responsiveness, four patterns were discerned to examine the deepening presence of democracy in the substance of policymaking. The first pattern refers to the absence of either quality. The second and third patterns refer to the presence of only one of those two qualities, which indicates a partial achievement of substantive democratization. The fourth pattern, however, refers to the presence of both qualities, attesting to the achievement of substantive democratization to the fullest degree.

Typological analysis of the 2001 KDB survey reveals that an overwhelming majority of the Korean people experienced at least one quality of substantive democracy. Yet those who experienced both qualities comprised a small minority. While over two-thirds (68%) experienced feelings of either empowerment as citizens of a democratic state or of its responsiveness to their preferences, less than one-quarter (24%) experienced both qualities. Failing to provide the two essential qualities to a majority, the current system can be characterized as a partial democracy. This accords with what has been known from the measuring of the amount or level of Korean democracy on a ten-point scale.

To assess the overall quality of its performance as a democracy, the 2001 KDB survey also asked respondents to evaluate the way democracy works in their country

today. On the ten-point scale, where 1 means complete dissatisfaction and 10 means complete satisfaction, they were asked to express the degree of their satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the current practice of democratic politics. Figure 2 provides the mean rating on this scale and the percentages of those placed at each of its ten scale points. As this figure shows, a minority of 47 per cent expressed satisfaction with the present regime with the placement of the regime at 6 or above on the scale. The mean score of 5.3 on a ten-point scale reinforces this qualified response. These findings testify to the fact that Korean democracy is not currently performing properly at least in the eyes of its citizens.

Missing elements

From the above, Korea today does not have all the essential attributes of democracy; it is an incomplete democracy. In Korean democracy, something is obviously missing, but what is it? Like many other third-wave democracies, Korea had introduced free elections with universal suffrage before establishing such basic institutions of a modern state as the rule of law, a government that is accountable, and a civil society. As a result, the country has yet to complete the process of political modernization by establishing the rule of law and accountability of the government to the National Assembly and its electorate.

In an incomplete democracy like the one in Korea, departures from the rule of law are of three main types. Under the first, individuals are deprived of their liberties often by arbitrary actions. Under the second, small sums of money are extracted from ordinary citizens, and large sums of money are extracted from domestic and foreign corporations for allocating public property and resources. Under the third, government benefits and services are distributed unfairly, with some citizens being favored and others suffering discrimination.

Freedom. Even after more than a decade of democratic rule, Korea has not fully abolished or 'deconstructed' the National Security Law and other repressive laws of the old military regime in order to advance what Isaiah Berlin (1958) has aptly termed 'freedom from the state'. More often than not, the government resorts to various repressive laws and procedures to silence its critics and opposition forces, as evidenced in its recent tax audit of the news media (Donga Ilbo, 2001; Kirk, 2001). By enforcing these and other repressive laws, the government deprives citizens of political rights and civil liberties.

To what extent do the Korean people live in freedom from the state? To explore this question, the 2001 KDB survey asked a pair of questions. 'Do you feel that individual citizens like you can express your political opinion freely in Korea today, or is it better to be careful?' 'Do you feel individual citizens like you can freely join any kind of organization or group you want to nowadays?' To the first question, one-half (50%) affirmed freedom from the state. To the second question, three-fifths (61%) did the same. When these affirmative responses are compared, it appears that

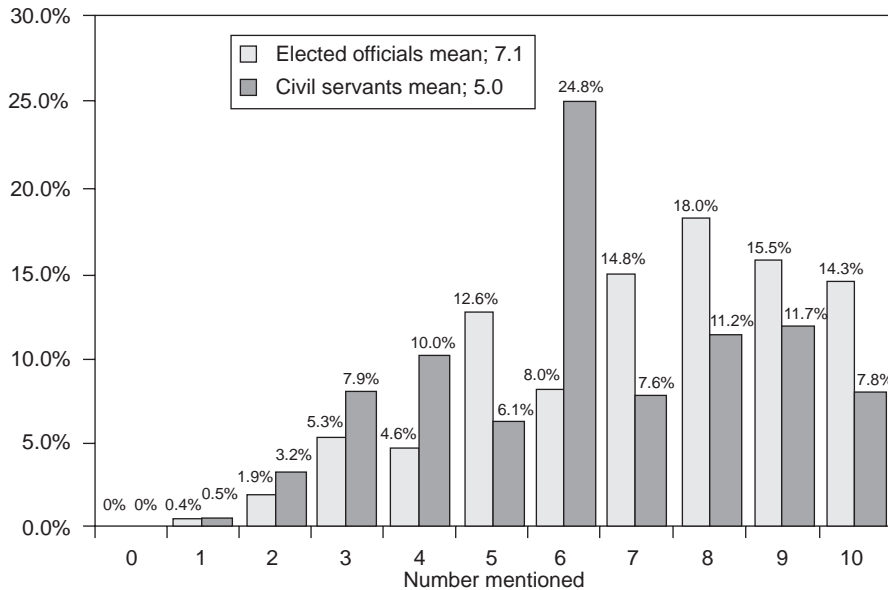


Figure 3 Perceptions of Elected Officials and Civil Servants as 'Corrupt'
(From none to all of every ten)

individual citizens are more vulnerable to state repression than their organizational counterparts. When those responses are considered together, it is evident that less than two-fifths (38%) experience the freedoms of both speech and association. Even after more than a decade of democratic rule, a substantial majority is still haunted by the specter of a repressive state to varying degrees.

Rule of universalism. In Korea, as in many other new democracies, corruption is a more pervasive threat to the rule of law than is political repression (Diamond, 1999; Y. Kim, 2001). Korea is a country whose presidents, under the authoritarian and democratic regimes, were imprisoned on charges of accepting bribes and kickbacks from large conglomerates in sums up to US \$900 million (Shin, 1999: 208). According to the year 2000 corruption perception index prepared by the Transparency International, Korea ranks 42nd out of the 91 countries surveyed (Transparency International, 2001). Korea maintains the dubious distinction of being one of the most corrupt members of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, the exclusive club of advanced economies.

The 2001 KDB survey asked two sets of questions to measure the levels of political corruption. The first set asked respondents how many of every ten elected officials and civil servants were engaged in corrupt practices. Figure 3 reports responses to these questions. According to the mean scores reported in the figure, the average Korean believes that seven out of every ten elected officials are corrupt, and

about five out of ten civil servants are corrupt. None said that every politician is *unmarred* by political corruption while one-seventh (14%) said that every politician is *marred* by political corruption. A careful scrutiny of the data in the figure reveals that more than eight out of ten (82%) Koreans rated one-half or more of elected politicians as corrupt while more than six out of ten (64%) Koreans rated one-half or more than half of civil servants that way. More surprising is that only one-tenth (10%) believed that less than half of both politicians and civil servants are corrupt, while two-thirds (66%) believe that more than half of both politicians and civil servants are corrupt.

The 2001 KDB survey asked another pair of questions concerning the overall level of corruption under the Kim Dae Jung government. When asked to rate the overall level of corruption under the Kim government on a four-point verbal scale ranging from 'very high' to 'very little', a majority replied 'very high' (12%) or 'high' (42%).⁵ When asked how the level of political corruption has changed since the installation of the current government three years ago, nearly half (47%) said that it had changed little. All these findings, when considered together, clearly illustrate that political corruption is seen as endemic and rampant in democratic Korea. As in the authoritarian past, the political game is still being played by the age-old informal rules of particularism (Y. Kim, 2001; O'Donnell, 1994; G. Park, 1998).

To what extent are ordinary Koreans inclined to play the political game by such rules of particularism rather than the universalistic rules of democratic politics? To explore this question, the 2001 KDB survey asked: 'If someone tells you that a gift or a bribe can help people avoid paying taxes, how much do you agree or disagree?' Over two-fifths (44%) expressed openly their reluctance to commit themselves to the rule of law that Linz and Stepan (1996) characterize as an indisputable condition for democratic consolidation. Although many politicians and civil servants are committed to the creation of a *Rechtsstaat*, a law-bound state, many ordinary citizens are not.

Fairness. A third type of departure from the rule of law involves unfair enforcement of laws. The military regimes headed by former Presidents Park Chung Hee and Chun Doo Hwan favored the *Kyongsang* provinces at the expense of the *Cholla* provinces. Current President Kim Dae Jung is widely believed to have favored the *Cholla* provinces, his home base, by reversing the earlier pattern of distributing governmental benefits and services unfairly (Chosun Ilbo, 2001; The Korean Political Science Association, 1999; S. Park, 2001). Obviously, these practices of unfair treatment violate the democratic principles of justice.

How fairly or unfairly are laws enforced in Korea today after the election of the third democratic government in the past 12 years? The 2001 KDB survey asked a pair

⁵ In November 1999 when the KDB asked the same question, eight per cent said 'very high' and 42 per cent 'high'.

of questions to explore the level of unfairness in governmental performance. Specifically, the survey first asked: 'How fairly or unfairly do you think laws are enforced on someone like yourself these days?' To this question of a general nature, a vast majority of four-fifths (80%) replied 'somewhat unfairly' (49%) or 'very unfairly' (31%). In addition, the same survey asked: 'How fairly or unfairly do you think the Kim Dae Jung government treats people from your own region as compared to those from other regions?' To this question focusing on region-based discrimination, about three-fifths replied 'somewhat unfairly' (43%) or 'very unfairly' (16%). When respondents from the Cholla provinces are excluded from consideration, the percentage expressing the unfair treatment of people from other provinces rises to two-thirds (66%). Clearly, these findings indicate that the current Kim Dae Jung government is seen as treating a majority of ordinary citizens more unfairly than fairly, which is what its authoritarian predecessors once did. When their perceptions of all these departures from the rule of law are considered together, there is a negative consensus among the Korean people: their new regime is far from being a constitutional democracy based on the rule of law.

Accountability. Democracy is a political system in which free elections create the vertical accountability of governors to their electorate, as they depend on the votes of the mass population, rather than being horizontally accountable to an undemocratic assembly of notables. To what extent do the Korean people think their governors are accountable to ordinary voters like themselves? To estimate the level of vertical accountability, the 2001 KDB asked a pair of questions, one on the extent to which political leaders can be trusted, and the other on governmental effort to cover up the illegal activities of the officials of the ruling party. Public trust of political leaders and the cover-up of their illegal activities are, respectively, considered positive and negative indicators of a government that is accountable.

The KDB survey first asked: 'Generally speaking, how much do you trust our political leaders?' A little over one-tenth (11%) replied affirmatively by saying 'some' or 'a lot'. In striking contrast, over three times as many (36%) said political leaders could not be trusted at all, while nearly five times (52%) said that they could not be trusted even somewhat. When asked about how often the government covers up the involvement of ruling party officials in illegal activities, less than one-tenth (8%) confirmed the government's accountability by saying that it 'never' covers up their involvement. More than one-third (35%) said the government 'always' or 'often' covers up their illegal activities, while nearly half (45%) said it 'occasionally' covers up those activities.

Affirmative responses to the two questions were added up into a summary index whose scores range from a low of 0 to a high of 2. While a score of 0 means the government is not accountable to the Korean electorate at all, a score of 2 means it is seen as being fully accountable to the electorate. As expected, the current system of electoral democracy is found to suffer a great deal from the lack of accountability.

Table 3 Assessments of political performance and the strong sense of democratic crisis

Scale points	Performance assessments				
	Corruption	Discrimination	Cover-up	Responsiveness	Trust
Low	20.5%	25.5%	23.4%	51.3%	46.9%
Middle	30.1	27.6	40.9	27.5	22.8
High	66.4	56.9	58.2	24.5	20.5

Note: Entries are percentages replying 'democracy is definitely in a crisis'.

Source: 2001 Korea Democracy Barometer Survey.

More than four out of five (82%) voters dismiss the current democratic system as *fully unaccountable* to them. More notable is that a negligible proportion (2%) views it as *fully accountable*. In the eyes of ordinary Koreans, the Korean system of democratic governance lacks accountability as much as respect for the rule of law. The findings confirm that in Korean democracy a government that is accountable is in short supply. They confirm the dictum of electoralism that competitive elections cannot be equated with democracy itself (Karl, 2000).

Since Korean democracy is deficient in the rule of law as well as accountability, it raises the issue of whether those democratic deficits have driven it into a state of crisis. To explore this possibility, the 2001 KDB survey asked: 'In view of what the National Assembly and political parties have been doing during the past year, do you feel our system of democratic government is or is not in a state of crisis?' Surprisingly, a large majority (82%) of those interviewed replied affirmatively, saying that the current system of democracy is either 'definitely in a crisis' or 'probably in a crisis'. While a small minority (14%) declined to recognize the presence of a democratic crisis, it was only a few Koreans (1%) who expressed the view that the country is 'definitely not in a democratic crisis'. Those recognizing a definite crisis of democratic rule in Korea are 30 times greater than those denying it to the same degree. From this finding alone, it is evident that Korean democracy is in a state of despair.

Why do many Koreans see their democratic political system as in a crisis? Do they do so primarily because they believe their democratically elected government is corrupt and unaccountable? Table 3 shows the relationships between the crisis perceptions of Korean democracy on the one hand and the assessments of democratic performance on the other. The higher the perceptions of political corruption, discrimination, and cover-up are, the greater the perceptions of the democratic crisis are. The lower the perceptions of governmental responsiveness and trust in politicians, the greater are the perceptions of the crisis. As a consequence, for example, nearly three-quarters (73%) have come to believe that their democracy is definitely in a crisis, when they see their government as not only corrupt, but also unresponsive to the citizenry. When they see it as relatively uncorrupt and responsive, on the other hand, less than one-fifth (18%) see it in a true crisis. Of all

the qualities of democracy examined in the 2001 KDB survey, corruption and distrust in politicians were found to contribute most to the prevailing sense of democratic crisis among the Korean people.

Trends in democratic support

In order for new democracies to consolidate and become full democracies, their citizens have to orient themselves toward the ideals and practices of democratic politics on an increasing basis. The direction and trajectories of popular support for those democracies affect their survival and effective functioning as much as the total amount of such support does (Mishler and Rose, 1996). In general, four different trajectories are conceivable for democratic support over time. First, the trajectory of support becomes steadily positive or upward when its aggregate level increases on a continuing basis. With continuing decreases in its aggregate level, the trajectory becomes steadily negative in nature or downward in spiral. With a combination of upward and downward changes in the support level, the trajectory becomes erratic or fluctuating. Finally, the trajectory becomes neutral with little or no significant change to the level in either an upward or downward direction.

What sort of trajectory best characterizes support of Koreans for the ideals and practices of democratic politics during the past five years, beginning in 1997, the year when an economic crisis erupted? During the period, four KDB surveys were conducted to monitor the short-term dynamics of their normative and empirical democratic support. For each of the two support levels, Table 4 reports two different percentages dealing, respectively, with individual and combined responses supportive of democracy. Two indicators of normative support display a fluctuating pattern of movement by registering both downward and upward changes over the period. With the deepening of the economic crisis in 1998, both went down by 5 percentage points or more. With the economy recovering from the crisis in 1999, both went up by 5 percentage points. In 2001, when the economy became sour once again, they fell sharply. When the two indicators are considered together, the current overall level of normative support stays at about four-fifths of what it was before the outbreak of the economic crisis four years ago. As compared to 81 per cent in 1997, 66 per cent are now fully attached to democracy-in-principle. This indicates that more than one in seven (15%) Korean adults have detached themselves from the ideals of democracy in the aftermath of the economic crisis.

More sharply than normative support, empirical support has fallen over the same period, 1997–2001. It has also fallen on a steady basis. The sense of democratic legitimacy, for example, has declined from 69 per cent in 1997 to 54 per cent in 1998, and 55 per cent in 1999 to 45 per cent in 2001. Before the outbreak of the economic crisis, more than two-thirds of the Korean people subscribed to the view that democracy is always preferable to any other kind of government. Currently, much less than half uphold this view of democratic legitimacy. As many as one in four (25%) Koreans no longer believes that democracy is always the best for their country.

Table 4 Trends in support for democracy and perceptions of its performance

Measures of democracy	Survey Year			
	1997	1998	1999	2001
Normative Support				
Democracy	90.0%	85.3%	90.9%	85.0%
Democratization	90.0	81.1	86.8	74.2
Both	81.4	72.7	80.2	66.0
Empirical support				
Legitimacy	68.9	53.7	55.1	44.6
Efficacy	–	50.8	51.8	38.3
Both	–	40.4	38.0	25.9
Opposition to Dictatorship				
Military	83.7	85.5	87.0	78.7
Civilian	79.1	74.3	81.0	76.4
Both	69.6	68.0	74.1	65.8
Regime performance				
Democratic	69.5	64.8	67.6	67.9
Satisfactory	35.7	43.5	45.2	46.8
Both	31.5	37.0	38.1	38.0
Democratic quality				
Empowerment	71.4	71.5	75.8	59.4
Responsiveness	44.7	32.0	28.5	29.9
Both	34.6	27.1	22.9	23.7

Sources: Korea Democracy Barometer Surveys.

The sense that democracy is the most efficacious method of sorting out societal problems has also weakened sharply and steadily from 51 per cent in 1998 and 52 per cent in 1999, down to 38 per cent in 2001. As a result, only one-quarter (26%) of Korean voters remain fully committed to democracy-in-practice. This figure is 14 percentage points lower than what it was three years ago, when the country was struggling still with record levels of bankruptcies and unemployment. Again one in seven (14%) Koreans no longer believes that democracy is the only game in town.

This raises the issue of whether these backsliders from democracy-in-action have been increasingly in favor of abandoning the democratic constitutional structure of the existing system, and restoring the authoritarian political system under which they once lived. According to the data reported in Table 4, most of these backsliders do not appear to favor the restoration of an authoritarian political system. As compared to 70 per cent in 1997, 66 per cent remain opposed to the restoration of a military or civilian dictatorship. Over the course of the economic crisis, there has been no significant increase in affinity for authoritarianism as a political system.

Nonetheless, significant increases have occurred in feeling nostalgia for authoritarianism as a method of tackling the economic and other serious problems facing the country. To monitor this trend, the KDB surveys repeatedly asked respondents to

rate on a separate basis the extent to which they were satisfied with the way the current government, and the former military government handled those problems (see Appendix A for the wording of these questions). The separate ratings of the democratic and military governments were compared to calculate the percentages of those rating the past authoritarian government more favorably (or less unfavorably) than the current democratic government. Supporters of authoritarianism, as the best method of tackling the country's serious problems, have increased steadily from 12 per cent in 1996 to 24 per cent in 1998, and 31 per cent in 1999 to 44 per cent in 2001. Compared to the pre-crisis period, nearly four times as many people express nostalgia for the way the Chun Doo Hwan government handled those problems.

The impact of the economic crisis on democratic support

The sense of authoritarian nostalgia, which the economic crisis has undoubtedly reinvigorated, appears to have motivated many Koreans to reorient themselves away from democracy-in-practice. Among those who believe that the Kim Dae Jung government handled the serious problems facing the country better than the Chun Doo Hwan government, for example, a majority (57%) unconditionally embrace the legitimacy of democracy. Among those who believe that the Chun Doo Hwan government handled those problems better than the Kim Dae Jung government, however, only one-quarter (25%) do so. As Figure 4 shows, there is a monotonic negative relationship between nostalgia for the Chun Doo Hwan government and the unconditional endorsement of democratic legitimacy. The higher the level of authoritarian nostalgia, the lower the level of unqualified commitment on the part of Koreans who see democracy as always preferable to any other type of government.

This raises the question of what has contributed to the increasing sense of authoritarian nostalgia among the Korean people. To explore this question, we examined its relationship with the relative priority of democratization as a policy, which has significantly declined in the aftermath of the economic crisis. Among those who emphasize economic development over democratization, 9 per cent more expressed satisfaction with the old Chun Doo Hwan government than the current Kim Dae Jung government (48% versus 39%). Among those who emphasize democratization, in sharp contrast, 21 per cent more expressed satisfaction with the current government than the old one (50% versus 29%). Among the Koreans who equally emphasize these two policies also, those satisfied with the current government outnumber those satisfied with the old government by a smaller margin (47% versus 40%). The higher the priority of economic development over democratization, the greater is the sense of nostalgia for authoritarian rule.

To explore further the impact of the economic crisis on nostalgia for authoritarian rule, the 2001 KDB survey asked a series of four questions. First, it asked: 'Having lived through an economic crisis for the past three years, how often have you, if ever, thought that democracy is not suitable to the situation in Korea?' In response, nearly half (45%) said that they have 'often' or 'sometimes' thought it is

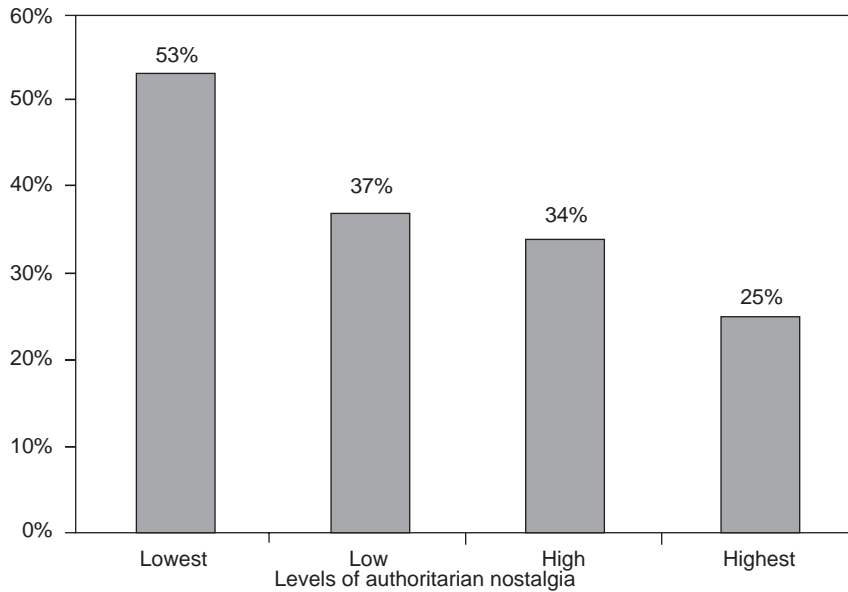


Figure 4 Unconditional Supports for Democratic Rule by Levels of Authoritarian Nostalgia

not suitable to the situation they have lived through. Next, the survey asked: ‘Having lived through an economic crisis, how often have you ever thought that a dictatorship still works better than democracy in the Korean situation?’ Nearly one-half (48%) replied that they have ‘often’ or ‘sometimes’ thought that a dictatorship still works better than democracy over the course of an economic crisis. When asked whether they have ever thought that political leaders are more important than democratic institutions, over three-fifths (62%) replied affirmatively. These responses, when considered together, make it clear that the experience of the economic crisis has motivated many Koreans to question the virtues of democracy as a government and reorient themselves toward the old authoritarian method of solving problems.

To explore the impact of the economic crisis on democratic support more directly, the 2001 KDB survey asked: ‘In the wake of our recent economic crisis, do you now think of democracy differently from the way you did in the past?’ Nearly one-fifth (19%) replied that they have become ‘a lot more’ or ‘somewhat more’ *favorable* to democracy. One-third (33%), however, said that they have become ‘somewhat more’ or ‘a lot more’ *unfavorable* to it. A majority (52%) of the Korean people have shifted their views on democracy in the wake of the economic crisis. Among the Koreans whose democratic support has been affected by the economic crisis, however, those *more unfavorably* affected outnumber those *more favorably* affected by a margin of over 3 to 2. Contrary to what is generally known in the

literature (Dahl, 1997; Remmer, 1990), economic crisis does not affect every subgroup of the population negatively; it motivates some population groups to strengthen their commitment to democratic politics while motivating other groups to withdraw from such commitment.

As is the case in the sense of authoritarian nostalgia, the positive and negative effects of the economic crisis on democratic support vary significantly according to the perceived relative priority of economic development and democratization as a national policy. Among the Koreans who see economic development as the greater need, those who become more *unfavorably attached* to democracy outnumber those who become more *favorably attached* to it by 16 percentage points (36% versus 20%). Among those who value these two policies equally, the more *unfavorably attached* lead the more *favorably attached* by 13 percentage points (27% versus 14%). Among the Koreans who value democratization to a greater extent, however, there is little difference between the more *unfavorably and favorably attached* to democracy (29% versus 28%). On the basis of these findings, it can be argued that the net impact of the economic crisis on democratic support is most negative among those who understand democracy in economic terms and least negative among those who do so in political terms.

Sources of democratic attitudinal dynamics

Why is it, then, that many Koreans have weakened in their support for democracy, while others have maintained or strengthened their support for it? Have they done so due to the divergent perceptions of the national economy and their personal financial situation, or the conflicting assessments of the role that the government has played to manage the economic crisis? To explore this question, the 2001 KDB survey first asked a pair of questions concerning changes in economic life. Specifically, respondents were asked to compare the country's current economic situation with what it was before the economic crisis three years ago. They were also asked to compare their own current financial situation with what it was prior to the outbreak of the crisis. Responses to these two questions were cross tabulated with those tapping favorable or unfavorable shifts in democratic support in the wake of the economic crisis.

The gains or losses experienced in the private or public sphere of economic life were found to have no significant impact on the dynamics of democratic support. The percentages reporting unfavorable shifts in democratic support, for example, varied very little from 37 per cent among those experiencing deteriorations in the personal financial realm and the national economy, to 36 per cent experiencing improvements in those situations. Likewise, the percentages reporting favorable shifts in democratic support did not vary much from 16 per cent among those most negatively affected by the economic crisis to 20 per cent among those most positively affected by it. In general, the economic gains or losses Koreans have experienced, either privately or publicly, in the aftermath of the economic crisis have neither

Table 5 *The crisis perceptions of economic and political situations and weakening in democratic support*

		Economic crisis	
		No	Yes
Political	No	25%	21%
Crisis	Yes	34	35

Note: Entries are percentages thinking more unfavorably of democracy in the wake of the recent economic crisis.

Source: 2001 Korea Democracy Barometer Survey.

contributed to nor detracted from their orientations toward democracy to any significant degree.

On the contrary, the particular economic gains or losses Koreans think they have experienced from the government's economic reforms have shifted their democratic orientations to a significant degree. When those reforms were evaluated to have hurt the national economy and one's personal financial situation, more than two-fifths (43%) reported being less in favor of democracy than they were before the crisis. When the same reforms were evaluated to have helped those situations, a small minority of one in sixteen (6%) became less supportive of democracy. The more negatively Koreans rate the impact of the governmental reforms, the less supportive they are of democracy. Conversely, the more positively they rate the impact of the economic reforms, the more supportive they become of democracy. When the reforms were rated as fully negative, only one in eight (13%) reported being more in favor of democracy. When they were rated as fully positive, one in every two (50%) became more supportive of democracy. Evidently, it is the economic role of the government, not sheer changes in financial situation, that has significantly shaped the short-term dynamics of democratic support among the Korean people.

A related question arises: Is it their perception of the protracted economic crisis or the ensuing crisis in the existing political system that have motivated the Korean people to significantly weaken in their democratic support? To determine whether the economic crisis itself detracts from democratic support independent of what is happening in the political system, the crisis perceptions of the economic and political situations are compared in terms of effecting unfavorable shifts in democratic support in the wake of the economic crisis. Table 5 shows that the crisis perceptions of economic life alone do not increase at all the percentage reporting unfavorable shifts in democratic support. When the political situation is perceived to be in a crisis, however, significant increases occur in thinking of democracy more unfavorably, regardless of whether or not the economic crisis is perceived to continue. As compared to 21 per cent among those who perceived only the national economy in a

crisis, for example, 35 per cent of those perceiving both the economy and politics in a crisis reported diminished support for democracy. What is happening in the world of politics matters much more in shaping democratic support than what is happening in the economy.

To date, the Korean economic crisis itself does not appear to have had a significant direct influence on democratic support among the Korean people. Nor has it been a uniformly negative influence on it. By and large, the crisis has shaped democratic support indirectly through the evaluations of the economic reforms the government has pursued to manage. Positive evaluations of those reforms have strengthened democratic support while negative evaluations of the reforms have weakened it.

Summary and conclusions

All the KDB survey findings presented above make it clear that Korea has not made much progress toward a fully consolidated democracy since 1997 when Kim Dae Jung, the leader of an opposition party, was elected as the third president of democratic Korea. Korea, as seen by its people, is mostly as an electoral democracy, the same as it was five years ago. It is viewed by the people as remaining deficient in delivering on its promises of freedom, accountability, responsiveness, and respect for the rule of law (J. Kim, 2001; Larkin, 2001). The rotation of political power to an opposition party more than three years ago has not ended the streaks of political corruption. Nor have these changes made the executive branch any more accountable to the popularly elected legislature than it was before.

Under the Kim Dae Jung government, an all-powerful, 'imperial presidency' has continued to thrive with a 'peripheral' legislative institution (Lim, 1998). As in the authoritarian past, it is the president, not the fundamental norms and rules of democratic politics, that most powerfully determine the contours and dynamics of Korean politics. As the *Chosun Ilbo* notes in a recent editorial,⁶ what the country has today is 'a government that listens to no one while ruling out of arrogance, self-righteousness and an 'imperial mindset'.' Substantively, therefore, Korean democracy today can be characterized as a broken-back democracy (Larkin, 2001; J. Lee, 2000; Rose and Shin, 2001).

Culturally, three years of democratic politics under his presidency have failed to broaden and deepen popular commitment by maintaining the rule of law and accountability to the electorate; instead, these three years have brought about a steady and significant erosion of democratic support among the Korean people. A majority of Koreans now no longer believe in the legitimacy of a democratic regime as they once did. Nor do they believe in the efficacy of democracy as a method of managing the serious problems facing the country. The proportion expressing unqualified commitment to the practices of democratic politics accounts for only

⁶ Quoted in Kirk (2001).

one-quarter of the Korean electorate. Today, the reservoir of popular support, in Korea, for democracy-in-action is meager.

Why is it, then, that so many Koreans have weakened in their support for the practices of democratic politics, or withdrawn from it altogether, while remaining attached to its ideals? One plausible answer to the question may be found in the way these novices in democratic politics evaluate the performance of the current political system relative to that of the past authoritarian system under which they once lived. For the first time since the initiation of democratic rule in 1988, a plurality of the Korean people rate the current government more negatively than the past authoritarian government headed by former general Chun Doo Hwan. When the new democratic regime is seen by its people to remain unable to deliver what the old repressive regime did effectively, it becomes for them the greater of two evils. Retreating from a greater evil represents a rational option to those Koreans who are increasingly dissatisfied with the performance of the current democratic political system. This instrumental view of democracy, to which many Koreans still subscribe, has contributed to the erosion of their support for democratic rule.

Finally, the latest 2001 KDB survey makes it clear that more than a decade of democratic rule in Korea has failed to end the old habit of equating dictatorship with effective leadership or good governance. There is little doubt that the democratization of authoritarian cultural values among Korean citizens and political leaders has turned into a 'long march' that may require several generations rather than a single generation (Shin, 1999: 264). It is likely to be a much longer march for new democracies like Korea, whose citizens tend to hold positive memories of economic life under the previous authoritarian regimes.

In former Communist states where authoritarian rule was responsible for economic chaos and stagnation, citizens tend to blame political leaders, not democratic institutions, for a deteriorating economy, and consequently they want new leaders only (Duch, 1995). In Korea, however, the outbreak of economic crisis has rekindled affinity for the practices of the authoritarian government that contributed to economic prosperity, and it has motivated an increasing number of ordinary citizens to blame democratic institutions as much as the custodians of those institutions. The nature of economic life under authoritarian rule, therefore, should be considered a significant influence on the distance each democratic march has to travel as an intergenerational phenomenon.

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Appendix A: Survey Questions

1. Conceptions of Democracy

Q48) [SHOW CARD 9] Which **two** elements on this list do you consider most important in democracy?

1. Freedom
2. Popular election of political leaders
3. Competitive multi-party system
4. Equality
8. Don't know

First element _____

Second element _____

Q52) Between the two national goals of **democratization** and **economic development**, which goal do you think is **more important**? [DON'T READ OUT]

1. Economic development is more important.
2. Democratization is more important.
3. Equally important.
8. Don't know

2. Normative Support for Democracy

Q49) Let us consider the **idea** of democracy, not its practice. In principle, how much are you for or against the idea of democracy? [READ OUT]

1. Very much for
2. Somewhat for
3. Against somewhat
4. Against very much
8. Don't know

Q51) How much do you agree or disagree with the statement that our political system should be made **a lot more** democratic than what it is now ?

1. Strongly agree
2. Somewhat agree
3. Somewhat disagree
4. Strongly disagree
8. Don't know

3. Empirical Support for Democracy

Q50) With which of the following statements do you agree most? [READ OUT]

1. Democracy is always preferable to any other kind of government.
2. Under certain situations, a dictatorship is preferable.
3. For people like me, it does not matter whether we have a democratic government or nondemocratic government.

Q16) When comparing democracy and dictatorship, which one is better for dealing with economic problems? [DON'T READ OUT]

1. Democracy
2. Dictatorship
3. Much the same
8. Don't know

4. Opposition to Non-Democratic Alternatives

Q31) [SHOW CARD 7] Our present system of government is not the only one that this country has had, and some people say we would be better off if the country was governed differently. How much do you agree or disagree with their views in favor of each of the following: [ASK ONE QUESTION AT A TIME]

Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewha disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
1	2	3	4	8

1. The army should govern the country.
2. Better to get rid of Parliament and elections and have a strong leader decide everything.
3. The most important decisions about the economy should be made by experts and not the government and Parliament.

5. Extent of Democracy and Democratization

Q53) [SHOW CARD 10] Here is a scale ranging from a lot of 1 to a high of 10. On this scale, 1 means complete dictatorship and 10 means complete democracy. The closer to 1 the score is, the more dictatorial our country is; the closer to 10 the score is, the more democratic our country is. Please choose a number on this card.

_____ a. On this scale, where would you place our country under the **Chun Doo**

Hwan government?

_____ b. Where would you place our country under the **Kim Young Sam** government?

_____ c. On this scale, where would you place our country under the **Kim Dae Jung** government as of right now?

6. Quality of Democracy

Q39) How much influence do you think the votes of people like yourself have on the way our country is governed? [READ OUT]

1. A lot
2. Some
3. A little
4. None
8. Don't know

Q40) To what extent do you think government leaders take the interests and opinion of people like yourself into account when making important decisions? [READ OUT]

1. A lot
2. Some
3. A little
4. Not at all
8. Don't know

Q58) [SHOW CARD 12] On the whole, how much are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the way **democracy works** in our country? On the scale where 1 means complete dissatisfaction and 10 means complete satisfaction, where would you place the current practice of democratic politics.

7. Freedom

Q21) Do you feel that individual citizens like you can express their political opinion freely in Korea today, or is it better to be careful?

1. Can speak freely
2. Better to be careful
8. Don't know

Q22) Do you feel individual citizens like you can freely join any kind of organization or group they want to nowadays?

1. Yes
2. No
8. Don't know

8. Law of Universalism

Q34) If someone tells you that a gift or a bribe can get people around paying taxes, how much do you agree or disagree?

1. Strongly agree
2. Somewhat agree
3. Somewhat disagree
4. Strongly disagree
8. Don't know

Q36a) How would you describe the level of political corruption under the Kim Dae Jung government?

1. Very high
2. High
3. Not so high
4. Very little
5. Can't answer
8. Don't know

Q36b) How would you compare the level of political corruption nowadays under the Kim Dae Jung presidency with that in the past under the Kim Young Sam presidency?

1. Much higher now
2. Somewhat higher now
3. About the same
4. Somewhat higher in the past
5. Much higher in the past
8. Don't know

Q37) Out of 10 elected politicians, how many do you feel are corrupt?

Q38) Out of 10 civil servants, how many do you feel are corrupt?

9. Fairness

Q35) How fairly or unfairly do you think laws are enforced on someone like yourself these days? [**READ OUT**]

1. Very fairly
2. Somewhat fairly
3. Somewhat unfairly
4. Very unfairly
8. Don't know

Q43) How fairly or unfairly do you think the Kim Dae Jung government treats people from your own region as compared to those from other regions? [**READ OUT**]

1. Very fairly
2. Somewhat fairly
3. Somewhat unfairly
4. Very unfairly
8. Don't know

10. Accountability

Q42) Generally speaking, how much do you trust our political leaders?

1. A lot
2. Somewhat
3. A little
4. Not at all
8. Don't know

Q44) When ruling party officials engage in illegal activities and corrupt practices, how often do you feel the Kim Dae Jung government covers up their involvement?[-**READ OUT**]

1. Always

2. Often
3. Occasionally
4. Never
8. Don't know

11. Nostalgia for Authoritarian Rule

Q30) [SHOW CARD 6] Here is a scale measuring the extent to which people are satisfied with the government. Please choose a number on this scale where 1 means complete dissatisfaction and 10 means complete satisfaction.

- _____ Q30a) On the whole, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way the Kim Dae Jung government handles problems facing our society?
- _____ Q30b) Where on this scale would you place the Kim Young Sam government?
- _____ Q30c) On the same scale, where would you place the Chun Doo Hwan government?

12. Political Consequences of the Economic Crisis

Q55) Having lived through an economic crisis for the past three years, how often have you, if ever, thought that democracy is **not suitable** to the situation in which Korea is? [READ OUT]

1. Often
2. Sometimes
3. Seldom
4. Never
8. Don't know

Q56) During the past three years, how often have you, if ever, thought that political leaders are more important to our situation than democratic institutions? [READ OUT]

1. Often
2. Sometimes
3. Seldom
4. Never
8. Don't know

Q57) Having lived through an economic crisis, how often have you ever thought that a dictatorship still works better than democracy in the Korean situation?

1. Often
2. Sometimes
3. Seldom
4. Never
5. Don't know

Q32) [SHOW CARD 8] In the wake of our recent economic crisis, do you now think of democracy differently from the way you did in the past?

1. A lot more favorably

2. Somewhat favorably
3. Somewhat unfavorably
4. A lot more unfavorably
5. Not differently
8. Don't know

13. Perceptions of Economic Situations

Q3) How would you compare the current economic condition of our country with what it was before the IMF crisis **three years ago**? [READ OUT]

1. Much better
2. A little better
3. About the same
4. A little worse
5. Much worse
8. Don't know

Q7) How would you compare the current economic condition of your family with what it was before the outbreak of the IMF crisis **three years ago**? [READ OUT]

1. Much better
2. A little better
3. About the same
4. A little worse
5. Much worse
8. Don't know

14. Economic Reform

Q14a) How do you think economic reforms under the Kim Dae Jung government have affected the **country's economic situation**? [READ OUT]

1. Made it a lot better
2. Made it somewhat better
3. Changed it little
4. Made it somewhat worse
5. Made it a lot worse
8. Don't know

Q14b) How do you believe economic reforms under the Kim Dae Jung government have affected **your family's economic situation**? [READ OUT]

1. Made it a lot better
2. Made it somewhat better
3. Changed it little
4. Made it somewhat worse
5. Made it a lot worse
8. Don't know

15. Recognition of Crises

Q10) Nowadays some people are saying our economy has slipped back into a crisis. Do you personally feel our country is or is not in a state of economic crisis once again? **[READ OUT]**

1. Definitely in a crisis
2. Probably in a crisis
3. Probably not in a crisis
4. Definitely not in a crisis
8. Don't know

Q45) In view of what the National Assembly and political parties have been doing during the past year, do you feel our system of democratic government is or is not in a state of crisis? **[READ OUT]**

1. Definitely in a crisis
2. Probably in a crisis
3. Probably not in a crisis
4. Definitely not in a crisis
8. Don't know