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The Dynamics of Popular Reactions to Democratization in Korea*

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ABSTRACT

The central argument of this paper is that, rather than simply absorbing democratic values diffusely, Koreans have acquired their support for democratization incrementally through experience with the consequences of regime change. In order to account for this pattern, we develop an empirical model that distinguishes between democracy as an ideal (desirability) and democracy understood as a viable political system (suitability). We draw on a survey of the Korean public to demonstrate that changes in these dimensions follow distinct trajectories, according to the recollections of our respondents, during the course of democratization. While beliefs about democracy-in-principle appear to be fairly impervious to political events and socioeconomic conditions, attitudes toward democracy-in-practice reflect a learning curve as the transition unfolds. We estimate the relative impact of evaluations of the economy, of the quality of life, and of governmental performance and political experience on support for democracy in practice. On the whole, democratic commitment is 'earned' through increasingly favorable perceptions of improvements in the quality of life, in economic growth, and especially in the performance of successive democratic governments, as contrasted with the workings of the previous authoritarian regime.

The supposition that a civic culture emerges as a necessary or sufficient condition prior to regime transformation (Inglehart 1988) has been challenged by the hypothesis that changes in political culture may be more likely to follow than precede the onset of democratization (Jackman and Miller 1996; Muller and Seligson 1994). Whatever the

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status of the controversy over sequencing and causation, *how* political culture changes during the course of democratization remains a matter of some uncertainty. In what ways do citizens orient themselves toward democratization, once the process gets underway? What motivates citizens to modify their support for the transition? Does a changing economy or some other set of concerns alter commitment to democracy?

Our study explores the dynamics of popular reactions to democratization through a national survey conducted in the Republic of Korea (hereafter Korea). We begin with a critical review of survey research on mass culture in new democracies. Based on this review, we develop a framework for understanding how and why citizens react to democratization. The key determinants of such shifts are conceptualized and their empirical indicators are outlined. We then analyze how and why Koreans have adjusted their views on democratization. Finally, the patterns and sources of shifting orientations in Korea are compared with the results of research on other new democracies.

Research on political culture and democratization

Numerous surveys have documented the levels and origins of support for democratization in Eastern, Central, and Southern Europe, Latin America, and East Asia (Dalton 1994; Duch 1995; Gibson 1996; Gibson, Duch, and Tedin 1992; Evans and Whitefield 1995; Finifter and Mickiewicz 1992; McDonough, Barnes, and López Pina 1986; McIntosh and Abele 1993; Park and Kim, 1987; Reisinger et al. 1994; Rose and Mishler 1994; Seligson and Booth 1993; Shin, Chey, and Kim 1989; Weil 1993). Instructive as it is, for our purposes this body of work suffers from two deficiencies.

First, as Rose and Mishler (1994, 161) note, most studies have failed to deal adequately with the dynamics of individual responses to democratization. To some extent, this omission reflects a temporal constraint. In a few countries democratization is so recent that first-in-the-field studies can only register provisional cross-sections of opinion. Moreover, the logistics of systematically monitoring public opinion under precarious political conditions can be daunting. Yet even when sufficient time has passed and periodic data-gathering proves to be feasible, surveys have rarely provided a methodological basis for unraveling the dynamics of political orientations. With few exceptions (Gibson 1996), prior surveys do not employ a panel design that involves interviewing and reinterviewing the same respondents, and even the panel studies confine themselves to the attitudinal dynamics within democratic regimes, since they lack data for inter-regime comparisons. Nor, again with few exceptions (Rose and Haerpfer 1996), do surveys

taken at a single point in time make an effort to estimate change by asking respondents to recollect how their attitudes may have shifted as democratization unfolds.

Second, most of these surveys are based on a liberal notion of democratic politics, which Barber (1984, 4) characterized as 'a "thin" theory of democracy." Predicated on the assumption that what is personally desirable and preferable to individual citizens is the paramount determinant of their commitment, or lack of it, to democracy, the approach is open to a pair of criticisms.

The strong criticism, advanced by communitarian and institutional theorists (Barber 1984; Caney 1992; Dryzek and Berejikian 1993; Fukuyama 1995b; Marcus and Hanson 1993; March and Olsen 1995; Warren 1992), is that the liberal model short-changes the role of community, or social setting, within which preferences for democratic politics develop. Largely ungrounded in the historical and cultural configurations that shape personal values, surveys that adhere to the liberal democratic model (Dahl 1971) convey a picture of democratization that may not travel well, especially outside the Western orbit (Bell et. al. 1995; Schmitter 1995).

A second limitation entails a variant on the difficulties of inferring aggregate *culture* from individual *opinion*. While personal preferences for or against democracy may be of interest, individual opinions are not equivalent to judgments of how suitable democracy may be for the country as a whole (Kinder and Kiewiet 1981; Thomassen 1995). In this instance, the distinction is more between individual desires, on the one hand, and perceptions of collective feasibility on the other than between contending definitions of democratic norms as liberal or communitarian. Though they may be connected, opinions about democracy-in-principle ('desirability') and perceptions of democracy-in-practice ('suitability') are not equivalent to one another.

While we do not engage in the debate over liberal versus communitarian models of democracy, the ensuing analysis does stress the distinction between (a) democratic principles as statements of individual preference and (b) perceptions of the viability of the democratic venture as a collective undertaking. In effect, we treat the latter set of orientations as sociotropic – as attitudes that, by taking into account collective conditions, may be only loosely related to personal conviction.

So, while our investigation does not resolve all the methodological and conceptual problems just outlined, it offers a fresh take on two of them. First, we elicit recollections of where Koreans have stood at various stages in the evolution of democracy. With due regard for the imperfections of memory in comparison to measures gathered at differ-

ent periods through successive surveys, these indicators provide more information about the cultural dynamics of democratization than synchronic data that capture attitudes at one time only.

Second, our implicit definition of democracy is procedural, separating authoritarianism from democracy by grounding the latter on Schumpeterian notions of contestation as institutionalized in elections (Przeworski, 1991). By this criterion the government of Roh Tae Woo, elected in 1988 after decades of military rule, is termed democratic, as is the government of Kim Young Sam, elected in 1993. We refrain from exploring substantive and communitarian variants of democracy. The novelty of our approach comes from the distinction between democracy (whatever its content) as a desirable ideal, a virtue revered by individuals, and democracy perceived as a workable, collectively attainable system.

Theoretical framework

Why do people change their support for democratization? There are at least three responses to this question. One answer – call it the learning model – emphasizes 'an informal process by which individuals acquire their beliefs through interactions with their political environments' (McClosky and Zaller 1984, 12). Upward shifts in democratic support are attributed to longer or positive experiences with democratic institutions (Converse 1969; Dahl 1989; Fuchs, Guidorossi, and Svensson 1995; Weil 1994).

Another answer – call it the functional diagnosis – contends that citizens remain committed to or withdraw their support for regime change based on how such change serves various interests to which they give priority (Gastil 1992; see also Schwartz 1987). If they feel that democratization promotes those goals, citizens become more supportive of the process; if they feel that it hinders them, they become less supportive. Though broadly similar, the functional model differs from the political in stressing a range of socioeconomic influences on democratic commitment; the latter emphasizes specifically political experiences and perceptions.

Both functional and political models of the attitudinal dynamics associated with democratization clash with explanations of popular support for regime change in Central and Eastern Europe that privilege diffuse precepts. The rationale of this third 'diffuse' model is to account for what seems to be the remarkably resilient support for democracy in post-communist settings. In his research on the former Soviet Union, for example, Duch (1995, 135) has argued that

> They [Soviet citizens] did not reject democratization because support for democratic institutions is not instrumental, i.e., it is not seen simply as a means to achieve a specific political or economic goal such as economic prosperity or better sanitation services. Rather, individual preferences for democratic institutions are the result of more diffuse effects such as education, exposure to western media, and what might be called the 'fad' of democracy that was pervasive in Soviet society at the time.

The difficulty here derives from a confusion between broad, presumably shallow ('fashionable') dispositions and deep-rooted values; this problem is compounded by the fact that the middle ground occupied by assessments of rather concrete political operations is not considered at all. Conceptually, a distinction exists between the preference for democracy as a remote and comparatively vague political ideal or principle on the one hand and commitment to democracy as a project that involves the consolidation of new institutions and procedures on the other (Weffort 1993, 253). It is far-fetched to suppose that endorsement of democratic institutions and procedures can be sustained diffusely, even if it can 'take off' or get on the political agenda this way. Like citizens of the United States and other consolidated democracies who have withdrawn trust from various democratic institutions (Lipset 1995; Miller and Borrelli 1991), citizens of new democracies may decline to support democratic institutions unless the institutions carry out certain functions.

What are these functions? Rousseau, Mill, Dewey, Pateman, Barber, and other theorists have argued that democracy fulfills a variety of specific ends (Caney 1992; Dahl 1989; Powell 1982; Warren 1992). While all of these functions can be said to involve payoffs – for example, physical well-being, autonomy, social identity, a sense of belonging – not all of them are equivalent to narrowly material or directly instrumental benefits (March and Olsen 1995, 55). A functional perspective can be viewed as pragmatic but it need not be equated with wholly tangible returns. Citizens can be expected to judge democratization in light of both its economic and non-economic repercussions. Almost certainly, assessments of economic welfare alone provide an inadequate rationale for changes in popular orientations toward democratization.

Recent evidence supports the claim that people expect more than enhanced economic well-being from democratization (Drakulic 1993; Finifter and Mickiewicz 1992; McIntosh and Abele 1993). Material considerations may not be the primary, much less the only, reason why ordinary citizens support and participate in democratic transitions (Sartori 1991; Weffort 1989). A growing collection of empirical clues suggests an approach to the democratization of political culture that goes beyond the usual economic line-up (Abramson and Inglehart 1995; Huntington 1996; Klingemann and Fuchs 1995).

A pair of analytical lessons flows from our review of the political, functional, and diffuse approaches to the dynamics of democratic commitment. The first two models imply a palpable, if not altogether material, set of causal factors – experience with political participation, for example; evaluations of economic performance, of the quality of life, and so on – that condition attitudes toward democracy in straightforward ways. By contrast, the diffuse model does not presuppose so transparent a set of antecedents, since democratic commitment is thought not to be contingent on such mundane forces. As a result, while we can expect to develop tests for the political and functional models through familiar reduction-in-variance procedures, the logic of the diffuse model requires that commitment to democracy not be explained by the usual assortment of predictors. If it were, then the relatively unconditional nature of the commitment to democracy, sheltered from short-term fluctuations, would evaporate.

Second, though they are distinct, the political-functional and diffuse models are not mutually exclusive. Partitioning the influence of these approaches depends in large measure on how democratic commitment is conceptualized. We will argue that functional and, especially, political assessments drive commitment to democracy-in-practice, while a diffuse model furnishes a better account of democracy-in-principle.

Modeling the dynamics of support for democratization

The statement that economic factors alone fail to explain what impels citizens to support democratization doesn't tell us much. We need to specify what these other factors are and how they operate. We divide the causal factors behind support for democratization into three categories: (1) perceptions of *economic* conditions, (2) assessments of the repercussions of democratization on the *social* quality of life, and (3) evaluations of *political* experience and the performance of democratic governments.

While all of these factors may be thought of as providing functional in contrast to diffuse reasons for embracing democracy, it is more precise and analytically productive to reserve the 'functional' label for a pair of dimensions touching on economic conditions and the quality of life and to treat the messages registered and lessons drawn from explicitly political experience as factors in a 'democratic learning' model. Let us consider the functional determinants of popular attitudes toward democratization before taking up the expressly political factors.

The distinction between perceptions of the economy and the quality of life is reasonably straightforward in newly industrialized countries like Korea with complex class systems, high levels of education, and

sophisticated technological infrastructures. Once threshold levels of economic development have been surpassed, quality of life concerns – e.g., environmental issues – tend to become increasingly salient (Inglehart 1997). We expect evaluations of life quality to be at least as important as perceptions of economic conditions in influencing support for democracy in Korea.

Indeed, quality of life concerns may outweigh more purely economic considerations as determinants of support for democracy insofar as economic growth has not been unequivocally identified with either authoritarian or democratic rule during recent decades in Korea. Unlike most democratizing countries once in the Soviet orbit, Korea brought to its political transition a heritage of prosperity under anti-democratic sponsorship, and it was this prosperity that, ironically, contributed to undermining the authoritarian regime (Im 1996). In Korea, democratization may be associated more with expectations and perceptions of improvement in the quality of life than with an escape from poverty and hardship that got underway decades prior to democratization.[1]

With the functional – i.e., economic and life quality – components of our model in place, we are now in a position to spell out the political learning features of the model. The thrust of our argument is that reactions to specifically political experiences – to governmental performance as well as the perceived extent of citizens' influence on public affairs, combined with the converse feeling of being affected by the actions of government – draw citizens into and 'accustom' them to democracy (Converse 1969; Barnes, McDonough, and López Pina 1985; Fuchs, Guidorossi, and Svensson 1995; Shin 1995; Toka 1995). The idea is not so much that Koreans move from outright hostility to sympathy toward democracy as the transition proceeds (though a few seem in fact to follow this route). More typically, Koreans shift from what amounts to virtual indifference or in the least considerable caution regarding the choice between authoritarianism and democracy – hardly a mysterious stance, given the developmental nature of the dictatorship – toward an appreciation of the workings of democratic government and a growing confidence regarding the role of ordinary citizens under the new system. They undergo this shift not as a radical conversion but incrementally, as a function of their experience with the democratic venture in practice.

Thus, political perceptions can be expected to exert a more powerful impact than quality-of-life, not to mention economic, evaluations on support for democracy. Such perceptions tend to be sensitive to the plainly political differences between democracies and non-democracies, more so than evaluations in the economic arena where it is sometimes hard to distinguish democratic from neo-authoritarian performance (Gunther 1996).

At the core of our approach, then, are two sets of ideas, one about the nature of what we are trying to explain and the other about the operation of the explanatory factors. We start with a characterization of the principal dependent variable as an orientation toward the suitability, not just the desirability, of democracy. This perspective does not rule out the emergence of democratic norms, principles, values, and the like prior to the onset of democratization, nor for that matter does it rule out the evolution of such norms after democratization gets underway. It does, however, call attention to growth in feelings of democratic 'practicability' during the course of the transition. This post-authoritarian dynamic allows for the possibility of disenchantment with real-life democracy, however desirable it may be in principle, as well as for the positive evolution of an investment in democracy tempered by experience.

The approach has comparative value. An emphasis on democratic feasibility is pertinent to the middle and later stages of democratization in post-communist societies, when the initial contrast with the old regime, almost always beneficial to fledgling democracies, begins to fade (McDonough 1995; Reisinger, Miller, and Hesli 1995; Kaase 1994; Noelle-Neumann 1994; Toka 1995). And it is clearly relevant to the evolution of democratic attitudes in polities like the Korean, where the anti-democracy/pro-democracy split may not be so clear-cut if confined to material gains alone. The trade-offs between the accomplishments of developmental dictatorship and the uncertain promise of democracy may not be overwhelmingly favorable to democracy in the eyes of citizens hesitant to fix what does not appear to them to be broken in the first place. The assessment of democracy as a realistic improvement over dictatorship may be more crucial, precisely because the outcome of this assessment is less certain than approval of democracy-in-principle.

The second set of core ideas concerns our independent variables. The analytical strategy entails a classification of empirical determinants into theoretically coherent 'functional' – both economic and quality-of-life – and 'political learning' predictors. While in some sense all of these causal clusters reflect an instrumental logic rather than diffuse beliefs, some of them are more crucial than others in affecting support for democracy as a feasible undertaking. Appreciation of the suitability of democracy flows less from judgments about the economy and the quality of life and more from perceptions of the democratic performance of successive governments and from feelings of civic competence that develop with first-hand experience of competitive political engagement.

Finally, when interest switches to the other *explicandum* – that is, to

the desirability of democracy – none of these independent variables make much difference. After all, a fundamental claim of the diffuse model is that such variation as occurs in democracy-in-principle is *not* contingent on economic, quality of life, or political factors.

Measurement

Dependent Variables

We first asked respondents to indicate their personal desire for democratic change under the current government and to recall how desirable they felt democracy was during the previous governments: one democratic and the other authoritarian.[2] We asked them to reflect on the condition of the country during each government and to indicate the extent to which they felt democratization was suitable for Korea during each of these periods. This series of questions makes the critical distinction, one that corresponds to that between egocentric and sociotropic opinion, between the desirability of democracy as a matter of personal preference or principle and perceptions of the suitability of democracy as collective practice.[3]

To estimate how these views might have changed as democratization unfolded, respondents were asked to recall their past opinions and to state their present ones. How much did they feel the political system should be democratized while they lived under authoritarian rule (1980–88)? How much did they want to democratize it under the first elected government of Roh Tae Woo (1988–93)? How much do they want to push democratization under the current government of Kim Young Sam (1993–)?

To gauge support for democratization as a collective enterprise in the Korean context, respondents were asked a parallel set of questions about the degree to which they felt the country was ready for democracy. For each of the last three governments, respondents were asked to judge the suitability of a democratic political system for the nation as a whole on a 10-point scale, with a score of '1' representing complete unsuitability and a score '10' indicating complete suitability.[4]

Independent Variables

Unlike its counterparts in Central and Eastern Europe, Korea became an economic powerhouse under authoritarian rule (Sakong 1993). Somewhat as happened in Spain, economic prosperity, rather than hardship, preceded the demise of the authoritarian regime. To be sure, concern with the economy did not vanish as Korea modernized, qualify-

ing for membership in the OECD, and democratization probably induced a degree of uncertainty about the economic direction of the country. Nevertheless, living standards continued to rise at an impressive clip (Moon and Kim 1996). This growth contrasts sharply with the desperate economic straits of some post-communist democracies, where per capita incomes are not expected to return to pre-democratic levels for seven to ten years (Summers 1992).

To assess the impact of the changing *economy*, we asked a set of four questions tapping retrospective and prospective evaluations of personal and collective economic conditions. For retrospective assessments, respondents were asked whether they felt (1) their family and (2) the country as a whole were better-off than they had been under the authoritarian government. For prospective evaluations, they were asked how they believed their (3) family and (4) the nation as a whole would fare economically over the next five years.[5]

The impact of democratization on perceptions of the *quality of life* was measured according to Cantril's (1965) 'self-anchoring striving scale' (Andrews and Withey 1976; Campbell, Converse, and Rodgers 1976). The device asks individuals to imagine 'the best life' and 'the worst life' and to indicate their past, present, and future locations on a ten-point metric spanning the two extremes.

The quality of life series contains six items rather than the four tallied for perceptions of economic conditions; the extra pair comes from assessments of life quality at the present time, in addition to evaluations of the past and projections of the future. Thus, Koreans were asked two sets of three questions, one to determine individual concerns and the other to assess their perceptions of the collective, that is, national quality of life: (1) where they (and the nation) stood on the scale while living under the authoritarian regime; (2) where they (and the nation) stand at the present time while living under the democratic government; and (3) where they expect themselves (and the nation) to be five years hence if Korea continue to democratize.[6]

Our indicators of *political* learning are less orthodox than the measures of economic perceptions and quality of life. The simplest is a set of ten-point scales tapping satisfaction with government performance – 'with the way each government has tackled the various problems facing our country.' Here again we used a tripartite format, asking respondents how satisfied or dissatisfied they were not only with the present government but also with the previous two.

To make the authoritarianism-democracy comparison as direct as possible, we devised a perceptual measure of 'change in regime character' by subtracting scores for the authoritarian government of Chun Doo Whan from comparable ratings of the current democratic govern-

ment. Responses to the separate 10-point scales, ranging from a score of '1' signifying 'complete dictatorship' to '10' for 'complete democracy,' provide the data for this indicator reflecting shifts in evaluations of the governments in the wake of democratic change.

Finally, a pair of items tapping what may be called 'internal' and 'external' efficacy are the components of our index of "democratic political experience." Along a five-point scale ranging from 'increased a lot' to 'decreased a lot,' the first incorporates responses to the question 'Would you say that the influence that people like yourself have on the government has increased, decreased, or stayed about the same since the Chun Doo Wan period?' The second question, using the same response scale, asks 'Would you say that the effect on people like yourself of what the government decides has increased, decreased, or stayed about the same since the Chun Doo Wan period?'

Because the number of predictors is large, we group them in theoretically coherent clusters to construct three additive indices summarizing (a) economic perceptions, (b) quality of life perceptions, and (c) evaluations of experience with democracy. For each cluster, the number of indicators reflecting negative change was subtracted from the number reflecting positive change. This operation sets all three predictive cluster scores on the same metric. Scores of each index range from a low of −4 when its four indicators all register negative change to a high of +4 when they all register positive change.

The dependent variables, democratic desirability and suitability, are handled as inter-regime *differences* once we get past the introductory, univariate presentation. The key contrast is the algebraic difference between support for democracy at the present time, during the second democratic government (t_3), and support for democracy during military rule (t_1). Thus, for example, the dependent variable becomes support for democracy-in-practice during the Kim Young Sam government, minus support for democracy as recollected under the Chun dictatorship.

The Sample

Our evidence is drawn from a national survey conducted in Korea during December, 1994. The sample is composed of 1,500 voting-age adults (aged 20 and older). The Korea-Gallup Polls selected the sample from 29.9 million eligible voters according to a multistage area random sampling method, stratifying the Korean electorate first by region, second by the size and level of administrative units within each region, and finally by the household in each administrative unit. The organization conducted personal interviews and verified 10 percent of those

TABLE 1: *Variation in Support for Democratization Across Three Governments*

Scale Points	Democratic Desirability			Democratic Suitability		
	Chun Period (1980–88) (in per cent)	Roh Period (1988–93) (in per cent)	Kim Period (1993–98) (in per cent)	Chun Period (1980–88) (in per cent)	Roh Period (1988–93) (in per cent)	Kim Period (1993–98) (in per cent)
1	0.3	0.1	0.1	2.5	1.3	0.7
2	0.3	0.1	0.2	5.5	3.0	0.7
3	1.3	0.5	0.4	14.7	8.1	2.8
4	2.2	1.0	0.7	16.4	11.7	5.3
5	11.4	7.2	2.3	17.3	21.6	10.8
6	13.1	12.4	2.4	13.5	19.7	17.6
7	17.7	17.0	9.2	9.5	14.7	22.3
8	21.6	26.3	25.9	7.9	8.9	20.2
9	8.5	12.5	25.6	1.9	2.5	10.2
10	13.1	15.0	29.0	1.3	1.0	3.6
No Opinion	10.5	7.9	4.2	9.5	7.5	5.8
Mean Score	7.3	7.7	8.6	5.0	5.5	6.8
Totals	100.0 (1,500)	100.0 (1,500)	100.0 (1,500)	100.0 (1,500)	100.0 (1,500)	100.0 (1,500)

interviews on a random basis. Half of those interviewed were females, reflecting their relative proportion in the population as reported in the 1993 Population and Housing Census conducted by the Korea National Statistical Office. As reported in the census, about three-fifths (61 percent) had a high school or college education. Interviews lasted, on average, from 20 minutes in urban areas to 40 in rural areas.

Univariate Analysis

Levels and Types of Support for Democratization

Table 1 reports three pieces of information concerning the individual and collective domains of support for democracy across three successive governments bridging the authoritarian and post-authoritarian periods. For each of the two domains, the percentages of those who express an opinion by choosing a position on the 10-point scale and the percentages of those who decline to do so are reported. The table also gives the average ratings for each of the scales.

As the regime or government changed (from Chun, 1980–88, through Roh, 1988–93, to Kim, 1993–), support for democratization increased. The incidence of respondents who choose one of the top three scalar ratings (8 through 10), expressing a strong desire for democratic change, rose sharply from 43 per cent under the authoritar-

TABLE 2: *Variations in Types of Support for Democratization Across Three Governments*

Types*		Government		
Desirability	Suitability	Chun (1980–88) (in per cent)	Roh (1988–93) (in per cent)	Kim (1993–98) (in per cent)
No	No	20.0	12.0	5.1
No	Yes	5.9	4.7	2.8
Yes	No	45.9	41.3	21.0
Yes	Yes	28.2	42.0	71.1
Totals		100.0 (1,500)	100.0 (1,500)	100.0 (1,500)

* 'yes' > 5 on 1–10 scale

ian Chun Doo Whan regime to 54 per cent under the first democratic government of Roh Tae Woo, to 81 per cent under the second democratic government period of Kim Young Sam. Similarly, the per centage claiming that democratization was suitable for Korea (again using the top of the scale, 8-through-10 criterion) more than doubled from 34 per cent under authoritarianism to 74 per cent under the second democratic government.

Table 1 also reveals important differences between the two domains of support for democratization. While both increase over time, Koreans' avowed *desire* for democracy is consistently higher than their assessment of democracy's *suitability* for the country. For example, a large majority (74 per cent) claim to have acquired democratic preferences or sympathies while living under authoritarian rule. However, a majority (56 per cent) felt that democratization would not be suitable for their country during this same period. Even under the current democratic government of Kim Young Sam, fewer Koreans on the average consider democratization appropriate for the country (mean = 6.8) than those who declare their support of democracy-in-principle (8.6). Democracy in a normative sense seems virtually unassailable when set alongside the realism, not to say measured skepticism, that democracy as a pragmatic risk evokes in the aftermath of developmental authoritarianism. The desirability of democracy is one thing, and its suitability is another.

Table 2 summarizes changes in democratic support by tracking the combinations of personal preference and judgments of suitability across three government periods. A plurality (46 per cent) assert that while they personally favored democratization in the authoritarian period, they declined to endorse it then for the nation. By the time of the first democratic government period, a plurality (42 per cent) favored democracy as a personal preference and viewed it as suitable for the nation. During the second democratic government, a large majority (71

TABLE 3: *Comparing and Summarizing the Dynamics of Support for Democratization*

	Government			Dimensions		
Patterns*	Chun	Roh	Kim	Desirability	Suitability	Both
A	No	No	No	4.7	20.0	23.5
B	No	No	Yes	9.5	29.1	30.8
C	No	Yes	Yes	11.0	15.3	15.6
D	Yes	No	No	0.7	1.7	1.2
E	Yes	Yes	No	1.9	2.9	2.4
F	Yes	Yes	Yes	69.7	27.1	22.2
G	Other Patterns			2.5	3.9	4.3
Totals				100.0 (1,500)	100.0 (1,500)	100.0 (1,500)

* 'yes' > 5 on 1–10 scale

per cent) had become both personally and 'collectively' supportive of democracy. Thus, over the seven years of democratization in Korea, the number of those who saw democracy as both desirable and feasible increased by two and a half times, from 28 to 71 per cent. Conversely, the fraction of those neither personally nor nationally supportive of change fell sharply, from 20 to 5 per cent. As democracy took hold, negative dispositions toward democratization turned positive more readily than positive attitudes turned negative.

Dynamics of Support for Democratization

Table 3 documents the dynamics of support for, and opposition to, democratization from an ampler perspective. The array was generated by combining the preference and suitability indicators for each of the three governments. This enables us to estimate the proportions of 'pure' democrats – those who claim to have consistently favored democratization in both senses from the authoritarian period onward – as well of the pure anti-democrats, those who admitted to rejecting the democratic option throughout the entire period. The incidence of these unequivocal types is about the same, between a fifth and a quarter of the respondents in either case.

Beyond this symmetry, of perhaps greater diagnostic interest is the fact that the largest category, nearly a third (31 per cent), is made up of Koreans who recall starting out as unconvinced about democracy during the authoritarian years and who persisted in their doubts during the first democratic government, finally to accede to the appeal of democracy by the time of the second democratic government. Significantly, the second largest category of changers (16 per cent) consists of

TABLE 4: *Changing Support for Democratization by Perceptions of Economic Conditions, Life Quality and Experience of Democratic Politics*

Democratic Desirability**										
Perceptions	Scale Points									
	−4	−3	−2	−1	0	1	2	3	4	(r)
Life Quality	−0.3	0.8	1.3	0.7	1.0	1.3	1.2	1.3	1.5	.09
Economic Conditions	0.9	0.7	1.3	1.1	1.0	1.3	1.4	1.4	1.3	.04
Democratic Experience	−0.7	2.0	0.8	0.9	1.3	1.3	1.2	1.3	1.3	.05
Democratic Suitability**										
Perceptions	Scale Points									
	−4	−3	−2	−1	0	1	2	3	4	(r)
Life Quality	−1.7	−1.1	0.1	0.2	0.8	1.4	1.7	2.0	2.5	.33*
Economic Conditions	0.4	0.1	0.2	1.1	1.2	1.7	1.8	2.1	2.5	.29*
Democratic Experience	−4.0	−2.8	−1.6	0.2	0.9	1.3	1.8	2.3	2.4	.39*

* Significant at the 0.01 level
** Dependent variable = (Support for democracy t_3 – support for democracy t_1)
Note: t_3 = Kim Young Sam government
t_1 = Chun Doo Whan government

those who started out as skeptics and claim to have opted for democracy 'the first time around,' during the Roh Tae Woo government. By contrast, switchers from an initial pro-democratic to an eventually anti-democratic stance constitute a tiny fraction, less than four per cent of the total.

The characteristic pattern, then, is one that shows democratization picking up support as the process unfolds rather than reflecting popular consensus or euphoria from the beginning. This ambivalence and provisional commitment rings true in the Korean case, where democratization entailed a measure of risk in the wake of the prosperity associated with authoritarian rule. Such a baseline helps account for the gradualist, prudent air of democratic 'values' surrounding the Korean transition, in distinction to the early reports of diffuse and pervasive enthusiasm in Eastern and Central Europe (Dalton 1994; Duch 1995; Gibson, Duch, and Tedin 1992; Huntington 1991; Weil 1993).

Bivariate Analysis

Support for democracy, we have shown, has developed gradually as the Korean transition has progressed. Now the task is to identify the forces driving the evolution in political culture. A first cut at this analysis is presented in Table 4.

The array maintains the pivotal division between the desirability of democracy on the part of individual Koreans and its suitability for their country. The upper portion depicts the average differences between

support for democracy-in-principle during the most recent democratic government and the same dimension as recollected by respondents during the time of authoritarian rule. The lower panels lay out the corresponding differences for opinions about democracy-in-practice. Throughout, the differences are tabulated against the reported overall levels of change in life quality, economic conditions, and democratic experience measured by the additive indices. The correlation coefficients in the rightmost column summarize the zero-order associations between democracy-in-principle and democracy-in-practice on the one hand and the causal clusters on the other.

The personal desire of Koreans for democratization varies little across perceptions of economic conditions, quality of life, or political experience. By contrast, opinions about the suitability of democracy are significantly related to perceptions on all these dimensions. As the economy or quality of life are thought to improve, and as experience with politics and assessments of government performance become more sanguine, Koreans are inclined to say that the country as a whole is better prepared ('suited') for democracy.

Evidently, declarations of personal desirability and collective suitability regarding democracy are not driven by the same forces. Belief in democracy-in-principle responds weakly, if at all, to signals from the economic, social, and political environment, while assessments of the suitability of democracy seem relatively circumstantial and 'event-sensitive.' This divergence lends provisional confirmation to our expectation that orientations toward democracy-in-principle and democracy-in-practice reflect substantially different perspectives.

These early returns set up two lines of inquiry. The obvious question concerns the net impact of the predictive clusters – the effects of economic conditions, life quality, and political experience – on democratic orientations, particularly on opinions about democracy-in-practice. It is this question that the multivariate analysis in the next section is designed to address.

The other question is more complex. The lack of association between the causal clusters and democracy-in-principle, if it persists with multivariate analysis, creates a puzzle. This non-finding would cease to be mysterious if democracy-in-principle were invariant, more or less unchanging during the course of democratization, as some readings of the 'diffuse' model of political culture suggest. Statistically there would be nothing to explain, were democratic desirability a constant. But this is not the case. In the recollections of Koreans, belief in democracy as an ideal, rather like evaluations of democracy in practice, grows from the beginning to the later phases of the transition, even if these convictions seem to be without much foundation in tangible conditions.

TABLE 5: *Exploring the Etiology of Changing Support for Democratization*

Dependent Variable = Democratic Desirability[a]				
Predictors	B	Beta	T-Values	Significance
Life Quality	.09	.09	.42	.67
Economic Conditions	.00	.00	.05	.96
Democratic Experience	.01	.01	2.80	.00
R^2 = .01				
Dependent Variable = Democratic Suitability[b]				
Predictors	B	Beta	T-Values	Significance
Life Quality	.21	.16	5.57	.00
Economic Conditions	.13	.12	4.36	.00
Democratic Experience	.36	.27	9.83	.00
R^2 = .20				

[a] Difference (Democratic Desirability $t_3 - t_1$)
[b] Difference (Democratic Suitability $t_3 - t_1$)
Note: t_3 = Kim Young Sam government
t_1 = Chun Doo Whan government

What drives this ascent? In order to answer this question, it is necessary first to get a clearer picture of the determinants of opinions about democracy-in-practice.

Multivariate Analysis

Table 5 provides estimates of the relative impact of perceptions of changes in economic conditions, quality of life, and political experience on the evolution of attitudes toward democracy-in-principle and democracy-in-practice, measured as the differences, respectively, between democratic desirability at t_3 (present government) and t_1 (Chun Doo Whan government) and democratic suitability over the same time-span. The ordinary least squares procedure generates standardized and non-standardized regression coefficients for each cluster of predictors, together with corresponding t-values and significance levels.

As expected from the results of the bivariate analysis, the predictors fail to explain much of anything in democratic desirability; as a whole they account for only one per cent of the variance. The personal desire for democratic change has nothing to do with how well or poorly the economy and the quality of life are perceived to be faring, and its connection with political experience is very faint indeed. It is just this dissociation between the standard predictors and convictions about democracy-in-principle that lends support to the diffuse model.

When it comes to change in commitment to democratization as suitable for the country as a whole, however, the tripartite model accounts for fully 20 per cent of the variance. Koreans modify their approval of

democratization for the nation in accord with their perceptions of whether the process contributes to or detracts from economic well-being, the quality of life, and their feelings about their experience with the political changes bound up with the transition. Unlike the personal desire for the realization of an ideal, approval of democracy as a collective venture is more circumstantially than diffusely determined. The dynamics of mass support for democratization cannot be understood without taking into consideration the judgment of citizens that they are collectively 'ready for democracy.'

The OLS analysis gives us a purchase on the relative importance of the causal clusters. The impact of each of the predictive indices on democracy-in-practice is statistically significant and, if we treat the standardized regression coefficients as orders of magnitude rather than as precise estimates, political experience turns out to be the crucial element in accounting for changes in opinion about the suitability of democracy, with perceptions of the quality of life and economic conditions coming in second and third. The outcome is consistent with the hypothesis that democratic learning – evaluations of experience in the political domain – is at the forefront of influences on growth in the conviction that democracy is workable for the nation, whatever personal preferences might be regarding democracy as an ideal.

All this provides reasonable substantiation for the learning model, with a significant contribution from the functional model, as a way of understanding the growth of support for democracy-in-practice. Yet the phenomenon of growth in support for democracy-in-principle remains a puzzle. To be sure, the singularity of democracy-in-principle – the absence of association with the standard predictors – lends plausibility to the notion that the construct is in fact diffuse. But this does not account for the upward movement in the desirability of democracy.

One possibility is that, however well it works for democracy-in-practice, the learning-cum-functional model is mispecified for democracy-in-principle. We may have gotten the predictors wrong. Still, the indicators of perceptions of economic conditions, quality of life, and political experience, though hardly exhaustive, cover a very wide spectrum of theoretically meaningful predictors. So, whatever empirical measures may have been omitted on the causal side of the equation, it is not immediately clear what these might be or, more important, what their conceptual status might be.

Perhaps the most cogent response to the possibility of mispecification reiterates the idea that changes in the desirability of democracy should *not* be correlated with changes in socioeconomic circumstance and political experience if the construct reflects in fact a diffuse norm. Why the upward momentum, then, in this ideal? The likeliest explanation, we

believe, is that such norms spread by diffusion. Democratic principles are not only diffuse, in the sense of 'vague,' for many citizens; these values diffuse through populations as a contagious progression, catching on in a manner that depends more on the incidence of their acceptance at early periods of the transition and on the sheer length of time they survive than on their role as a reflex of socioeconomic circumstances and political experience (Granovetter 1978; Lynch 1996; Noelle-Neumann 1993).

Another, related explanation is that personal desire for democracy is an aspiration that rises as it starts to look reachable. Aspiration levels are known to adjust to changed reality (Campbell, Converse, and Rodgers 1976, 209). In the present case, it would appear that 'inflation' in democratic desirability stems, in part, from a growing sense of the suitability of democracy.

The striking pattern shown in Figure 1 gives support to the diffusion-cum-adjustment model as an explanation for the ascendant momentum displayed by opinion about democracy-in-principle. The correlations between opinions about democratic desirability and suitability are presented for each of the three governments. As we scan the pattern from the authoritarian regime to the pair of democratic governments that followed it, the correlations rise from practically zero to .30. The trend suggests that, with time, as experience with the actual operations of democracy is prolonged, democracy becomes less of a disembodied ideal and more closely embedded in, though still differentiated from, the workings of democratic institutions. The longer a pluralistic regime exists, the more its democratic principles take on a kind of normalcy or 'fit' through practice (Rose and Mishler 1994, 179).[7]

The Functional-Political Model in Detail

In Korea, the personal desirability and collective suitability imputed to democracy neither shift at the same pace nor react to the same forces. Furthermore, the role of political learning, as well as the weight of quality of life over economic perceptions, in conditioning democratic suitability, look impressive.

Still, it can be objected that such inferences rest on a condensation of numerous independent variables into three theoretically simplified sets of predictors that are supposed to measure complex assessments of economic, quality of life, and political conditions. The analytical procedure has involved substituting simplified indices for discrete measures of these perceptions. In compressing the empirical details, some distortion may have been introduced.

The regression summarized in Table 6 addresses this problem by

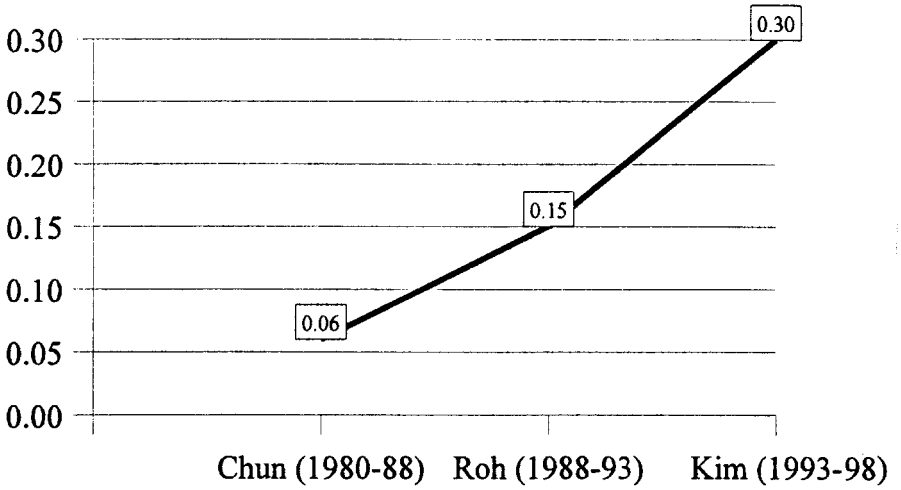

FIGURE 1: *Correlations between Opinions about Democracy-in-Principle and Democracy-in-Practice during the Korean Transition*

listing only the predictors that, taken one-by-one, turn out to be significant, in order of impact.[8] The disaggregated indicators boost explanatory power from 20 to 27 per cent, a non-trivial improvement. So, it would appear, the clustering of predictors obscured some significant effects. Yet the ordering of predictors in terms of their causal impact stays much the same. For example, the two measures of change in regime character and change in evaluation of regime performance have far and away the largest regression coefficients, while only one of the indicators of economic perceptions retains significance.

Three inferences can be drawn from this exercise. First, the quantit-

TABLE 6: *Regression Analysis of the Dynamics ofDemocratic Suitability**

Predictors	B	Beta	T-Values	Significance
1. Past change in regime character	.72	.26	9.95	.00
2. Past change in regime performance	.41	.22	6.78	.00
3. Past change in national life quality	.19	.09	2.65	.00
4. Past change in external efficacy	.18	.08	3.00	.00
5. Past change in family economy	.16	.08	2.67	.00
6. Past change in personal life quality	.14	.07	2.27	.02
7. Future change in national life quality	.17	.06	2.24	.03

R^2 = .27
* Dependent variable = Difference (Democratic Suitability $t_3 - t_1$)
Note: t_3 = Kim Young Sam government
t_1 = Chun Doo Whan government

ative bonus generated by disaggregating the predictors is greater than the conceptual gain. Aside from reconfirming the primacy of political experience as a determinant of democratic suitability, the increase in understanding is modest. The shrinkage in statistical explanatory power attendant on the simplified model discussed in the preceding section almost certainly reflects the fact that the causal clusters are to some degree multidimensional compounds; the ingredients of life quality perceptions, for example, are probably not all of one piece.[9]

Second, the crucial distinction between individual and collective perceptions entails the dependent rather than the independent variables. The difference between democracy-in-principle and democracy-in-practice corresponds to a distinction that is more meaningful, from the standpoint of ordinary Koreans, than variations on egocentric versus sociotropic impressions of the economic environment, for example.

Finally, the big story on the causal side is the paramount role of political learning – notably, perceptions of the changing nature of the regime, from authoritarian to democratic, and of its problem-solving capacities, together with a growing sense of being involved in, that is, affected by, what the regime does. Koreans discontinue or withdraw their support for democratization when they feel that democratic governments perform more poorly than the previous system. Put positively: growth in the perceived quality of governmental performance boosts support for democracy to a significantly greater degree than democratization's perceived impact on economic well-being or life quality.

The implication is that ordinary people in new democracies tend to blame democratic institutions when government proves incapable of tackling problems facing the nation and to support the government when it 'works.' All the same, it is important to recognize that political legitimacy cannot be reduced to political performance. Support for democracy-in-principle, which approximates legitimacy, is in fact resistant, for some time anyway, to the fortunes of the economy and fluctuations in the quality of life. Second, performance itself is more than just a matter of providing economic benefits and guarantees. 'People support democracies,' Evans and Whitefield (1995: 503) argue, 'because they are seen to work, reflecting respondents' experience of the pay-offs from democracy itself, rather than on the basis of a simple "cash nexus".' The upshot is a kind of practical, prudential commitment rather than abstract, Platonic legitimacy. Unless they reach a judgment that the new democratic government performs better than the authoritarian government under which they once lived, ordinary Koreans may be characterized as prudent rather than enthusiastic or uncritical about supporting democratic reform. Democratic legitimacy, in this sense, has to be earned.

Conclusion

Several studies contend that citizens of former communist countries in Eastern and Central Europe have acquired a preference for democracy primarily through the global diffusion of its message prior to the demise of communism (Diamond, n.d.; Dalton 1994; Duch 1995; Huntington 1991; McIntosh and Abele 1993). Furthermore, some of these studies have also claimed that mass publics have furnished continuing support for democratic change by directing their dissatisfaction against government officials rather than at newly installed democratic institutions. New democracies, the argument goes, have commanded the resilient and pervasive support of the public.

What might our findings lead us to expect regarding popular reactions in the economic contraction that hit Korea in the late nineties? Two things in the first place, while we know that economic hardship has a relatively modest, mostly indirect effect on support for democracy, we know little about how prolonged economic deprivation impacts political legitimacy. Second, perceptions of how democratic governments manage public policy, including no doubt measures designed to cope with economic crisis, matter more than assessments of economic crisis itself. In other words, judgements that the government is being fair probably count for more than judgments of its effectiveness, at least in the short run.[10]

However, the evolution of commitment to democracy in Korea and, we suspect, in many other countries has followed a more complex trajectory. Even though they lived under an authoritarian system that permitted greater exposure to democratic cues than its communist counterparts, by their own account Koreans were initially reticent about democratization, and they increased their support for democratic reforms instrumentally and incrementally, through their experience with reform. Their attachments to the reforms shifted significantly during the transition and responded to the performance of democratic governments. A wait-and-see attitude prevailed over unequivocal support.

A major clue to this discrepancy lies in the distinction between a personal preference for democracy – its close-to-consensual desirability – and the assessment of its suitability for the country as the transition proceeds. The viability of democracy-in-practice is seen as more problematic than the desirability of democracy-in-principle.

Much of the gap between the results reported in earlier studies and our own can be attributed to the way in which support for democratic change is conceptualized and measured. Once the division between democracy-in-principle and democracy-in-practice is clarified, one-

dimensional renditions of the growth of democratic commitment come in for revision. Thus, in Korea, both facets of commitment to democracy evolved during the transition. Even so, only one of them, judgment about the suitability of democracy-in-practice, shows any significant association with perceived changes in the socioeconomic and political environment.

This outcome does not so much contradict as amplify interpretations of the growth of democratic support along diffusionist lines. Rather than being fully formed at birth, as some constructions of the resilience of democratic value might have it, diffuse norms spread – literally, diffuse – through the citizenry during the course of democratization. The notion of diffuse norms – of what we have called democracy-in-principle or democratic desirability – remains valid. Our point is that it is not the only dimension of democratic commitment, nor is the phenomenon itself unchanging.

Evaluations of democracy-in-practice, of its suitability, constitute the second dimension, in addition to norms about democracy as an ideal.[11] Somewhat like the diffuse values associated with democracy-in-principle, such evaluations change during the transition but, unlike 'ideal' values, they change in response to alterations in socioeconomic conditions and according to experience with democratic performance. Here again, our study complements the democracy-by-diffusion approach. The tendency for opinions about democracy-in-practice to be sensitive to the ups-and-downs of the transition does not make relatively free-floating beliefs in democracy-in-principle less real. It does, however, point to the empirical as well as conceptual distinctions between the two dynamics. Not only do judgments about the suitability of democracy differ from its desirability; they are influenced by different things. These 'things' are, moreover, a theoretically coherent set of causes rather than an undifferentiated assortment of stray factors.

On the one hand, changes in perceptions of democratic suitability are determined, to a modest though significant degree, by perceived changes in the quality of life and economic conditions during democratization, as compared to achievements under authoritarianism. Quality of life concerns appear to count for a bit more than assessments of the economy probably because, in the wake of a developmental dictatorship that was largely successful in improving the standard of living, economic performance itself is not a sharply distinguishing feature of democracy in Korea. Some functional conditions of the growth of democratic support – notably, changes in perceptions of the overall quality of life – are less material but no less powerful than the narrowly economic, at least in countries that democratize under propitious economic conditions.

On the other hand, outweighing both these ingredients of our functional explanation of commitment to democracy-in-practice is the process of political learning. Koreans update their appreciation of democracy, keeping a tally not just of the changing socioeconomic situation but of what they perceive to be the performance and democratic nature of the new regime. While the desirability of democracy appears to spread by diffusion convictions about its 'fit' follow a learning curve. Commitment to democracy-in-practice is contingent not only on functional payoffs, having to do with economic and quality of life issues, but also on estimates of how democratic government works – how efficiently it implements policies and how extensively it engages citizens. This type of democratic learning, we have argued, may be particularly important in the Korean case because it is in the political domain, more than in regard to economic performance or even in the area of quality of life, that the separation between an authoritarian system identified with prosperity and an uncertain democracy emerges most clearly.

Our analysis calls into question the notion that support for democracy is equivalent to or even mainly a reflection of diffuse commitment reflecting deep-seated values. Contrary to what Easton (1975) and others (Di Palma 1993; Kornberg and Clarke 1983) have suggested, popular support for a democratic political system is not impervious to change; instead it grows and declines in response to a variety of forces. Our results are of a piece with evidence that civic attitudes are as much an outcome as a cause of democratic praxis (Seligson and Booth 1993; Muller and Seligson 1994). Finally, the tendency for commitment to democracy to be conditioned by the quality of governmental performance testifies to the instrumental idea according to which regimes are supported by what they do at least as much as for what they are or claim to be (Lipset 1994; Przeworski 1993).

The gist of our analysis is that popular commitment to democracy encompasses two dimensions. A preference for democracy in the abstract, untested by experience, may be a promising start, an improvement over the outright hostility that in some cultures views democratic ideals as corrupt, decadent, and otherwise insidious. But it is not a commitment to the collective suitability of democracy. It seems unlikely that mass publics acquire a robust stake in democracy – something approaching an enduring commitment to it – mainly, much less solely, through exposure to Western media and education, even if these agencies are crucial to putting democracy on the screen of popular culture in the first place.[12] Equally if not more important is the tendency for a democratic political culture to develop through a learning process that includes first-hand experience with democratic politics (Fukuyama

1995a; Putnam 1993; Weil 1994). During this process, mass publics learn the art of self-government while conforming to 'universalistic and public-oriented rules rather than their particularistic interests' (O'Donnell 1996, 32; see also Dahl 1992; Fukuyama 1995b; Putnam 1993). Perhaps more realistically, ordinary citizens may come to the realization that 'democracy is a structure of laws and incentives by which less than perfect individuals are induced to act in the common good while pursuing their own' (March and Olsen 1995, 41).

Appendix: Survey Questions

Indicators of Dependent Variables

1. Desirability of Democracy

[SHOW CARD] Here is a scale showing the extent to which people desire democracy. On this scale 1 means complete dictatorship, and 10 means complete democracy.

1.1. Where would you place the extent to which you desired democracy for our country during President Chun Doo Wan's Fifth Republic?

1.2. And where would you place the extent to which you desired democracy during President Roh Tae Woo's Sixth Republic?

1.3. Finally, where would you place the extent to which you desire democracy nowadays?

2. Suitability of Democracy

[SHOW CARD] Here is a scale showing the extent to which people think democracy is suitable. On this scale 1 means complete unsuitability, and 10 means complete suitability.

2.1. During the Chun Doo Wan government, to what extent was democracy suitable for our country?

2.2. And during the Roh Tae Woo government, to what extent was democracy suitable for our country?

2.3. To what extent is democracy suitable for our country nowadays?

Indicators of Independent Variables

3. Economic Change

3.1. How would you compare economic conditions in our country nowadays with what they were during the Chun Doo Wan period?

Would you say they are much better, a little better, about the same. a little worse, or much worse?

3.2. What do you think the national economy will be like in five years – much better, a little better, about the same, a little worse, or much worse?

3.3. How would you compare the economic situation of your household nowadays with what it was during the Chun Doo Wan period – much better, a little better, about the same, a little worse, or much worse?

3.4. And what do you think your household economic situation will be like in five years – much better, a little better, about the same, a little worse, or much worse?

4. Change in the Quality of National Life

[SHOW CARD] Here is a picture of a ladder with ten rungs. Imagine that the top (tenth rung) of the ladder represents the best possible place to live and the bottom (first rung) represents the worst possible place to live.

4.1. Where do you think our country stood on the ladder during the Chun Doo Wan period?

4.2. And where do you think our country stands at the present time?

4.3. Where do you think our country will stand in five years?

5. Change in the Quality of Personal Life

[SHOW CARD] Here is a picture of another ladder with ten rungs. Imagine that the top (tenth rung) of the ladder represents the best possible life for you and the bottom (first rung) represents the worst possible life for you.

5.1. On which step of the ladder would you say you personally stood during the Chun Doo Whan government?

5.2. And where do you stand at the present time?

5.3. Where do you think you will stand in five years?

6. Political Change

Satisfaction with Government Performance

[SHOW CARD] On the whole, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way the following governments have handled the problems facing our society? Please choose a number on the scale where 1 represents complete dissatisfaction and 10 means complete satisfaction.

6.1. How satisfied were you with the Chun Doo Wan government?
6.2. What about the Roh Tae Woo government?
6.3. And the Kim Young Sam government?

Change in Regime Character

[SHOW CARD] Here is a scale ranging from one to ten. On this scale 1 means complete dictatorship, and 10 means complete democracy.

6.4. Where would you locate our country on this scale during the Chun Doo Whan government?
6.5. Where would you place our country during the Roh Tae Woo government?
6.6. And where would you place our country at the present time?

Change in Internal Efficacy

6.7. How would you say the influence that people like yourself have on the government has changed since the Chun Doo Whan government? Has it increased a lot, increased a little, stayed about the same, decreased a little, or decreased a lot?

Change in External Efficacy

6.8. How would you say the effect of what the government decides on people like yourself has changed since the Chun Doo Whan government? Has it increased a lot, increased a little, stayed about the same, decreased a little, or decreased a lot?

NOTES

1. Others (Campbell 1981; Campbell, Converse, and Rodgers 1976) have argued that the notion of life quality allows for a more comprehensive account of human life than an exclusive focus on economic well-being Whether the construct provides a more powerful causal account of political commitment is another matter.
2. Translations of all questions are given in the appendix.
3. The measures of democratic desirability and suitability possess construct validity The indicators 'relate to other measures consistent with theoretically derived hypotheses concerning the concepts (or constructs) that are being measured' (Carmines and Zeller 1979, 23). Thus, for example, the extent to which respondents desire democracy is positively correlated with agreement with the statement that 'our political system should be more democratic than what it is now' ($r = .31$). The extent to which respondents believe democracy would be suitable for Korea is, on the other hand, negatively correlated with agreement with the statement that 'the dictatorial rule of a strong leader like Park Chung Hee is much better than a democracy for handling the problems facing our country' ($r = -.24$).

4. A natural objection to this procedure is that, given the progress of the transition, respondents may be inclined to adjust upwards, in hindsight, their estimates of the desirability and suitability of democracy under the authoritarian and first democratic governments While this possibility cannot be ruled out completely, data drawn from a survey we conducted in 1991 generate mean estimates of satisfaction with these earlier governments that are not significantly different from the satisfaction estimates for the same governments reported in 1994. Thus, there is no empirical evidence that the constancy in 'satisfaction' should not hold for 'desirability' and 'suitability.' In addition, what matters more than the absolute values is the relative ordering of recollected as compared to current evaluations. If, for example, feelings conjured up in memory about the suitability of democracy turned out to be higher under the authoritarian regime than during the current democracy, there would be serious reason to doubt the validity of the data. But empirically, as will be shown, this is not the case. It should also be noted that our results are consistent with the longitudinal stability of comparable retrospective indicators registered by Rose and his associates in their New Democracies Barometer annual surveys of Central and Eastern Europe.
5. The sorting of economic (and quality of life) indicators into perceptions of individual and collective conditions follows the familiar division between personal and sociotropic measures, just as the distinction between perceptions of past conditions and expectations for the future follows a tradition documented in the electoral literature for voters to follow retrospective more than prospective evaluations (Lewis-Beck 1988; MacKuen, Erikson, and Stimpson 1992; Rose and Mishler 1996) However, because such refinements turn out to have scarcely any empirical resonance in Korea, at least with our dependent variables, we do not pursue this line of analysis. The consequential differences, by far, are between sociotropic (suitability) and personal (desirability) renderings of the dependent variable, as well as between the relative importance of the economic, quality of life, and political perceptions as predictors.
6. The asymmetry between the four-item economic and six-item quality of life series is more formal than substantive Assessments of economic conditions for the family and the nation as a whole were elicited in comparison to the perception of conditions 'during the Chun Doo Whan (authoritarian) government.' Separate items were used to get at past and present evaluations of life quality; a retrospective comparison was not built into the evaluation of the present. The economic and quality of life series employ the same format for prospective evaluations.
7. While the diffusion model of democracy-in-principle does not have a set of predictors of the sort associated with the functional and political models of democracy-in-practice, 'media exposure' perhaps comes closest to this status Empirically, however, the link doesn't hold up. None of the correlations of measures of television viewing (not shown here) with the indicators of democratic desirability are statistically significant.
8. With a dozen predictors, the risk of multicollinearity is high Correlations were computed for each of the 67 pairs formed by the independent variables. The largest of the coefficients (.53) turned out to be for the correlation between perceptions of past change in the national economy and past change in the family's economic situation. Thus, multicollinearity is not a problem in the case at hand.
9. This is reflected in the reliability of the economic, quality of life, and political indices, as measured by Cronbach's alpha: respectively, 65, .41, and .50.
10. For mass reactions to democratization during the Korean economic crisis, see Shin and Rose (1998).
11. Many, though not all, studies of democratization fail to distinguish between democratic norms and values For some exceptions, see Fuchs et al. (1995), Toka (1995), and Kaase (1994).
12. In Russia where popular support for democratic reform was once considered 'quite robust' (Duch 1995, 152), a nearly moribund Communist Party has revived, propelled by the belief that 'the second time around, Communists will get it right' (Stanley 1995, A10; see also Reisinger, Miller, and Hesli 1995, 22).

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