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**POLITICAL CULTURE AND  
DEMOCRATIC CONSOLIDATION**

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Larry Diamond is Senior Research Fellow at the Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace, Stanford University. This paper is based on a series of four seminars that he presented at the *Center for Advanced Study in the Social Sciences* of the Juan March Institute, Madrid, on 7, 12, 13 and 14 November 1996, entitled “Is the Third Wave of Democratization Over?”; “Political Culture: Cause or Effect?”; “Economic Development and Democracy Reconsidered”; and “Promoting Democracy: The International Role”.

Few problems are more ripe for illumination from the political culture perspective than the sources of democratic emergence, consolidation, and persistence. Prominent theories of democracy, both classical and modern, claim that democracy requires a distinctive set of political values and orientations from its citizens: moderation, tolerance, civility, efficacy, knowledge, participation. Beliefs and perceptions about regime legitimacy have long been recognized as critical factors in regime change, bearing particularly on the persistence or breakdown of democracy.<sup>1</sup> The path-breaking works of Almond and Verba and of Inkeles and Smith showed that countries differ significantly in their patterns of politically relevant beliefs, values, and attitudes, and that within nations these elements of political culture are clearly shaped by life experiences, education, and social class.<sup>2</sup> As early as the late 1950s, Lipset presented extensive evidence demonstrating not only a strong positive relationship between economic development and democracy, but that political beliefs, attitudes, and values were an important intervening variable in this relationship.<sup>3</sup> In 1980, Inkeles and Diamond presented more direct evidence of a relationship between a country's level of economic development and the prevalence among its people of such democratic cultural attributes as tolerance, trust, and efficacy.<sup>4</sup> Subsequently, Inglehart showed that life satisfaction, interpersonal trust, and rejection of revolutionary change are highly correlated not

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<sup>1</sup> Robert A. Dahl, *Polyarchy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971), pp. 129-140; Juan J. Linz, *The Breakdown of Democratic Regimes: Crisis, Breakdown, and Reequilibration* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978).

<sup>2</sup> Gabriel A. Almond and Sidney Verba, *The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963); Alex Inkeles and David Smith, *Becoming Modern: Individual Change in Six Developing Nations* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1974); and Alex Inkeles, "Participant Citizenship in Six Developing Countries," *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 63, no. 4, pp. 1120-1141.

<sup>3</sup> Seymour Martin Lipset, "Economic Development and Democracy," *Political Man: The Social Bases of Politics* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981), pp. 27-63. New supporting evidence for the overall relationship and the intervening role of political culture appears in Larry Diamond, "Economic Development and Democracy Reconsidered," in Gary Marks and Larry Diamond, eds., *Reexamining Democracy: Essays in Honor of Seymour Martin Lipset* (Newbury Park, CA, and London: Sage Publications, 1992), pp. 93-139.

<sup>4</sup> Alex Inkeles and Larry Diamond, "Personal Qualities as a Reflection of Level of National Development." In Frank Andrews and Alexander Szalai, eds., *Comparative Studies in the Quality of Life* (London: Sage, 1980), pp. 73-109.

only with economic development but with stable democracy, and that "political culture may be a crucial link between economic development and democracy."<sup>5</sup>

Despite these considerable theoretical and empirical grounds for expecting that political culture plays an important role in the development and maintenance (or failure) of democracy, the post-1960s generation of work on democracy tended, until rather recently, to neglect the phenomenon, particularly at the mass level. Political and intellectual trends in the social sciences during the late 1960s and 1970s challenged or dismissed political culture theory, from both the right and the left. The democratic transitions literature of the 1980s also tended to give short shrift to the political culture variable. Only with the surge in the 1990s of theoretical and empirical attention to the process of democratic consolidation - and to the growth of mass belief in democratic legitimacy as the core element of this process - has political culture recovered a central place in the comparative study of democracy.

This paper makes the case for political culture - and particularly, beliefs about democratic legitimacy - as a central factor in the consolidation of democracy. From a mounting wealth of survey data across numerous regions and countries, it assesses trends in public support for democracy, satisfaction with democracy, and other political attitudes and values that could affect the viability of third wave democracies. It also addresses three important theoretical questions in the study of political culture: Which elements of political culture matter for democratic consolidation? How and how much does political culture change over time in a developing democracy? And what are the sources of political culture change?

The most striking finding here is the autonomy of the political. No doubt, socioeconomic development does generate more "modern" attitudes and values - greater tolerance and valuing of

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<sup>5</sup> Ronald Inglehart, *Culture Shift in Advanced Industrial Countries* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), p. 45. See also Inglehart, "The Renaissance of Political Culture," *American Political Science Review* 82, no. 4 (December 1988), pp. 1203-1230.

freedom, higher levels of political efficacy, greater capacity to participate in politics and civic life. But political experience with democracy and alternative regimes, and how well a formally democratic regime functions to deliver the “political goods” of democracy, have sizable independent effects on political attitudes and values, often overpowering those of the country’s level of socioeconomic development, the individual’s socioeconomic status, and the regime’s economic performance. That political experience and the quality of governance have such large autonomous effects on the way citizens think, believe, and behave politically underscores the need for viewing democracy in a developmental perspective, which views democracy as an ongoing process of evolution that may emerge in different parts or fragments at different times, through diverse paths and sequences in different countries.<sup>6</sup> There is no developmental prerequisite for democracy. And there is no better way of developing the values, skills, and commitments of democratic citizenship than through direct experience with democracy, however imperfect it may be.

It is beyond the scope of this paper to review the considerable body of prior theoretical and conceptual work on political culture and its relationship to democratic development and stability.<sup>7</sup> However, some conceptual treatment is needed of the most vital element of political culture for democratic consolidation: legitimacy.

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<sup>6</sup> Richard L. Sklar, "Developmental Democracy," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 29, no. 4 (1987), pp. 686-714, and "Towards a Theory of Developmental Democracy," in Adrian Leftwich, ed., *Democracy and Development: Theory and Practice* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1996).

<sup>7</sup> For that discussion, see the full version of this paper, to be published as chapter 5 in Larry Diamond, *Developing Democracy: In Quest of Consolidation* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999, forthcoming); and Larry Diamond, "Introduction: Political Culture and Democracy," in Diamond, *Political Culture and Democracy in Developing Countries* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1993), pp. 1-15.

### *Democratic Legitimacy*

It is by now a cardinal tenet of empirical democratic theory that stable democracy also requires a *belief in the legitimacy of democracy*. Indeed, as I argue elsewhere, the growth of this belief and behavioral commitment is the defining feature of the consolidation process.<sup>8</sup> Ideally, this belief should be held at two levels: as a general principle, that democracy is the best (or at least the “least bad”) form of government possible, and as an evaluation of their own system, that in spite of its failures and shortcomings, their own democratic regime is better than any other that might be established for their country.<sup>9</sup> Both of these assessments, but particularly the latter, are *relative* judgements, rendered in comparison with known alternatives. As we will see, direct and recent experience with regime alternatives can powerfully shape the readiness of publics to embrace the legitimacy of democracy, not necessarily as an ideal form of government but as preferable to any other system that might be tried.<sup>10</sup>

As we will also shortly discover, public opinion surveys have used several different types of questions to try to assess levels of democratic legitimacy, or what is sometimes termed “support for democracy.” At the most abstract level, they have questioned about support for “the idea” of democracy “in principle.” Somewhat less abstract (and inevitably eliciting at least somewhat less support in established democracies) is the question of whether “democracy is the best form of government, whatever the circumstance,” or whether “sometimes an authoritarian government can be preferable.” Much more concrete, and less stable, is the question of whether citizens are “satisfied with the way democracy is working” in their country. This is frequently taken as a

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<sup>8</sup> See chapter 3 of *Developing Democracy*.

<sup>9</sup> Linz, *Breakdown of Democratic Regimes*, p. 16; Lipset, *Political Man*, p. 64.

<sup>10</sup> Although they do not use the term “legitimacy,” this conception of support for democracy as inherently comparative in nature drives the theory and methodology of Richard Rose, William Mishler, and Christian Haerpfer in their analysis of attitudinal trends in the postcommunist states. See their *Testing the Churchill Hypothesis in Post-Communist Societies: Support for Democracy and its Alternatives* (Oxford: Polity Press, 1999, forthcoming).

measure of support for the democratic system, and is the measure that is probably most widely and systematically available across many countries and time points.<sup>11</sup> Yet this is not a measure of legitimacy or system *support* per se.<sup>12</sup> For one thing, “identical responses to this question do not have an identical meaning in different institutional contexts.” Depending on how democratic the country is (and the respondent as well), dissatisfaction could mean support for democratic reform or preference for a nondemocratic regime.<sup>13</sup> Citizens may be dissatisfied with the way democracy works in their country but still deeply committed to the principle of democracy and unwilling to countenance any other form of government. Alternatively, a citizen may see democracy to be functioning reasonably well at the moment, but may nevertheless be prepared to support an authoritarian regime at the first sign of trouble. In this case, the belief in legitimacy is not *intrinsic* - that is, internalized and deeply rooted, or what Maravall calls “autonomous”<sup>14</sup> - but *instrumental*, conditional on effective performance. This is not real legitimacy, certainly not the kind that sustains and consolidates democracy. For at some point, democracy is likely to experience problems and public perceptions of decline in its effectiveness. Only when support for democracy has become intrinsic and unconditional can democracy be considered consolidated and secure.

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<sup>11</sup> For an extensive analysis based on this conceptualization, see Dieter Fuchs, Giovanna Guidorossi, and Pallo Svensson, “Support for the Democratic System,” in Hans-Dieter Klingemann and Dieter Fuchs, eds., *Citizens and the State* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), pp. 323-353. Typical of the problem is an otherwise rigorous and widely cited study of “legitimation” which takes satisfaction with the way democracy works as equivalent to other, more appropriate, measures of legitimacy. Frederick D. Weil, “The Sources and Structure of Legitimation in Western Democracies: A Consolidated Model Tested with Time-Series Data in Six Countries Since World War II,” *American Sociological Review* 54 (October 1989): 682-706.

<sup>12</sup> A particularly suspect feature of this item, as a measure of democracy, is that supporters of the governing party evince substantially higher levels of satisfaction with democracy than do supporters of the opposition party, irrespective of whether it is the left or right that is governing. In some cases, these differences are very large, 30 to 40 percentage points. Fuchs, Guidorossi, and Svensson, “Support for the Democratic System,” pp. 345-346.

<sup>13</sup> Rose, Mishler, and Haerpfer, *Testing the Churchill Hypothesis*, chapter 5, page 9 of October 1997 draft manuscript.

<sup>14</sup> José María Maravall, *Regimes, Politics, and Markets: Democratization and Economic Change in Southern and Eastern Europe* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 204.

At the same time, publics may be committed to the idea of democracy in principle but so disillusioned and disgusted with its failures in their own country that they may judge it an inappropriate form of government *for their country, at the time*. They may (as in Nigeria in the 1980s, Thailand in 1991, and Peru in 1992) support and rally behind a temporary suspension of democracy, with the expectation that subsequent structural reforms will enable it to work better. In a consolidated democracy, judgements of legitimacy must therefore refer to the political system as it actually operates, with its real institutions and informal rules, and not merely to its legal form.<sup>15</sup> Legitimacy thus reflects the depth of commitment to the substance of the political system and process (and to the boundaries and identity of the state which democracy governs). The most revealing measure of democratic legitimacy would therefore probe the extent to which a public views democracy as the best, the most appropriate, or the most suitable system for the country at the current time. Strangely, few surveys have posed the question this way.<sup>16</sup> Neither have they made the notion of democracy very concrete, or done much to determine whether people's understanding of "democracy" matches the conception of multiparty electoral competition with constitutional freedoms that is assumed by survey researchers.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Fuchs, Guidorossi, and Svensson, "Support for the Democratic System," p. 328.

<sup>16</sup> Two exceptions are a series of Spanish surveys which asked whether "Democracy is the best system for a country like ours," and the New Korea Barometer, which asks Koreans to rate from 1 to 10 how "suitable" democracy was for the country during the authoritarian era and is today. José Ramón Montero, Richard Gunther, and Mariano Torcal, "Democracy in Spain: Legitimacy, Discontent, and Disaffection," *Estudio/Working Paper* 1997/100, Centro de Estudios Avanzados en Ciencias Sociales, Instituto Juan March de Estudios e Investigaciones, June 1997, p. 5; Doh Chull Shin and Peter McDonough, "The Dynamics of Popular Reaction to Democratization in Korea: A Comparative Perspective," unpublished draft, December 1997.

<sup>17</sup> This is the principal criticism of the standard research approach advanced in Arthur H. Miller, Vicki L. Hesli, and William M. Reisinger, "Understanding Democracy: A Comparison of Mass and Elite in Post-Soviet Russia and Ukraine," *Studies in Public Policy* 247, Centre for the Study of Public Policy, University of Strathclyde, 1995. They show that in Russia and Ukraine, elite and mass have different conceptions of democracy, and that "beliefs about democracy vary across demographic and political categories rather than reflecting a shared common culture" (p. 16). Rose, Mishler, and Haerpfer (*Testing the Churchill Hypothesis*) avoid (or diminish) potential ambiguity in interpreting a commitment to "democracy" by specifying the system as involving "free elections and many parties" or by specifying concrete types of authoritarian alternatives.



Democratic legitimacy derives partly from the performance over time of the democratic regime, but it is also influenced (especially in the early life of a regime) by how specific democratic institutions articulate with traditionally legitimate forms of authority, and later by socialization, expanding education, and other types of social and cultural change. Regime performance (as I will demonstrate below) is not only assessed in terms of economic growth and social reform. It encompasses several crucial political dimensions as well: the capacity to maintain order, to govern transparently, to maintain a rule of law, and to otherwise respect and preserve the democratic rules of the game.

### **Political Culture and Democratic Consolidation**

If popular legitimation is a core component of democratic consolidation, then mass-level survey data on popular support for democracy provide an indispensable measure of progress toward democratic consolidation. National sample surveys can also tell us how mass publics evaluate the performance of their (fledgling) democracies, to what extent they manifest other attributes of democratic culture, such as trust, tolerance, efficacy, and engagement, and how these other attitudes and values are related to beliefs in the legitimacy of democracy. Most of the relevant survey data on third wave democracies is relatively recent (as are many of the third wave democracies), and much remains to be done to achieve a degree of standardization in survey items that would permit clear comparisons across regions as well as countries. Nevertheless, more and more explicitly cross-national survey work is being undertaken, and comparisons are now possible at least within regions and in some cases over several points in time.

*Support for Democracy: Legitimacy*

Spain, Greece, and Portugal were not only the first third-wave democracies, but the first to become consolidated.<sup>18</sup> Numerous surveys show that Portugal within a decade and Spain and Greece well before that developed political cultures highly supportive of democracy, separate and apart from its material benefits. By 1985, 70 percent of Spaniards, 61 percent of Portuguese, and 87 percent of Greeks responded that “democracy is preferable to any other type of regime,” while no more than 10 percent in any of these countries believed that “in some cases an authoritarian regime, a dictatorship, is preferable.”<sup>19</sup> Within three years, these levels of democratic legitimacy had risen to 75 percent in Spain, 84 percent in Portugal, and 90 percent in Greece, where they more or less remained in 1992. By then, the Greek figure was the second highest of the 12 countries of the European Community - most of which had at least several decades of democratic experience - while Portugal also exceeded and Spain equalled the EC average of 78 percent agreement (Table 1).<sup>20</sup> Considering that support for democracy ranged from 76 to 81 percent in such long established and obviously secure democracies as Britain, France, Germany, and the Netherlands, the figures for Southern Europe point to a firm cultural rooting of democracy. In fact, in each of the three Southern European democracies, support for “the idea of democracy... in principle” was nearly universal by the end of the 1980s, with support from 95.5 percent of Spaniard, 98.5 percent of Portuguese, and 98.7 percent of Greeks. The latter proportions were the two highest of the 12 EC countries.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> For evidence of high levels of diffuse support for democracy as early as 1985, see Leonardo Morlino and José Ramón Montero, “Legitimacy and Democracy in Southern Europe,” in Richard Gunther, Nikiforos Diamandouros, and Hans-Jürgen Puhle, eds., *The Politics of Democratic Consolidation: Southern Europe in Comparative Perspective* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), pp. 235-239.

<sup>19</sup> Morlino and Montero, “Legitimacy and Democracy in Southern Europe,” 236, Table 7.1. For the exact wording of the complete survey item, see p. 458, note 21.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid, p. 238, Table 7.2.

<sup>21</sup> Fuchs, Guidorossi, and Svensson, “Support for the Democratic System,” p. 349, Table 11.6.

Other survey data amplify the picture of resilience in the Spanish public's commitment to democracy. From 1978 (shortly after the completion of the transition) to 1993, the proportion of the Spanish public agreeing that "democracy is the best political system for a country like ours" ranged as high as 87 percent, and never dipped lower than 69 percent, even at times of economic decline and terrorist violence. Immediately following the failed military coup attempt in February 1981, only 2 percent expressed a preference for the principal alternative to democracy, a military government (and only 5 percent favored a civil-military government).<sup>22</sup> These data lead Linz and Stepan to conclude that once the 1981 military coup plotters had been tried and punished in 1982, and the cloud of a nondemocratic constraint on a democratically elected government was thus removed, democracy in Spain was consolidated.<sup>23</sup> Morlino and Montero essentially concur, showing that while dissatisfaction with the way democracy was working increased sharply in 1980, belief in democratic legitimacy held firm.<sup>24</sup> The persistent absence of any significant electoral support for anti-system or anti-democratic parties over the last 20 years further confirms the consolidation of Spain's democracy.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), pp. 108-109, Tables 6.4 and 6.5. See also Montero, Gunther, and Torcal, "Democracy in Spain: Legitimacy, Discontent, and Disaffection," pp.5-6, Tables 1-2.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid, p. 110.

<sup>24</sup> Morlino and Montero, "Legitimacy and Democracy in Southern Europe," p. 244. Legitimacy also increased in the face of a steep decline in political trust during this period of economic turmoil in Spain. Weil, "Sources and Structures of Legitimation," p. 694.

<sup>25</sup> Montero, Gunther, and Torcal, "Democracy in Spain," p. 3.

<b>Table 1. Legitimacy and Support for Democracy, 1985-1997</b>								
<b>Country</b>	<b>1985</b>	<b>1988</b>	<b>1991</b>	<b>1992</b>	<b>1993</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>1996</b>	<b>1997</b>
Spain	70 <sup>1a</sup>	72 <sup>1b</sup> 87 <sup>2a</sup>	76 <sup>1b</sup>	78 <sup>1a</sup> 73 <sup>1b</sup>	81 <sup>1b</sup> 79 <sup>2a</sup>	74 <sup>1b</sup>	81 <sup>1c</sup>	
Portugal <sup>1a</sup>	61	84		83				
Greece <sup>1a</sup>	87	90		90				
<b>EC avg.<sup>1a</sup></b>				<b>78</b>				
Uruguay <sup>1</sup>		73 <sup>a</sup>	73 <sup>d</sup>			80 <sup>d</sup>	80 <sup>c</sup>	
Argentina <sup>1</sup>		74 <sup>a</sup>				77 <sup>d</sup>	71 <sup>c</sup>	
Chile		57 <sup>1a</sup>	87 <sup>2d</sup>	79 <sup>2d</sup>		52 <sup>1d</sup>	54 <sup>1c</sup>	
Brazil <sup>1</sup>		43 <sup>d</sup>	39 <sup>d</sup>	42 <sup>d</sup>		41 <sup>d</sup>	50 <sup>c</sup>	
Panama <sup>1</sup>							75 <sup>c</sup>	
Venezuela <sup>1</sup>							62 <sup>c</sup>	
Peru <sup>1</sup>							63 <sup>c</sup>	
Nicaragua <sup>1</sup>							59 <sup>c</sup>	
Colombia <sup>1</sup>							60 <sup>c</sup>	
El Salvador <sup>1</sup>							56 <sup>c</sup>	
<b>10-nation average for Latin America.</b>							<b>63</b>	
Czech Repub			88 <sup>3e</sup>	78 <sup>3e</sup>	82 <sup>3e</sup>		75 <sup>3e</sup>	
Slovakia			85 <sup>3e</sup>	81 <sup>3e</sup>	76 <sup>3e</sup>		78 <sup>3e</sup>	
Hungary			75 <sup>3e</sup>	75 <sup>3e</sup>	70 <sup>3e</sup> 54 <sup>4f</sup>		74 <sup>3e</sup>	
Poland			67 <sup>3e</sup>	57 <sup>3e</sup> 31 <sup>1d</sup>	71 <sup>3e</sup> 49 <sup>4f</sup>		68 <sup>3e</sup>	
Slovenia			85 <sup>3e</sup>	89 <sup>3e</sup>	na		81 <sup>3e</sup>	
Bulgaria			79 <sup>3e</sup>	72 <sup>3e</sup>	75 <sup>3e</sup> 56 <sup>4f</sup>		78 <sup>3e</sup>	
Romania			90 <sup>3e</sup>	81 <sup>3e</sup>	76 <sup>3e</sup> 81 <sup>4f</sup>		88 <sup>3e</sup>	
<b>7-nation CEE average</b>			<b>81<sup>3e</sup></b>	<b>76<sup>3e</sup></b>	<b>75<sup>3e</sup></b>		<b>79<sup>3e</sup></b>	
Belarus				68 <sup>3e</sup>	57 <sup>3e</sup>		60 <sup>3e</sup>	
Ukraine				58 <sup>3e</sup>	56 <sup>3e</sup> 40 <sup>4f</sup>		39 <sup>3e</sup>	
Russia				49 <sup>5e</sup>	49 <sup>4f</sup>	41 <sup>4f</sup>		
South Korea							65 <sup>1g</sup>	69 <sup>1g</sup> 81 <sup>1g</sup>
South Africa						47 <sup>6h</sup> 72 <sup>7h</sup>		56 <sup>6h</sup>

*Notes:*

Numbered superscript notations indicate the measure of legitimacy as follows:

1. Choose "Democracy is preferable to any other form of government." [vs. "Under some circumstances, an authoritarian regime, a dictatorship, is preferable to a democratic system."]
2. Agree "Democracy is the best system for a country like ours."
3. Disapprove "If parliament was suspended and parties abolished."
4. Support "the aim of introducing democracy in [respondent's country], in which parties compete for government."
5. Disagree "We do not need parliament or elections but instead a strong leader who can make decisions and put them into effect fast."
6. Choose "even when things don't work, democracy is always best." [vs. "when that happens we need a strong leader who does not have to bother with elections."]
7. Agree "Democracy may have its problems, but it is better than any other form of government."

Lettered superscripts indicate sources for data as follows:

- a. 1985 Four-Nation Survey, and Eurobarometer, from José Ramón Montero, Richard Gunther, and Mariano Torcal, "Democracy in Spain: Legitimacy, Discontent, and Disaffection," *Estudio/Working Paper* 1997/100, Centro de Estudios Avanzados en Ciencias Sociales, June 1997, Table 3.
- b. Montero, Gunther, and Torcal, "Democracy in Spain," Tables 1 and 2.
- c. Marta Lagos, "Latin America's Smiling Mask," *Journal of Democracy* 8, no. 3 (July 1997): Table 3.
- d. Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), Tables 10.1, 11.2, 11.4, 13.1, and 14.1, and 16.8.
- e. Richard Rose and Christian Haerpfer, "Change and Stability in the New Democracies Barometer," *Studies in Public Policy* 270, Centre for the Study of Public Policy, University of Strathclyde, 1996, Figure 2.7; and Richard Rose and Evgeny Tikhomirov, "Trends in the New Russia Barometer, 1992-1995," *Studies in Public Policy* 256, 1995, Figure II.4.
- f. Geoffrey Evans and Stephen Whitefield, "The Politics and Economics of Democratic Commitment: Support for Democracy in Transition Societies," *British Journal of Political Science* 25 (1985): Table 1, for 1993; Stephen Whitefield and Geoffrey Evans, "Support for Democracy and Political Opposition in Russia, 1993-1995," *Post-Soviet Affairs* 12, no. 3 (1996): Table 2, for Russia, 1995.
- g. Doh C. Shin and Richard Rose, "Koreans Evaluate Democracy: A New Korea Barometer Survey," *Studies in Public Policy* 292, 1997.
- h. Robert Mattes and Hermann Thiel, "Consolidation and Public Opinion in South Africa," *Journal of Democracy* 9, no. 1 (January 1998): Table 1.

Democratic consolidation is most evident and secure when support for democracy is not only unconditional but widely shared by all major political groups and tendencies. Although citizens on the political right in each country (especially Spain) are more skeptical of the efficacy of democracy and more often willing to entertain an authoritarian regime, in all three countries clear majorities on all five points of the left-right spectrum believe democracy is always preferable, and only small percentages reject both the legitimacy and the efficacy of democracy.<sup>26</sup> In fact, by the

<sup>26</sup> Morlino and Montero, "Legitimacy and Democracy in Southern Europe," pp.236-241. See in particular Table 7.5, p. 241. Rejection of democratic efficacy is indicated by the response, "Our democracy is getting worse, and soon it will not work at all," as opposed to agreeing either that "our democracy works well," or that it "has many

1990s in Spain, “democratic legitimacy was spread fairly evenly throughout society” and ideology did little to explain the variance in this belief.<sup>27</sup> Neither was legitimacy linked to income, education, age, occupation, or religion in any of the three countries.<sup>28</sup> Similarly, across all the principal political parties in each country, clear (and usually very large) majorities see democracy as legitimate and believe that it “works well” in their country.<sup>29</sup>

Two other measures further substantiate the picture of deep and resilient legitimacy - in other words, consolidated democracy - in Southern Europe by the mid-1980s. First, there was little nostalgia for the authoritarian past. By 1985, less than a fifth of citizens in Spain and Portugal and only a tiny fraction in Greece considered the previous authoritarian regime as good on balance. This compares with much higher favorable evaluations of the previous authoritarian regimes in most of the post-communist countries, and in Korea (Table 2). Secondly, the belief in democracy as always preferable was only weakly related to the perception of system efficacy (how well democracy is seen to be working in the country). In none of the three countries did the correlation between these two items exceed. Thus, one could “conclude that efficacy ‘explains’ less than 10 percent of the variance in the diffuse legitimacy variable.”<sup>30</sup>

In other third wave democracies, legitimation has generally not proceeded as far as in Southern Europe. Among the third wave democracies of Latin America, probably only Uruguay could be classified today as “consolidated” (and Linz and Stepan judged it “a ‘risk-prone’ consolidated democracy” at that).<sup>30</sup> Elsewhere in the region, support for democracy either does not reach the two-thirds level that may be taken as a minimum threshold of mass support for democracy

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defects, but it works.”

<sup>27</sup> Maravall, *Regimes, Politics, and Markets*, p. 221.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid, p. 218.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid, p. 249.

<sup>30</sup> *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation*, chapter 10.

in a consolidated regime, or there remain serious doubts about the stability of this support or the depth of elite commitment to the rules of the democratic game.

<b>Table 2. Approval of Previous Authoritarian Regime</b>			
<b>Country and Year</b>	<b>Percent Approving of Authoritarian Regime</b>	<b>Percent Approving of Current Regime</b>	<b>Difference in approval between present &amp; past regime</b>
<b>Southern Europe, 1985, rate authoritarian regime as “mostly good”</b>			
Spain	17		
Portugal	13		
Italy	6		
Greece	6		
<b>Brazil, 1989, rate overall situation better under military than in current regime</b>	46 <sup>1</sup>		
<b>Central and Eastern Europe, 1995</b>			
Czech Republic	24	77	53
Slovakia	52	61	9
Hungary	56	50	-6
Slovenia	36	66	30
Poland	25	76	51
Romania	28	60	32
Bulgaria	58	66	8
Belarus	77	35	-42
Ukraine	75	33	-42
Russia	67	26	-41
Korea	46	21	-25
<p>1. Only 17 percent rated the overall situation better in the current regime of the New Republic, while 28 percent rated the two regimes as equal. Linz and Stepan, <i>Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation</i>, Table 11.3.</p> <p><i>Other sources:</i> For Southern Europe, José R. Montero and Mariano Torcal, “Voters and Citizens in a New Democracy: Some Trend data on Political Attitudes in Spain,” <i>International Journal of Public Opinion Research</i> 2, no. 2 (1990): Table 6. For Central and Eastern Europe, Rose and Haerpfer, “Change and Stability in the New Democracies Barometer.” For Russia, Rose and Tikhomirov, “Trends in the New Russia Barometer, 1992-1995.” For Korea, Shin and Rose, “Koreans Evaluate Democracy: A New Korea Barometer Survey.”</p>			

The 1996 “Latinobarometro” provides the most comprehensive comparative portrait to date of public opinion about democracy in Latin America. It confirms the picture that Linz and Stepan had presented of an Uruguayan public broadly and firmly committed to democracy. Unconditional support for democracy stood at 80 percent in Uruguay in 1996, identical to the stable and long-consolidated democracy in Costa Rica and essentially to Spain (Table 1).<sup>31</sup> Moreover, this support was not new but had been almost as high (73 percent) in 1991 (six years after the transition). At that time, support for democracy was well distributed regionally and across the ideological spectrum, with the political right having the lowest level (69 percent) but one still higher than the corresponding figures for *any* of the Southern European democracies in 1985.<sup>32</sup> This impressive level of support for democracy is only one dimension of what appears to be (along with Costa Rica’s) the most democratic political culture in Latin America. Among the 18 countries in the Latinobarometro (including Spain and Costa Rica) Uruguayans manifest the highest frequencies of satisfaction with democracy (57 percent) and perception of full democracy (34 percent) (see Table 3). They are also the most likely to trust other people in general and (by large margins) to perceive their fellow nationals as honest and law-abiding; indeed, Uruguay appears to be virtually the only democracy in the region that departs from a sweeping “regional heritage of distrust.”<sup>33</sup> Not surprisingly, this mass survey evidence is complemented by numerous indications of convergence toward democratic behavior and what Linz terms “loyalty” to the democratic system on the part of political party elites, and both these attitudinal trends accord with Uruguay’s history of freedom from political crisis since the 1989 referendum approving the government’s amnesty for human rights abuses committed by the previous military regime.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Marta Lagos, “Latin America’s Smiling Mask,” *Journal of Democracy* 8, no. 3 (July 1997): 133, Table 3.

<sup>32</sup> For the Uruguayan data, see Linz and Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition*, pp. 160-161; for the comparative data on ideology and legitimacy, see again Morlino and Montero, “Legitimacy and Democracy in Southern Europe,” p. 241, Table 7.5.

<sup>33</sup> Lagos, “Latin America’s Smiling Mask,” pp. 128-129.

<sup>34</sup> Linz and Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition*, chapter 10. For Linz’s seminal formulation of loyalty to the democratic regime (and its rules, procedures, and norms) as a key foundation for stable democracy, see *The Breakdown of Democratic Regimes*, pp. 27-38.



**Table 3.** *Democratic Commitment and Levels of Democracy in Latin America, 1996*

Country	Support Democracy	Satisfaction Democracy	Defend Democracy	Avg Democ Commitment	Perceive Full Democracy	Freedom Score
Spain	81	57	76	71.3	29	1.5
Costa Rica	80	51	85	72.0	23	1.5
Uruguay	80	52	78	70.0	34	1.5
Argentina	71	34	73	59.3	12	2.5
Panama	75	28	75	59.3	13	2.5
Bolivia	64	25	84	57.7	13	2.5
Venezuela	62	30	74	55.3	16	2.5
Ecuador	52	34	80	55.3	20	3.0
Peru	63	28	75	55.3	14	3.5
Nicaragua	59	23	72	51.3	7	3.0
Colombia	60	16	74	50.0	7	4.0
El Salvador	56	26	60	47.3	10	3.0
Honduras	42	20	80	47.3	13	3.0
Paraguay	59	22	59	46.7	9	3.5
Brazil	50	20	69	46.3	4	3.0
Chile	54	27	53	44.7	10	2.0
Mexico	53	11	66	43.3	10	3.5
Guatemala	51	16	56	41.0	6	3.5

*Source:* Marta Lagos, "Latin America's Smiling Mask," *Journal of Democracy* 8, no. 3, 1997, Table 3, p. 133, and Freedom House, *Freedom in the World: The Annual Survey of Political Rights and Civil Liberties, 1996-1997* (New York: Freedom House, 1997).

*Note:* Support is the percentage agreeing that "democracy is preferable to any other kind of government." Satisfaction is "with the way democracy works in [nation]." Defend democracy is willingness "to defend democracy if it was under threat." Commitment averages these three percentages. Perceive democracy is the percentage who "think that democracy is fully established in [nation]" rather than "it is not fully established and there are still things to be done for there to be a full democracy." Freedom Score is the average combined Freedom House rating on political rights and civil liberties for 1996.

Among Latin American third wave democracies, only Uruguay shows levels of public support for democracy so unambiguously high. Although Argentina and Panama both had more than 70 percent of their publics supporting democracy as the best system in 1996, it is not clear how stable these levels of support will be. In both countries - in fact, in *all* Latin American democracies save for Uruguay and Costa Rica - substantial majorities of the public are dissatisfied “with the way democracy works” in their country, and in Brazil and Venezuela more than a quarter in 1996 said they are “not at all satisfied” (Table 4). Levels of satisfaction with democracy are much more sensitive to fluctuations in short-term economic, social, and political conditions than are public assessments of legitimacy or of system efficacy. And as we see in Table 4, satisfaction with democracy can dip to low levels in consolidated democracies (like those of Southern Europe) as policy effectiveness temporarily wanes. In the case of Italy, dissatisfaction was substantial and prolonged throughout the 1985 to 1993 period. However, high levels of dissatisfaction in Italy were counterbalanced by a deeper perception of some degree of system efficacy, with about two-thirds of Italians saying that democracy works or that “our democracy has many defects, but it works.”<sup>35</sup> Equivalent or higher proportions also perceive some degree of system efficacy in the other three Southern European democracies.

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<sup>35</sup> Morlino and Montero, “Legitimacy and Democracy in Southern Europe,” p. 236. As their data show, even though Italians were markedly more dissatisfied with their democracy than the other three Southern European publics, they were just about as likely (65 percent) as citizens in Spain or Portugal to see their democratic system as working, even if with defects.

**Table 4** *Satisfaction with the Way Democracy Works in the Country, 1985-1996*

<b>A. Southern Europe, Latin America, Korea, and Taiwan</b>				
<b>Country</b>	<b>1985</b>	<b>1989</b>	<b>1993</b>	<b>1996</b>
Portugal	34	60	54 <sup>1</sup>	
Spain	51	60	39 <sup>1</sup>	57
Greece	51	52	45 <sup>1</sup>	
Italy	28	27	32 <sup>1</sup>	
EC average	58	66	41 <sup>1</sup>	
Uruguay				52
Argentina				34
Bolivia				25
Brazil				20
Colombia				16
Chile				27
Ecuador				34
Mexico				11
Peru				28
Venezuela				30
Korea (1997)				49
Taiwan				51 <sup>2</sup>

**B. Central and Eastern Europe**

<b>Country</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>1991</b>	<b>1992</b>	<b>1993</b>	<b>1994</b>
Czech Republic	40	35	40	53	40 <sup>1</sup>
Slovakia	26	17	24	27	19 <sup>1</sup>
Hungary	21	34	23	29	24 <sup>1</sup>
Poland	50	35	37	26 17 <sup>1</sup>	
Bulgaria				25 <sup>1</sup>	
Romania				17 <sup>1</sup>	
Estonia				29 <sup>1</sup>	
Lithuania				23 <sup>1</sup>	
Russia				19 <sup>1</sup>	
Ukraine				12 <sup>1</sup>	
Mean for 9 CEE Countries				29	

- 1 Average levels of satisfaction over time are as follows: Portugal (1985-1991) 63%, Spain (1985-91) 58%, Greece (1980-91) 56%, Italy (1976-91) 24%, EC overall (1976-91) 57%.
  2. This is the mean level of satisfaction recorded in two different surveys in Taiwan in 1996, one showing 60% satisfied and the other 41%.
  3. This item is positive response to the question "How do you feel about the *aim* of introducing democracy in [respondent's country], in which parties compete for power?" Source, Geoffrey Evans and Stephen Whitefield, "The Politics and Economics of Democratic Commitment: Support for Democracy in Transition Societies," *British Journal of Political Science* 25 (1985); and Geoffrey Evans, "Mass Political Attitudes and the Development of Market Democracy in Eastern Europe," Centre for European Studies, Nuffield College, Oxford University, Discussion Paper no. 39, September 1995: Table 1.
- Other Sources:* Leonardo Morlino and José R. Montero, "Legitimacy and Democracy in Southern Europe," in Richard Gunther, P. Nikiforos Diamandouros, and Hans-Jürgen Puhle, eds., *The Politics of Democratic Consolidation: Southern Europe in Comparative Perspective* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995): Table 7.4; Marta Lagos, "Latin America's Smiling Mask," *Journal of Democracy* 8, no. 3, 1997, Table 3; Shin and Rose, "Koreans Evaluate Democracy," National Taiwan University, Department of Political Science, Surveys of Political System and Electoral Behavior (see Table 7 for acknowledgments); Gábor Tóka, "Political Support in East-Central Europe," in Hans-Dieter Klingemann and Dieter Fuchs, eds., *Citizens and the State* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1995): Table 12.3; Rose, Mishler, and Haerpfer, *Testing the Churchill Hypothesis*, Figure 5.1.

A similar measure of system efficacy showed much more skepticism in South America in 1995, with roughly half of the people in each country feeling democracy "does not solve the problems" of the country (Table 5). These levels of skepticism were not much different from those in Spain (where, since 1980, they have fluctuated between 42 and 56 percent on this precise question) but Spain has had higher levels of both legitimacy and satisfaction. In fact, it is precisely the very large gap between high levels of legitimacy and only moderate levels of system efficacy (a gap of 43 percentage points in the capital of Montevideo in 1990) that lead Linz and Stepan to worry that Uruguay's democracy will be "risk-prone" if it cannot demonstrate an ability to formulate some effective policy responses to the country's serious economic and institutional problems.<sup>36</sup> Yet, among Latin America's third wave democracies, only Uruguay has a level of satisfaction with democracy that falls within the historic normal range for Western Europe of 50-60 percent.<sup>37</sup> As survey data accumulate in the coming years, we will learn how much of a problem

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<sup>36</sup> Linz and Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation*, p. 163.

<sup>37</sup> Between 1976 and 1991, the average level of satisfaction with democracy among the 12 EC countries ranged

low levels of satisfaction represent for democratic consolidation in Latin America, and how they fluctuate in response to economic and political developments.

**Table 5.** *System Efficacy: Percent Saying Democracy Works, 1978-1995*

Country	1978	1980	1982	1985	1988	1993	1994	1995
Spain <sup>1</sup>	68	45	55		56	42	50	
Spain <sup>2</sup>				69		75		63
Portugal				68				
Greece				81				
Italy				65				
Uruguay								54
Argentina								53
Chile								48
Brazil								46
Korea (1996)								81

*Items:*

1. "Democracy allows for the solution of our problems" (versus "Democracy does not solve the problems.")
  2. "Democracy works well," or "It has many defects but it works acceptably well," (vs. "It works rather badly.")
- Sources:* José Ramón Montero, Richard Gunther, and Mariano Torcal, "Democracy in Spain: Legitimacy, Efficacy, and Disaffection." Paper presented at the International Conference on *The Erosion of Confidence in Advanced Industrial Democracies*, Brussels, 7-9 November 1996, Tables 3 and 4; Morlino and Montero, "Legitimacy and Democracy in Southern Europe," Table 7.1.

How do these trends in support for and evaluation of democracy compare with those in Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union since the fall of communism? Unfortunately, opinion surveys are only beginning to be standardized across regions.<sup>38</sup> Our

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between 49 and 59 percent, with an overall mean of 57 percent. Only in Northern Ireland and Italy were the fifteen-year national averages below 50 percent. Greece, Spain, and Portugal averaged 56, 58, and 63 percent satisfaction respectively during the 1980s. Fuchs, Guidorossi, and Svensson, "Support for Democracy," pp. 332-334, 337-342.

<sup>38</sup> For an application to Korea of the survey most widely used in the postcommunist world, see Doh C. Shin

comparisons are thus presented tentatively and with caution. Table 1 utilizes as an indicator of democratic legitimacy for the postcommunist states disapproval of the prospect of suspending parliament and abolishing political parties. This has the advantage of being available for each of four years in which the New Democracies Barometer has been conducted since 1991. A more reliable and revealing measure is the percentage of respondents who reject all plausible authoritarian alternatives - army rule, a return to Communist rule, and "getting rid of Parliament and elections in favor of a strong leader." The data on both these measures show divergent trends among two sets of postcommunist states. The seven states of Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) appear to be heading toward democratic consolidation, at least at the level of mass attitudes and norms. However, with the exception of the Baltic states (which are moving toward Europe culturally, politically, and economically), the post-Soviet states are stalled or moving backwards.

In all seven CEE countries, more than two-thirds of the public have consistently (across four annual surveys) said they would disapprove if parliament was suspended and parties were abolished. In six of the seven countries, three-quarters or more now would disapprove of this (Table 1).<sup>39</sup> Somewhat smaller (except in the Czech Republic) but still sizeable majorities reject all three authoritarian alternatives (Table 6), and in each country support for any particular authoritarian alternative is limited. Although earlier surveys found some considerable support (up to 45 percent for getting rid of parliament and elections in favor of a strong leader), sentiment for a "strong man" to solve the countries' problems has visibly diminished, from an average of 39 percent in 1992 to 24 percent in 1995.<sup>40</sup> Moreover, there is strong support for liberal freedoms.

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and Richard Rose, "Koreans Evaluate Democracy: A New Korea Barometer Survey," *Studies in Public Policy*, 292, Centre for the Study of Public Policy, University of Strathclyde, 1997.

<sup>39</sup> For the trend data on all of these questions in Central and Eastern Europe for the four surveys from 1991 to 1995, see Richard Rose and Christian Haerpfer, "Change and Stability in the New Democracies Barometer: A Trend Analysis," *Studies in Public Policy* 270, Centre for the Study of Public Policy, University of Strathclyde, 1996.

<sup>40</sup> Rose and Haerpfer, "Change and Stability," pp. 36-37, Figure 2.8. Between 1992 and 1995, support for the "strong leader" authoritarian option fell from 66 to 22 percent in Bulgaria, from 71 to 29 percent in Slovenia, and from 24 to 12 percent in the Czech Republic.

As early as 1991, large majorities said they would disapprove of placing greater constraints on what newspapers print.<sup>41</sup>

At varying paces and to somewhat varying degrees, the trends in attitudinal support for democracy in Central and Eastern Europe are matched by a stabilization of politics and by an apparent growing elite commitment to the rules of the democratic game. The most important political development in this regard was the defeat of the communist successor party in Romania in 1996 elections and the peaceful, constitutional transition to a more liberal government. By that time, alternation of parties in power had taken place (to one degree or another) in all of these countries (and even though this was less so in the Czech Republic, it had the most liberal government and arguably the regime closest to consolidation). On other measures of attitudes, perceptions, and values as well, the Central and Eastern European countries appear headed toward democratic consolidation, albeit with some caveats or concerns. In each of these seven countries except Poland, “representative democrats” (those consistently committed to the parliamentary process in response to two key questions) constitute two-thirds or more of the public, and if Poles are somewhat more tentative (51 percent “representative democrats”), they also have the highest positive margin of difference in approval of the current regime as opposed to approval of the previous one (Table 6). Levels of satisfaction with democratic performance have been much lower in the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia than in the new Southern European democracies as they progressed toward consolidation, instead resembling the modal response in Latin America (Table 4). But when the question of “how government works” compares the new democracy to the old communist system, all but one of the seven countries are more favorable about democracy, and usually by huge proportions (Table 6). (Hungary is the exception, but it had the

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<sup>41</sup> Max Kaase, “Political Culture and Political Consolidation in Central and Eastern Europe,” *Research on Democracy and Society* 2 (1994), Table 10.

most liberal communist regime, and Hungarians are second highest in rejecting undemocratic alternatives.)<sup>42</sup>

In Russia, and especially Belarus and Ukraine, support for democracy is much more limited. In each of these countries, majorities of the public (51 percent in Russia, 56 percent in Belarus, 67 percent in Ukraine, compared to an average of only 24 percent in the seven countries of Central and Eastern Europe) would support terminating parliament and elections in favor of a strong leader, and larger minorities than in CEE (generally about a quarter) support a return to communist rule. In fact, by 1995, fully three-quarters of the public in both Belarus and Ukraine and two-thirds in Russia looked back favorably on the old communist regimes.<sup>43</sup> In Belarus and Ukraine, in contrast to CEE, support for abolishing parties and parliament has actually increased, and by 1995 only 39 percent of Ukrainians said they would disapprove of that (Table 1).<sup>44</sup> Similarly, in Russia between 1993 and 1995 support for the general aim of building democracy declined from 49 to 41 percent, and positive evaluations of the *actual practice* of democracy declined from an already anemic 19 percent to 14 percent.<sup>45</sup> In each of these three post-Soviet countries, the old communist regime is much more popular than the current one, and democracy is still a very long way from consolidation. While normative commitment to democracy played a vital role in motivating mass opposition to

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<sup>42</sup> Rose, Mishler, and Haerpfer, *Testing the Churchill Hypothesis*, chapter 5.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid, p. 23, Figure 2.1; Richard Rose and Evgeny Tikhomirov, "Trends in the New Russia Barometer, 1992-1995," *Studies in Public Policy*, 256, Centre for the Study of Public Policy, University of Strathclyde, 1995, p. 17, Table II.1.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid, pp. 34-37, Figures 2.7 and 2.8; Richard Rose and William Mishler, "What Are the Alternatives to Democracy in Post-Communist Societies," *Studies in Public Policy* 248, 1995, p. 12, Table 1; Rose and Tikhomirov, "Trends in the New Russia Barometer, 1992-1995," pp. 24-25, Figure II.2. Although Rose and Tikhomirov emphasized the lack of clear support for any particular authoritarian alternative, their Spring 1995 survey actually detected some trends of decline in support for democracy, which was not at very high levels to begin with. The proportion of "democrats," who evaluated the current regime positively but not the pre-perestroika communist regime, fell from 21% in 1994 to 7%. Reactionaries (the reverse) increased from 36 to 48%. The percentage saying "we should try some other system of government," if the current one "can't produce results soon" increased from 55% in 1994 to 68%.

<sup>45</sup> Stephen Whitefield and Geoffrey Evans, "Support for Democracy and Political Opposition in Russia, 1993-1995," *Post-Soviet Affairs* 12, no. 3 (1996): Tables 2 and 5.



the August 1991 coup attempt in the Soviet Union,<sup>46</sup> the recent trends in public opinion foreshadowed the slide to outright dictatorship in Belarus and point ominously toward a similar vulnerability in Ukraine and Russia. These data help us to understand why, outside the Baltics, none of the other twelve former republics of the Soviet Union is “free” and only four are electoral democracies.<sup>47</sup>

**Table 6.** *Democratic Commitment and Levels of Democracy in Central and Eastern Europe, 1995 and Korea, 1997*

Country	Rejection of all Authoritarian Alternatives	Approve Current Regime minus Approve Old Regime	Representative Democrats	1995 Freedom Score
Czech Republic	80%	49%	75%	1.5
Slovakia	71%	9%	69%	2.5
Hungary	69%	-6%	65%	1.5
Slovenia	68%	30%	69%	2.5
Poland	63%	51%	51%	1.5
Romania	61%	32%	66%	3.5
Bulgaria	55%	8%	65%	2.0
Belarus	31%	-42%	36%	5.0
Ukraine	23%	-42%	22%	3.5
Russia	n.a.	-41%	n.a.	3.5
Korea	70%	-25%	65%	2.0

<sup>46</sup> James L. Gibson, “Mass Opposition to the Soviet Putsch of August 1991: Collective Action, Rational Choice, and Democratic Values in the Former Soviet Union,” *American Political Science Review* 91, no. 3 (September 1997): 671-684.

<sup>47</sup> Adrian Karatnycky, “Freedom on the March,” in Freedom House, *Freedom in the World: Political Rights and Civil Liberties, 1996-1997* (New York: Freedom House, 1997), p. 10.

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Source: Richard Rose and Christian Haerpfer, "New Democracies Barometer IV: A 10-Nation Survey," *Studies in Public Policy* 262, Centre for the Study of Public Policy, University of Strathclyde, 1996; Rose and Haerpfer, "Change and Stability in the New Democracies Barometer," *Studies in Public Policy* 270; Doh C. Shin and Richard Rose, "Koreans Evaluate Democracy: A New Democracy Barometer Survey," *Studies in Public Policy* 292; and private communication from Doh C. Shin.

Note to Table 6: Rejection is of all three authoritarian alternatives: army rule, a return to Communist rule, and "to get rid of Parliament and elections in favor of a strong leader who can quickly decide everything." Relative approval is the percent approving of the current regime minus the percent approving of the previous communist regime. "Representative democrats" (as Rose and Haerpfer term them) prefer parliamentary democracy to a "strong leader" and disapprove of the suspension of parliament and abolition of parties.

Over the past decade or two, political attitudes and values have been extensively surveyed in both Korea and Taiwan. Most of these surveys measure legitimacy with markedly different questions from those above. However, a recent (1997) application of the (postcommunist) New Democracies Barometer to South Korea shows comparatively strong levels of support for democracy in Korea. Eighty-one percent of Koreans would disapprove if parliament was suspended and parties abolished - a very high proportion that slightly exceeds the average for the seven democracies of Central and Eastern Europe. And measuring legitimacy with the question used in the Latinobarometer- whether "democracy is preferable to any other form of government" - shows a level of support for democracy (69 percent) higher than in most Latin American countries (Table 1). This strong support for democracy holds across a number of questions. Seventy-eight percent agree that, "The best way of choosing our government is an election that gives every voter a choice of candidates and parties."<sup>48</sup> Ninety-two percent endorse (at least "somewhat") "the idea of democracy" in principle.<sup>49</sup> Seventy-two percent of Koreans reject both of the plausible authoritarian options (army or strong-man rule), a proportion that again compares favorably with most postcommunist countries (Table 6).<sup>50</sup> Moreover, the preference for democracy has risen since the beginning of the decade and now holds firm at a rather high level. On a ten-point scale with

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<sup>48</sup> Shin and Rose, "Koreans Evaluate Democracy," p. 11.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid, p. 21.

<sup>50</sup> Doh Chull Shin, "The Evolution of Popular Support for Democracy During the Kim Young Sam Government." Paper presented to the Hoover Institution Conference on "Institutional Reform and Democratic Consolidation in Korea," Stanford, California, January 8-9, 1998, Table 6.

1 representing “complete dictatorship” and 10 “complete democracy,” the mean level of democracy desired by Koreans rose from 6.8 in November 1991 to 8.4 exactly two years later. In three surveys over the subsequent four years, it has remained between 8.4 and 8.6.<sup>51</sup>

However, support for democracy in Korea does seem to have eroded somewhat with the perceived poor performance of the Kim Young Sam government. At the time of writing, it is still too soon to tell how attitudes about democracy will be affected by the financial collapse that gripped Korea at the end of 1997. But even by mid-1997, following continued revelations of large-scale corruption (one involving President Kim’s son), the belief that democracy was suitable for Korea had fallen thirteen percentage points in three years, to 63 percent.<sup>52</sup> This is still a substantial majority. However, when democracy is evaluated not as an abstract principle or ideal for the country, but as a concrete regime and its functioning relative to past ones, support for democracy in Korea further declines. In particular, Koreans in mid-1997 expressed considerable disenchantment with the workings of their own democracy. Almost half of Koreans had a favorable view of the authoritarian “system of government under the presidency of Chun Doo Whan.” Only a quarter viewed the system under Kim Young Sam favorably, a negative balance that is in marked contrast to the pattern among the CEE countries (Tables 2 and 6). In fact, when offered the concrete alternative of “dictatorial rule like that of a strong leader like Park Chung-Hee,” the rejection of an authoritarian alternative melted away. Fully two-thirds of Koreans in 1997 (up from 61 percent in 1994) felt a dictator like Park “would be much better than a democracy to handle the serious problems facing the country these days.” Eighty-five percent rated political corruption under Kim Young Sam “high” or “very high” and a stunning 96 percent blamed him “a lot” or “somewhat” “for our country’s political problems.” Given these numbers, it may seem surprising

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<sup>51</sup> Shin and Rose, “New Korea Barometer,” p. 24; Doh Chull Shin and Huoyan Shyu, “Political Ambivalence in South Korea and Taiwan,” *Journal of Democracy* 8, no. 3 (July 1997): 112-113.

<sup>52</sup> Shin, “The Evolution of Popular Support for Democracy.” Belief in the suitability of democracy is indicated when respondents choose a point from 6 to 10 on a ten-point scale. See Shin and Rose, “New Korea Barometer,” p. 25.

that more than half the public in 1996 was satisfied “with the way democracy works in Korea,” a proportion roughly equivalent to Spain and Greece in 1985 and Uruguay in 1996 (and considerably greater than most Latin American democracies) (Table 4). However, by 1997 that proportion had plummeted to 36 percent.<sup>53</sup> Taken together, these data indicate overall progress toward legitimation of democracy at the mass level, but also some elements of decay, instability, reservation, and even contradiction.

The ambivalence in Koreans’ support for democracy is underscored by their responses to several questions that have been asked repeatedly in Taiwan to assess public attitudes toward political pluralism and democracy. Only 39 percent of Koreans (in 1997) and 43 percent of Taiwanese (in 1996) disagreed with the proposition, “If a government is often restrained by an assembly, it will be unable to achieve great things.” Again 39 percent of Koreans and 40 percent of Taiwanese (in 1993) disagreed that “We can leave things to morally upright leaders.” Only 34 percent of Koreans and 43 percent of Taiwanese (in 1996) disagreed that “Too many competing groups would undermine social harmony.”<sup>54</sup> On each of these items, majorities of the public in both countries gave responses embracing nondemocratic values or beliefs.

However, just as there are positive signs of democratic value change in Korea, so there are in Taiwan as well. On some measures, majorities of Taiwan’s public still manifest the fear of disorder and the preference for communal harmony over individual freedom that Pye takes to be generally characteristic of Asian attitudes toward power and authority (and, much more polemically, that Lee Kuan Yew has identified as quintessential Confucian or East Asian values).<sup>55</sup> However, what is most striking about Taiwan is the generally steady increase since

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<sup>53</sup> Shin, “The Evolution of Popular Support for Democracy,” Figure 4.

<sup>54</sup> Question wording was slightly different in Taiwan but still comparable. For the Korean data and response wording, see Shin and Rose, “Koreans Evaluate Democracy,” pp. 19-20. For the data and wording from the Taiwanese questionnaire, see Table 7.

<sup>55</sup> In his famous interview in *Foreign Affairs* (“Culture is Destiny,” March-June 1994, pp. 109-126), Lee Kuan Yew rejected the notion of a single Asian model, but the interview is full of generalizations about nondemocratic values that are “widely shared in East Asia” (p. 113).

democratization began in the mid-1980s in the proportions of the public expressing pro-democratic sentiment - and rejecting the paternalistic, collectivist, illiberal norms associated with the “Asian values” perspective. Between 1985 and 1991, support for authoritarian political norms declined substantially. On some measures, the change was huge: from 49 to 81 percent rejecting the notion that “elders should manage politics,” and from 34 to 78 percent disagreeing that “many political parties lead to bad politics.” The steady growth in liberal value orientations - driven over time both by modernization and by political liberalization - contradicts notions of a stable political culture rooted in traditional values and reproduced through early socialization experience.<sup>56</sup>

Different survey data, covering a longer time period, elaborate the picture of a political culture undergoing a process of democratic transformation. In tracking five dimensions of democratic belief and commitment (with a total of 11 different measures) between 1984 and 1993, Fu and Chu concluded that beliefs about political legitimacy overall conform “more to the modern authoritarian than democratic typology.”<sup>57</sup> Yet, as they note, support for political equality was high from the beginning, and endorsement of popular sovereignty rose dramatically from 1984 to 1993. Moreover, several beliefs are continuing to become more democratic. Table 7 shows substantial growth over little more than a decade in a number of democratic orientations. Taiwan’s citizens are markedly less likely today to fear political and social differences and to defer to government. On seven of the ten measures in Table 7, majorities now manifest a pluralist, democratic orientation, and on the other three, democratic norms have increased since the mid-1980s. On the

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<sup>56</sup> William L. Parish and Charles Chi-hsiang Chang, “Political Values in Taiwan: Sources of Change and Constancy,” in Hung-mao Tien, ed., *Taiwan’s Electoral Politics and Democratic Transition: Riding the Third Wave* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1996), pp. 27-41. The evolution of political values is part of a much larger process of cultural change in Taiwan as a result of modernization and integration with the West. For example, such traditional Confucian values as unconditional filial piety, nepotism, fatalism, conformity, and male primacy have eroded to the point where only a quarter of 16 traditional value statements find majority agreement in Taiwan. By huge majorities, Taiwanese disagree that one should always favor a relative or friend, or do what parents say, or that it is better to have a son than a daughter. Huoyan Shyu, “Neo-Traditionalism in a Modernizing Confucian Society: Value Change in Taiwan.” Paper presented to the 1995 Meeting of the Association of Asian Studies, Washington, D.C., April 6-9.

<sup>57</sup> Hu Fu and Yun-han Chu, “Neo-Authoritarianism, Polarized Conflict and Populism in a Newly Democratizing Regime: Taiwan’s Emerging Mass Politics,” *Journal of Contemporary China* 5, no. 11 (1996): 31.

one norm that has remained basically stable, the vast majority rejects the notion that women should play a lesser role in politics. An analysis merging six of the measures in Table 7 into a four-point scale of democratic orientation found that the most authoritarian category of response declined from 44 percent in 1984 to 15 percent in 1996, while the most democratic category increased from 12 percent to 34 percent.<sup>58</sup>

The evolution of political culture in Taiwan is particularly impressive when one recalls that martial law was lifted only in July 1987 (about the time of the survey conducted that year); the first multiparty national election did not take place until 1989; the first comprehensive reelection of the Legislative Yuan did not occur until 1992; and direct election of the President was only introduced in 1996.<sup>59</sup> The data for 1987 show a surge of democratic sentiment on some measures with the lifting of martial law. As democracy matures, public sentiment sobers on some questions, such as what government can accomplish in the face of a strong legislature (which Taiwan now has). But even in the mid-1990s, values have become more democratic. And the public has consistently favored the expansion of democracy since the breakthrough democratic reform electing a new National Assembly to amend the Constitution in 1991.<sup>60</sup> All of this attitudinal change reflects the steady growth in Taiwan of an “ideological marketplace” permitting vigorous debate on a wide range of issues, policies, and philosophies, from national identity to human rights to the environment to the very structure of the political system.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Huoyan Shyu, “Empowering the People: The Role of Elections in Taiwanese Democratization,” paper presented to the 1997 Copenhagen Workshop on “Power and Authority in the Political Cultures: East Asia and the Nordic Countries Compared,” the Nordic Institute of Asian Studies, Copenhagen, Denmark, October 13-19, Table 3.

<sup>59</sup> For excellent overviews of these milestones in Taiwan’s democratic development, see Hung-mao Tien, “Taiwan’s Transformation,” in Larry Diamond, Marc F. Plattner, Yun-han Chu and Hung-mao Tien, eds., *Consolidating the Third Wave Democracies: Regional Challenges* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), pp. 123-161; and Linda Chao and Ramon H. Myers, *The First Chinese Democracy: Political Life in the Republic of China on Taiwan* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998), especially Chart 2, page 13.

<sup>60</sup> Shin and Shyu, “Political Ambivalence,” pp. 114-115.

<sup>61</sup> This is a major insight of Chao and Myers, *The First Chinese Democracy*.

**Table 7. Trends in Democratic Attitudes in Taiwan, 1984-1996**

Survey Item	1984	1987	1990	1993	1996
Disagree: Different opinions lead to chaos*	24%	34%	35%	34%	40%
Disagree: Too many groups lead to chaos*	25	36	38	49	43
Disagree: Too many parties lead to chaos*	24	32	33	49	53
Disagree: Government can't act with strong legislature*	37	47	38	47	43
Disagree: Government should decide what issues are allowed*	42	55	49	60	65
Disagree: All matters should be decided by government	44	59	-	67	72
Disagree: Women shouldn't participate	81	87	79	83	81
Disagree: Judges should accept executive opinions*	45	57	53	60	57
Disagree: Society is already democratic enough			44 <sup>1</sup>	51	53
Agree: Opposition improves politics			56 <sup>1</sup>	69	67
Democratic orientation on the Shyu scale <sup>2</sup>	12	27	27	32	34

\* Items in Shyu's scale of democratic orientations. See Huoyan Shyu, "Empowering the People. The Role of Elections in Taiwanese Democratization."

<sup>1</sup>Figure is for 1991.

<sup>2</sup>Each item on the scale is scored from +3 (strongly disagree) to -3 (strongly agree with the authoritarian item). The total scale thus ranges from +18 to -18. Respondents were distributed into four categories on the scale. Authoritarian is -18 to -6, democratic is +6 to +18.

Source: National Taiwan University, Department of Political Science, Surveys of Political System and Electoral Behavior, directed by Professor Hu Fu, supported by the National Science Council of the Republic of China.

Wording of Questionnaire Items (as translated, with slight variations over time):

Percentage saying they strongly, moderately, or slightly disagree (or agree, as indicated above) with the following:

"Everyone's thinking should be in the same vein, otherwise society won't be stable"

"In any place (society), if groups proliferate everywhere, it will influence stability and tranquility in that place."

"If a country has too many political parties, it will influence (impede) political stability."

"If the government is often checked by the legislature, it can't possibly accomplish great things."

"Whether or not a concept should be allowed to flow through society should be decided by the government."

"Government executives are the equivalent of the head of a household - all matters large or small should be decided by them."

"Women shouldn't participate in political activities like men do."

"When judges rule on important cases which influence law and order, they should accept the opinions of executive organs."

"Our society is already democratic enough, we really shouldn't be greedy for more."

"Politics will only improve if there is a strong opposition party."

Weighing the trends in public opinion about democracy over the past decade, Shin and Shyu find “political ambivalence” in both fledgling East Asian democracies. There is support for the ideal of democracy in Korea and Taiwan, but values and beliefs are not fully democratic, and much traditional suspicion of the slow, uncertain “give and take” of the democratic process persists. Even with the financial crisis and economic depression that has befallen South Korea, there seems little prospect of a reversion to outright authoritarian rule. And there are clear signs of growth in mass democratic commitment. Yet at the level of mass political culture, democracy has yet to become consolidated. “Obviously, eight years of democratic rule have not enabled a majority of the Taiwanese and Korean peoples to overcome the authoritarian political tendencies in which they have long been socialized. Consequently, they still live in a state of political ambivalence—desiring freedom from political oppression while simultaneously wanting to be ruled by a strong leader.”<sup>62</sup> Part of the reason, they speculate, may be because, in contrast to Latin America and the former communist states, the authoritarian regimes in South Korea and Taiwan were successful in bringing economic development, and in their later years, more restrained in their use of blatant repression.

My own interpretation is more optimistic. Even if democracy does not enjoy such enormous legitimacy “by default” as in other regions, a gradual rooting of democracy in mass beliefs and practices is now occurring in South Korea and Taiwan. If it lags behind the pace of cultural change in Southern Europe, it is nevertheless following the same trajectory. After all, the percentage embracing democracy as always preferable was only 49 percent in Spain in 1980 (Table 1), but rose to 70 percent by 1985. Although democratic orientations and demands were more fully formed in Spain by the time of the transition, there, too, they evolved over time from a more authoritarian culture and continued to grow after the transition.<sup>63</sup> In processes of democratization, political

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<sup>62</sup> Shin and Shyu, “Political Ambivalence,” p. 117.

<sup>63</sup> In 1966, only 35 percent of Spaniards said “decisions should be taken by a group of people elected by the citizens” (as opposed to a single person deciding). This democratic response grew to 60 percent in 1974 and to 78 percent by May 1976 (six months after the death of Franco), after which it levelled off. More qualitative evidence suggests a majority political culture during the Franco era that was illiberal, “defensive and authoritarian,” yet in 1973,



learning occurs beyond the elite level. Democratic change in mass political culture occurs not just through the socialization of new generations but also through the *resocialization* of old ones. Any viable model of political culture dynamics must appreciate the lifelong character of the political socialization process, and thus the potential even for quite mature citizens to adapt their political beliefs and preferences in response to actual experience.<sup>64</sup> Democratic culture change in Korea (and Taiwan) may be set back by economic crisis or political turmoil. In any case, it will probably continue to be slow and uneven, and will no doubt leave distinctive features that do not mirror North American or European political beliefs. Nevertheless, the prediction that “remolding authoritarian cultural norms... may take several generations” seems too pessimistic.<sup>65</sup> Given the enormous cultural and institutional changes the two countries have undergone in the past decade, it is not too much to expect that another decade may bring the consolidation of democracy at the level of mass beliefs and values, if democracy continues to function in a reasonably democratic and even modestly effective manner.

Of the regions experiencing democratization during the third wave, Africa has been the least systematically surveyed. However, the largest and most influential democracy in Africa, South Africa, has been the subject of intensive public opinion study in the last few years. Those surveys show a mixed picture. A measure of legitimacy somewhat comparable to (but slightly more demanding than) “democracy is always preferable” shows increasing, and now majority, support for democracy in South Africa. The proportion of South Africans saying that democracy is always

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as that era was ending, pollsters were beginning to find support for various political freedoms among large majorities of the public. José Ramón Montero and Mariano Torcal, “Voters and Citizens in a New Democracy: Some Trend Data on Political Attitudes in Spain,” *International Journal of Public Opinion Research* 2, no. 2 (1990): 119-120.

<sup>64</sup> This emphasis on adult political learning figures prominently in the works of José Ramón Montero and his colleagues (cited above) and of Rose, Mishler, and Haerpfer, *Testing the Churchill Hypothesis*. And even stronger versions of political culture theory recognize some scope for adult resocialization. See Gabriel A. Almond, “The Study of Political Culture,” in Almond, *A Divided Discipline: Schools and Sects in Political Science* (Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1990); and Harry Eckstein, “A Culturalist Theory of Political Change,” *American Political Science Review* 82, no. 2 (September 1988).

<sup>65</sup> Shin and Shyu, “Political Ambivalence,” p. 122.

best, even when it does not work, rose from 47 percent in 1995 to 56 percent in 1997. However, during those two years, there was a dramatic racial bifurcation in beliefs. While in 1995 Whites and Blacks had both been about at the national average, two years later Black support for democracy had increased to 61 percent while white support had declined to 39 percent.<sup>66</sup> Support for democracy is also heavily correlated with political party (which is also correlated with race). Fully two-thirds of black supporters of the ruling African National Congress affirm the legitimacy of democracy, while only a quarter of white supporters of the conservative Freedom Front do so. The pattern of racial and party difference in political opinions and evaluations holds across a number of other measures. Satisfaction with democracy, trust in political institutions, and related assessments are all heavily correlated with race and to a lesser extent with party. Blacks are more likely to be satisfied and positive about how democracy is doing, whites much less so.<sup>67</sup> Yet mean black levels of satisfaction with democracy are significantly higher than they were in Central and Eastern Europe at a comparable period of time after the transition.<sup>68</sup>

### *Explaining Support for Democracy*

What causes public commitment to democracy? This is one of the most important analytical challenges in understanding democratic consolidation, and one of the most difficult. As I have already suggested above, support for democracy is not strongly correlated with a perception

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<sup>66</sup> Among the small Asian population, support for democracy plummeted, from 55 to 27 percent. Robert Mattes and Hermann Thiel, "Consolidation and Public Opinion in South Africa," *Journal of Democracy* 9, no. 1 (January 1998): Table 1, p. 100.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid, Table 2.

<sup>68</sup> The mean score on the four point scale of satisfaction (with 4 being "very satisfied") was 2.75 for black ANC supporters and 2.41 for black supporters of the rival Inkatha Freedom Party. This compares with overall means of 1.9 for Poland, 2.0 for Hungary, 2.1 for Slovakia, and 2.5 for the Czech Republic in 1993. Toka, "Political Support in East-Central Europe," Table 12.2, p. 362.

of its systemic efficacy, or with satisfaction with its near-term performance. Yet measures of efficacy and satisfaction typically capture - or are interpreted as capturing - the performance of the system in dealing with economic and social policy problems. A growing accumulation of evidence from a wide range of countries and regions suggests that in forming beliefs about regime legitimacy, citizens weigh independently - and much more heavily - the *political* performance of the system, in particular, the degree to which it delivers on its promise of freedom and democracy.

One source of support for this thesis is an innovative analysis by Shin and McDonough of what causes change over time in Koreans' beliefs about the suitability of democracy. The most powerful predictor of growth in the belief that democracy is suitable for Korea was not the assessment of economic performance (neither their own personal condition nor how they judged the country to be doing). Neither was it their personal (egocentric) or national (sociotropic) assessment of change in the quality of life. Rather it was a scale of measures of democratic political experience. And of these, the single most powerful measure was individuals' perception of change in the character of the regime from the military authoritarian era to the present. The more substantially democratic individuals judged the country to have become, the greater was the increase in how "suitable" or appropriate they judged democracy for the country. The next most powerful predictor was satisfaction with the way democracy works in Korea. The more satisfied they were, the greater was their increase in support for democracy. Thus, while assessments of economic conditions (and slightly more so, of changes in the quality of life) significantly affected change in this support for "democracy-in-practice," the growth of this dimension of legitimacy in Korea has much more to do with how *democratically* the system is perceived to be functioning, and how effectively in general. From this, Shin and McDonough infer that a "political learning" model of democratic practice and internalization best explains change in support for democracy.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> Shin and McDonough, "The Dynamics of Popular Reactions to Democratization in Korea." External efficacy, the perception that government has an effect on them as individuals, also emerged as a significant element of "democratic experience" affecting change in support for democracy.

Evidence from public opinion surveys in South Africa points more suggestively in the same direction. There appears to be “a close association between people’s beliefs about ethics and corruption on one hand, and their views on parliament and democracy.” Of those who believe that “almost all officials” are corrupt, only 22 percent are satisfied with democracy. As perceptions of corruption abate, the level rises, to 51 percent satisfied for those seeing “a few officials” as corrupt and 68 percent for those who believe no officials are corrupt.<sup>70</sup> Assessments of the performance of parliament and of the national government, and a wide variety of other political factors, such as the feeling that “government represents people like me,” are also strongly associated with satisfaction with democracy.<sup>71</sup> To be sure, satisfaction is not the same as legitimacy, but perceptions of corruption and unresponsiveness have similar effects on democratic satisfaction in Spain, and when such public cynicism combines with economic crisis it “can lead to a serious erosion of legitimacy and a tendency towards demagogic economic policies.”<sup>72</sup>

Two different studies of support for democracy in the postcommunist world confirm the thesis of the causal primacy of political factors. Rose, Mishler, and Haerpfer analyzed through multiple regression analysis the determinants of two measures of regime support in nine Central and Eastern European countries: rejection of all authoritarian alternatives (see above) and positive evaluations of the current regime on their “heaven/hell” scale of minus 100 to plus 100.<sup>73</sup> For

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<sup>70</sup> “Parliamentary Ethics and Government Corruption: Playing with Public Trust,” Institute for Democracy in South Africa (IDASA), *Public Opinion Service Reports* No. 3 (February 1996), pp. 12-13.

<sup>71</sup> “The Public’s View of Parliament, IDASA, *Public Opinion Service Reports* No. 1 (February 1996), especially Appendix II, p. 11.

<sup>72</sup> Maravall, *Regimes, Politics, and Markets*, p. 239.

<sup>73</sup> The evaluation of the current regime appears similar in wording to measures of satisfaction with how democracy is working, but in the patterns of response by country it is closer to measures of legitimacy. The responses in 1993 on “satisfaction with the way democracy works,” regime approval, and rejection of all authoritarian alternatives were as follows:

rejection of authoritarian alternatives, a battery of eight political attitudes and evaluations explains substantially more of the variance (19.3%) than does a set of nine objective and subjective economic measures (14.3%). When this measure of support for democracy is regressed on all these 17 measures simultaneously, five of the political variables and four of the economic prove significant. The two most powerful determinants of support for democracy are political: first, a negative evaluation of the former Communist regime, and next the perception of greater political freedom in the current regime. A third political variable, patience, has about as strong an effect as any economic variable. The patient, who believe it will take years for government to deal with the problems inherited from communist rule, are twice as likely to support democracy as those who are “definitely” impatient. This pattern of causation holds when objective measures of a country’s political context are included in a regression with 27 variables. Political variables remain the most powerful factors (accounting altogether for more than half of the total variance explained), and of the four objective country variables, the three political measures are each more powerful than the economic one (change in GDP). Moreover, the objective indicators reinforce the subjective. The degree of increase on the Freedom House rating of freedom in the world has an independent positive effect on legitimacy. And the single most powerful predictor of democratic orientation (strongly negative) is the political experience of having been part of the Soviet Union. Still, it is important to recognize that in postcommunist Europe (as in Korea) economic experiences and perceptions are not irrelevant to the growth of democratic legitimacy. Absolute deprivation (of necessary food, heat, or electricity in the past year) in particular depresses support for democracy.

Country	Satisfaction with democracy	Approve Current Regime	Disapprove suspension of parliament
Czech Republic	53%	78%	72%
Hungary	29	51	70
Poland	26	69	71
Slovakia	27	52	76
Sources: for satisfaction, Gabor Toka, “Political Support in East-Central Europe,” in Klingemann and Fuchs, <i>Citizens and the State</i> , Table 12.3, pp. 364-365; Rose and Haerpfer, “Change and Stability in the New Democracies Barometer,” Figures 2.1 and 2.7.			

To a lesser but still significant extent, higher household income and future expectations for the household and macro economy increase support for democracy.<sup>74</sup>

For the second measure of regime support, approval of the “present system of governing with many parties and free elections,” the single most powerful predictor is in fact economic, the evaluation of the current economic system (with evaluations of the old economic system, expectations for the future, and change in GDP also showing significant effects). But many more political variables than economic ones have a significant effect, and these effects are remarkably robust, no matter how the regression test is structured. In particular, both the reality and the individual perception of increased political freedom have independent and relatively sizeable positive effects on regime approval, and political efficacy and trust in institutions are equally significant. Only slightly smaller is the positive effect of the perception of increased fairness.<sup>75</sup> In Russia, especially, the widespread perception that privileged ties to the state are unfairly benefiting a narrow, parasitic capitalist elite is suppressing the growth of popular support for the new democracy. In fact, the Russian state is heavily penetrated by super-rich monopolies and organized crime, and this derives from the objective weakness of democratic institutions - parties, labor, civil society, the judicial system.<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> Rose, Mishler, and Haerpfer, *Testing the Churchill Hypothesis*, Tables 7.1, 8.4, and 9.2. The standardized regression coefficients (betas) for the combined test of economic and political influences in their most complete model (Table 9.2) were: evaluation of Communist regime (-.19), more perceived freedom now (.14), patience (.11), and destitution (-.09). Trust in institutions, income, future expectations of household finance, and future expectations for the national economy had significant but weaker effects (.03 to .06). For the data on political patience, see also Richard Rose and William Mishler, “Political Patience in Regime Transformation: A Comparative Analysis of Post-Communist Citizens,” *Studies in Public Policy* 274, Centre for the Study of Public Policy, University of Strathclyde, p. 28, Table 4.

<sup>75</sup> Rose, Mishler and Haerpfer, *Testing the Churchill Hypothesis*, Tables 7.1, 8.4, and 9.2. The “increased fairness” item measured whether the current regime was regarded as better, equal or worse than the previous one in “treating everybody equally and fairly.”

<sup>76</sup> Michael McFaul, “Russia: Transition without Consolidation,” in *Freedom in the World: The Annual Survey of Political Rights and Civil Liberties 1996-1997*, (New York: Freedom House, 1997), pp. 14-25.

Using data for a different measure than Rose's (support for "the *aim* of introducing democracy"), the same year (1993), and an overlapping set of countries (four CEE countries, Ukraine, and now Russia, Estonia, and Lithuania), Evans and Whitefield find that political beliefs and perceptions - in particular, positive evaluation of "the actual practice of democracy" in the country - explain considerably more of the variance in support for democracy than do evaluations of economic circumstances. Moreover, the effect of economic evaluations virtually disappears when support "for the *aim* of creating a market economy" is added to the regression model. Reinforcing the findings of other studies, they thus conclude that "people support democracies 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.'"<sup>77</sup>

Data from the Latinobarometro are also consistent with this theoretical interpretation. If we join Marta Lagos in averaging three responses - support for democracy, willingness to defend democracy, and satisfaction with the way democracy works - into a scale of democratic commitment, we find that levels of democratic commitment appear closely associated with levels of democracy. The three countries that rank clearly highest - and are consolidated democracies - Costa Rica, Spain, and Uruguay, also have the most liberal average freedom scores in 1996 (Table 3) from the Freedom House annual ratings. Levels of democratic support and overall commitment tend to decline with lower freedom scores, and the lowest democratic support levels are in the least democratic countries, Mexico and Guatemala (both of which had lower freedom scores prior to 1996).

The two exceptions to this pattern are telling. Colombia (which has plummeted to the lowest Freedom Score of any South American democracy) shows middling levels of democratic

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<sup>77</sup> Geoffrey Evans and Stephen Whitefield, "The Politics and Economics of Democratic Commitment: Support for Democracy in Transition Societies," *British Journal of Political Science* 25 (1995): 503. Their conclusion closely parallels Weil's, in analyzing the survey evidence for the U.S., Britain, France, Germany, Italy, and Spain: "Citizens judge democracy less by what it 'gives' them than by whether it presents them with real (but not polarized) alternatives and responds to their choices." "The Sources and Structures of Legitimation," p. 699.

support. That they are not lower may be due to the country's four decades of formal democracy. However, Colombia also has the second lowest level of satisfaction with "the way democracy works" (second only to Mexico, which did not begin to cross the threshold to electoral democracy until the July 1997 mid-term elections). A more striking exception is Chile, which is near the bottom in democratic support and overall commitment, even though it has the second most liberal freedom score. This skepticism seems to derive from two factors: the persistence of a pro-authoritarian element which views with favor General Pinochet's past military rule and supports his continued institutional role in politics; and broader popular frustration with the "authoritarian institutional lags" - including General Pinochet's continued command of the Army and the military's constitutional role in government seven years after the transition to democracy.<sup>78</sup> In fact, as Linz and Stepan argue, the interlocking system of prerogatives for the military and its civilian appointees, embedded in Pinochet's 1980 constitution, so constrains the authority of elected governments and so insulates the military from democratic control that, until it "is removed or greatly diminished, the Chilean transition cannot be completed, and, by definition, Chilean democracy cannot be consolidated."<sup>79</sup> Chile's freedom score thus understates an institutional problem with its democracy that is deeply felt by its citizens and that continues to divide the society.

This returns us to the relationship between democratic deepening and democracy. Given wide disenchantment with corruption and "money politics" around the world, most citizens of most new democracies would not be inclined to think they have attained "full democracy." As we see in Table 3, the percentages in Latin America who believe their country has achieved "full democracy" are generally low, but they are higher in those countries with higher levels of

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<sup>78</sup> Lagos, "Latin America's Smiling Mask." See also her "The Latinobarometro: Media and Political Attitudes in South America." Paper presented to the 1996 Meeting of the American Political Science Association, August 29-September 1, San Francisco.

<sup>79</sup> *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation*, p. 210. For their conceptual treatment of the problem, see pp. 3-5 and also pp. 207-211.



democratic legitimacy (especially the three consolidated democracies). Again it is telling that Chile ranks so low here (at only ten percent) - the same as Mexico and El Salvador - and that Brazil has the lowest proportion of all.

As Linz and Stepan have shown with regard to Spain and then for other third wave democracies, citizens of a new democracy are able to distinguish between the political and economic dimensions of regime performance. They may come to value democracy for the political goods it produces even when its economic performance is perceived to be poor and costly in the short term. Part of this is due to the fact that citizens of postcommunist Europe have proven to be more patient and realistic in their time horizons for economic improvement than many observers expected. But much of it is due as well to the real improvements they perceive in what Linz and Stepan call the “political basket of goods” during the first few years of democracy. By late 1993 and early 1994, proportions ranging from 60 to 98 percent of all citizens in the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia, Hungary, Poland, Bulgaria, and Romania saw the current political system as better than the previous one in giving people freedom to join any organization they want, to say what they think, to travel and live wherever they want, to “live without fear of unlawful arrest,” to “decide whether to take an interest in politics,” and to choose whether or not to practice a religion. On these six dimensions of freedom, across the seven national samples, the percentage recognizing a better political life was often 85 to 90 percent. The perception of increased freedom averaged 94 percent in Bulgaria, 91 percent in Romania, and 82 percent overall for the seven CEE countries. It was roughly as high in Lithuania and Estonia as well.<sup>80</sup> Russian perceptions (in mid-1993) of greater freedom on these six dimensions were less clear-cut, ranging from 29 (less fear of unlawful arrest) to 83 percent, with a mean of 62 percent (about the same as Belarus and Ukraine).<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> Richard Rose, “Freedom as a Fundamental Value,” *International Social Science Journal* 145 (September 1995): Table 2. For some additional raw data, drawn from the New Democracies Barometer III of Rose and Haerpfer, see Linz and Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation*, Table 21.3, p. 443.

<sup>81</sup> Rose, “Freedom as a Fundamental Value,” Table 2. For the full raw data see Richard Rose and Christian Haerpfer, “New Democracies Barometer III: Learning from What is Happening,” *Studies in Public Policy* 230, Centre for the Study of Public Policy, University of Strathclyde, 1994: questions 35-42.

These perceptions of greater freedom have done much to legitimate the new democracies of Central and Eastern Europe. The fuller the sense of greater freedom, the greater the likelihood that a postcommunist citizen will positively evaluate the current regime and reject all undemocratic alternatives. On each measure of legitimacy, there is a clear step pattern, as the number of dimensions on which the individual feels freer increases. Those perceiving greater freedom in all respects are three times more likely to be positive about the current regime and twice as likely to reject all authoritarian alternatives as those who perceive no change at all from the past.<sup>82</sup> Support for democracy is thus related to the “sense of freedom from state oppression [that] is felt throughout the postcommunist societies of Central and Eastern Europe. People may be dissatisfied with their current living standards or fearful of losing their jobs, but they have not forgotten the great gains made in freedom from fear and censorship.”<sup>83</sup>

The statistical analysis of Rose *et al.* also confirms what the naked eye can see in Table 6 - a clear relationship in the postcommunist states (as in Latin America) between attitudinal support for democracy and actual levels of democratic freedom. People who live in liberal democracies are more likely to reject all authoritarian alternatives and to approve the current regime while disapproving the previous communist one. More generally, the data confirm the perception of rapid progress toward the entrenchment of democratic legitimacy and the consolidation of democracy in the six states of the former Warsaw Pact (as well as Slovenia). To reiterate, these seven CEE states stand in sharp contrast to the former Soviet states of Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus. The latter have significantly lower freedom levels and their citizens are significantly more likely to favor at least one authoritarian alternative to democracy.<sup>84</sup> In most of the other non-Russian successor states, the

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<sup>82</sup> Rose, Mishler, and Haerpfer, *Testing the Churchill Hypothesis*, Figure 7.3. The New Democracies Barometer III, which they use, listed only five dimensions of freedom. Of those feeling freer on all five, 65% were positive about the current regime, while those who felt freer on only one or no dimension were 23% and 21% positive about democracy.

<sup>83</sup> Rose, “Postcommunism and the Problem of Trust,” p. 25.

<sup>84</sup> In addition to Table 8, for more specific data on Russia and the other two states, see *ibid.*, Table 3.1, p. 41.

heavy weight of the Soviet legacy more closely matches the oppressive situation in Belarus, with a shapeless institutional terrain dominated by corrupt elite clans, authoritarian presidents, and local mafias.<sup>85</sup>

Romania appears as an anomaly, in that its levels of public commitment to democracy ranked it much higher among the postcommunist countries than would be predicted by its relatively low freedom score in 1995 and the few preceding years. This may help to explain its embrace of a more democratic alternative in the 1996 presidential elections, and its movement during that year into the free category (followed by further improvement in 1997 to a 2.0 average freedom score). Romania's shift raises the question of the direction of causality. Once a formal transition has occurred, does the underlying political culture play a substantial role in pressing a country toward a certain level of democracy (or as in Belarus, back to dictatorship), or (as the "transitions" school maintains) do objective conditions and institutions of democracy generate levels of appreciation for democracy that may then become embedded in the political culture?

The geographic patterning of human rights performance around the world appears to reflect a major role for culture. Using 1990s data, Bova shows that among electoral democracies, Western countries, or those more influenced by Western cultural traditions valuing individual freedom and autonomy, have better human rights records than non-Western (African and Asian) countries.<sup>86</sup> This analysis does not control for economic development, which is correlated with regional-cultural blocs, nor does it adequately recognize how much (and how rapidly) culture can evolve in response to structural changes. Nevertheless, it suggests that culture does play an independent role in shaping a political system. Moreover, as we see with South Korea and Taiwan, some substantial residues of illiberal value orientations may persist and coexist with strong support for democracy

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<sup>85</sup> Alexander J. Motyl, "The Non-Russian States: Soviet Legacies, Post-Soviet Transformations," in *Freedom in the World 1996-1997*, p. 26-31.

<sup>86</sup> Russell Bova, "Democracy and Liberty: The Cultural Connection," *Journal of Democracy* 8, no. 1 (January 1997): 112-126.

in general, and even with relatively wide scope for civil liberties. Thus, while “habituation” reshapes political norms and values to fit democratic institutions, underlying cultural dispositions may slow or accelerate this process.

*Socioeconomic factors.* As has long been argued by modernization theory, and demonstrated by such earlier studies as Almond and Verba’s *The Civic Culture* and Inkeles and Smith’s *Becoming Modern*, socioeconomic variables - both macro and micro - also help to explain democratic orientations and values. However, from the limited causal analysis that is so far available, social structural factors are not as powerful or as numerous as might have been expected. This augurs well for democratic consolidation, “insofar as it means there are no socially cohesive pockets of resistance to democratization.”<sup>87</sup> In the comprehensive study that Richard Rose and his colleagues have conducted during the 1990s in Central and Eastern Europe, the one social structural variable that appears to have some real power in explaining support for democracy (and especially, rejection of authoritarian alternatives) is education. (This was also the most powerful structural variable identified in the above two classic studies). While the age of respondents has no effect, the more educated are more likely to embrace democracy, even when many other factors are controlled for.<sup>88</sup> Education is one of the three most powerful factors predicting the rejection of authoritarian alternatives.<sup>89</sup> Education also has positive effects on a broader scale of liberal, pro-democratic social and political values in every one of ten postcommunist countries studied by Evans.<sup>90</sup> Even more strikingly (and in contrast to the findings of Rose *et al.*), so does youth.<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> Rose, Mishler, and Haerpfer, *Testing the Churchill Hypothesis*, chapter 6, p. 19 of October 1997 draft.

<sup>88</sup> Rose, Mishler, and Haerpfer, *Testing the Churchill Hypothesis*, Table 6.2.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid, Table 9.2.

<sup>90</sup> Geoffrey Evans, “Mass Political Attitudes and the Development of Market Democracy in Eastern Europe,” Discussion Paper No. 39, Centre for European Studies, Nuffield College, Oxford University, September 1995, Table 11. The scale included not only democratic political orientations but also social tolerance. This scale was also consistently negatively associated with age across all ten countries. Studies have also found consistent, significant positive effects of education (and negative effects of age) on democratic orientations in Russia, Ukraine, and Lithuania in 1991, 1992, and 1995. Arthur H. Miller, Vicki L. Hesli, and William M. Reisinger, “Reassessing Mass Support for Political and Economic Change in the Former USSR,” *American Political Science Review* 88, no. 2 (June 1994): 406-

Indeed, when one considers as well that youth and education and higher-status occupation are all associated with support for the market as well, the prognosis for the postcommunist states appears more encouraging, in that “the main opposition to both markets and democracy is among declining groups.”<sup>92</sup>

Education also appears to be strongly correlated with democratic values in Taiwan. Parish and Chang found that the more educated were appreciably more likely to disagree with authoritarian political ideas, and to manifest democratic value change between 1985 and 1990. Beyond education, a more modern (professional) occupation, urban residence, and youth also contribute independently to more liberal values.<sup>93</sup> Consistently across five time periods, education emerges as the single most powerful determinant of a scale of democratic values encompassing many of the measures in Table 7.<sup>94</sup> Within greater China, Chu found that “level of education consistently exerts the most significant impact on the transformation of political culture at the individual level.” The higher the educational level, the more likely respondents in each of the four Chinese samples (Hong Kong, Taiwan, China, and urban China) were to manifest pro-democratic value orientations (as well as political efficacy).<sup>95</sup> Other studies of Hong Kong also show that the more educated are more likely to be tolerant of social conflict and to value political freedom.<sup>96</sup>

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407, and “Understanding Political Change in Post-Soviet Societies: A Further Commentary on Finifter and Mickiewicz,” *American Political Science Review* 90, no. 1 (March 1996): 157-158; and William M. Reisinger, Arthur H. Miller, Vicki L. Hesli, and Kristen Hill Maher, “Political Values in Russia, Ukraine, and Lithuania: Sources and Implications for Democracy,” *British Journal of Political Science* 24 (1994): 183-223.

<sup>91</sup> The discrepancy between the findings of Rose *et al.* and of Evans and of Miller *et al.* with respect to age may be due to the wider range of democratic values and orientations probed in the latter two groups of studies.

<sup>92</sup> Evans, “Mass Political Attitudes and the Development of Market Democracy in Eastern Europe,” p. 37.

<sup>93</sup> Parish and Chang, “Political Values in Taiwan,” pp. 31-34.

<sup>94</sup> Shyu, “Empowering the People,” Table 4.

<sup>95</sup> Yun-han Chu, “The Transformation of Civic Culture in Mainland China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong.” Paper presented to the 1996 Convention of the Association of Asian Studies, Honolulu, April 11-13, 1996, p. 13.

<sup>96</sup> Alex Inkeles, “Continuity and Change in Popular Values on the Pacific Rim,” *Hoover Institution Essays*

*Evaluating Democracy: The Role of System Performance*

We have seen that beliefs about the legitimacy of democracy are shaped more by political than economic performance, and in fact have many causal sources, some of which do not relate to performance of the system at all. Still, even if citizens come to value democracy over the long run for its political qualities, shorter-run assessments of the system - such as those that are tapped by questions about satisfaction with the way democracy works in the country - can presumably affect the ability of a democratic regime to mobilize support and govern effectively. These more immediate performance assessments appear much more sensitive to economic conditions. Montero, Gunther, and Torcal show that in the first two decades of Spanish democracy (1976-96), public assessments of economic and political conditions have covaried “almost perfectly,” and that supposedly more general evaluations of system efficacy also follow closely in step with assessments of the economic and political situation. When these various evaluations of performance, however, are juxtaposed against the stability of public belief in the legitimacy of democracy, no clear association is apparent. Dissatisfaction with democratic performance appears to reflect partisan opposition to the government in power and policy dissatisfaction, while “the basic legitimacy of democracy is relatively autonomous.”<sup>97</sup>

This detachment of legitimacy from evaluations of performance (satisfaction and system efficacy) took place in a democracy that had built up a strong foundation of legitimacy early on for several reasons: rejection of the authoritarian past, socioeconomic development and generational change, integration into the sociocultural milieu of a democratic Europe, and perhaps most significantly, the institutionalization of democratic structures and procedures, as a result of which the democratic system functioned democratically, in faithful adherence to constitutional rules and

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(Stanford University, 1997), p. 20.

<sup>97</sup> Montero, Gunther, and Torcal, “Democracy in Spain,” pp. 13-15. For further evidence of the impact of economic conditions and of public evaluations of government policies and political performance on democratic satisfaction, see Maravall, *Regimes, Politics, and Markets*, Table 6, p. 230.

individual rights. In parts of Latin America, and even more so in the former Soviet Union, legitimacy has not yet firmly taken root, and support for democracy appears much more conditional on assessments of how the regime is performing.

The countries of Central and Eastern Europe appear to be following the Spanish model, but with important distinctions. Levels of external efficacy are low, as people generally judge their elected officials distant and unresponsive, but external efficacy is similarly low in Spain and other West European democracies.<sup>98</sup> Overall levels of satisfaction “with the way democracy works” are much lower than in Spain, Portugal, and Greece, but the trends respond similarly to economic evaluations. At the individual level and especially the aggregate level of different national surveys, satisfaction with democracy is strongly influenced by personal economic assessments (current and future); the greater the economic optimism, the greater the satisfaction with the way democracy is working.<sup>99</sup> Similarly, across five postcommunist samples, “satisfaction with the way democracy is developing in our country” is consistently correlated with expectations for progress in both personal and national conditions.<sup>100</sup>

Data from the New Democracies Barometer depict a similar picture. Although they do not encompass as many time points as the data on Spain, the mean levels of political and economic approval for Central and Eastern Europe appear to vary with one another, while legitimacy (support for democracy) moves somewhat independently. The high level of legitimacy is noteworthy, even during periods when economic dissatisfaction is very high. In contrast to satisfaction in Spain, however, approval of the political system consistently hovers about 20 percentage points higher

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<sup>98</sup> For example, in both sets of democracies, only about 25 to 35 percent felt (in 1991) that “most elected officials care what people like me think.” The outliers on the low end are Italy (15%), European Russia (20%), and on the high end the U.S. at 45%. Max Kaase, “Political Culture and Political Consolidation in Central and Eastern Europe,” *Research in Democracy and Society* 2 (1994): Table 7.

<sup>99</sup> Toka, “Political Support in East-Central Europe,” pp. 363-367.

<sup>100</sup> Kaase, “Political Culture and Political Consolidation,” pp. 255, 269.

than approval of the economic system (Figure 1). This may be due to the high levels of hope citizens of postcommunist Europe consistently manifest for the future economic system. For the seven Central and East European countries, the average proportion expecting they will approve of the economic system in five years time has remained between 70 and 74 percent across the four surveys between 1991 and 1995.<sup>101</sup> Even slightly larger proportions expect to approve of the political regime in five years time.

The huge gap between current and future economic ratings (which narrowed from 40 percentage points in 1991 to 26 in 1995 as approval of the current system rose), is due to the patience of CEE publics. Two-thirds of Central and East Europeans on average reject the proposition, “If our system can’t produce results soon, that’s a good reason to try some other system,” and instead accept that “It will take years for government to deal with the problems inherited from Communists.” Moreover, patience increased 10 percentage points between 1993 and 1995. Although CEE governments have frequently been voted out of office in response to economic pain, “people are not voting against the new regime, but endorsing a trial-and-error search for a government that will make the new system work better.”<sup>102</sup> This political patience has important consequences. Not only does it increase support for democracy, as noted above, it also produces more positive evaluations of the current regime.<sup>103</sup>

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<sup>101</sup> Rose and Haerpfer, “Change and Stability in the New Democracies Barometer,” p. 49, Figure 3.4. Here I take as indicators of satisfaction the ratings of how the system of government and the economy work (presently, and in the past and future) on the “heaven/hell” scale from plus 100 to minus 100, with positive ratings indicating satisfaction or approval.

<sup>102</sup> Rose and Haerpfer, “Change and Stability in the New Democracies Barometer,” p. 38.

<sup>103</sup> Rose, Mishler, and Haerpfer, *Testing the Churchill Hypothesis*, Tables 7.1, 8.4 and 9.2.





Post-Soviet publics - who had the longest, most total experience with communism, and who confront the steepest and most dislocating challenge of transition from state socialism to the market - are not nearly so patient, nor so approving of the current economic or political system. By 1995, only about a third of Russians and Ukrainians were prepared to see the system “take years” to deal with inherited problems.<sup>104</sup> Disenchantment with the current economic system in Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus is sweeping; by 1995, no more than 16 percent in any country approved of how the economy was working. Political regime approval never exceeded 36 percent. Even expectations for the future were well below the CEE mean.<sup>105</sup>

While statistical analysis confirms the positive effect of patience on support for democracy in the postcommunist states, there are few statistical tests for the effect on democratic legitimacy of satisfaction with democracy or regime approval. We saw that satisfaction has a positive effect on legitimacy in Korea. Because democratic legitimacy in Spain is only weakly correlated with satisfaction, Montero, Gunther, and Torcal conclude that it has “acquired increasing autonomy from ... economic discontent or political dissatisfaction.”<sup>106</sup> However, this finding was for a democracy that had significant public support at its birth and rather quickly became legitimated in part by its political performance. Given that economic as well as political factors shape regime approval, and given as well the degree to which political dissatisfaction in the post-Soviet states is grounded in objective realities of lower freedom, and greater crime, lawlessness, and corruption, it seems plausible that (at least in some countries) low levels of regime performance depress satisfaction with the way the new political system is working, which in turn diminishes support for democracy.

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<sup>104</sup> Rose and Haerpfer, “Change and Stability in the New Democracies Barometer,” p. 39, Figure 2.9; Rose and Tikhomirov, “Trends in the New Russia Barometer, 1992-1995,” p. 27, Figures II.3.

<sup>105</sup> 53 percent expected to approve of the political regime in five years time, versus. 79 percent for CEE; 45 percent expected to approve of the economic system in five years, versus. 72 percent for CEE.

<sup>106</sup> José Ramón Montero, Richard Gunther, and Mariano Torcal, “Democracy in Spain: Legitimacy, Efficacy, and Disaffection,” paper presented at the International Conference on *The Erosion of Confidence in Advanced Democracies*, Brussels, November 7-9, 1996, p. 12.

At the same time, political and historical factors clearly have an independent impact on regime legitimacy.

A model of these causal dynamics would show that economic performance can affect legitimacy indirectly, through the intervening variable of satisfaction with democracy (or regime approval), but the democraticness of the regime has an autonomous and more direct effect on legitimacy (through the perception of increased freedom and responsiveness). While it cannot be fully confirmed by the above data and analysis, this model is consistent with much of that evidence. Certainly, the impact of economic performance on satisfaction with democracy is by now very well established.<sup>107</sup> To be sure, causal dynamics are not everywhere the same. While in Spain, “democratic legitimacy has not been inevitably undermined by economic discontent, political pessimism, political scandals or other unpopular aspects of a government’s performance,”<sup>108</sup> in the post-Soviet states precisely the reverse appears true. In short, in these systems, where democracy has not functioned well from the start, economically *or* politically, democracy must work better if it is to legitimate itself.

Can the same be said for Latin America? As I suggested above, this may well be the case. In Uruguay, support for democracy has been consistently high and satisfaction with the way democracy works is also relatively high. In Argentina, support for democracy has remained over 70 percent even though satisfaction is low. But elsewhere, even a decade and more beyond the democratic transition, levels of support for democracy lag well below those of Southern Europe in the mid-1980s (or today), well below those of Central and Eastern Europe, and below the two-thirds

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<sup>107</sup> In addition to the analyses cited above, a recent study found that in *every* one of eleven Western European countries surveyed by the Eurobarometer in 1990, evaluations of *both* national economic performance and the respondent’s own personal economic performance had statistically significant positive effects on satisfaction with democracy. By contrast, the standard demographic variables (even education) virtually never registered significant effects. Christopher J. Anderson and Christine A. Guillory, “Political Institutions and Satisfaction with Democracy: A Cross-National Analysis of Consensus and Majoritarian Systems,” *American Political Science Review* 91, no. 1 (March 1997): Table 1, p. 74.

<sup>108</sup> Montero, Gunther, and Torcal, “Democracy in Spain,” p. 16.

level one would expect to see in a consolidated democracy. In these Latin American countries high levels of political dissatisfaction and distrust (which have apparently prevailed for some time) contribute to doubts about democratic legitimacy among significant segments of the population. The 1996 Latinobarometro shows large majorities in many countries (over 60 percent in Brazil, Argentina, Peru, and Venezuela) worried about being unemployed in the next 12 months (compared with only 29 percent in Spain). Although majorities (barely) in most countries believe voting “can change the way things will be in the future,” only in Chile, among eight South American democracies, do most voters believe that elections are clean.<sup>109</sup> More than a third in Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, and Colombia, and half the public in Venezuela, say that politicians are offering no solutions (not even “a few”) to the problems of the country. Substantial proportions choose distrust, boredom, and indifference to describe how they feel about politics. Distrust was commonly expressed in Spain as well (40 percent), but in Brazil and Ecuador - two of the countries with the lowest levels of support for democracy - it was felt by roughly 60 percent of the public.<sup>110</sup>

How important is economic performance for the judgements citizens make about their democracy? The evidence to date is only partial and somewhat contradictory. Political performance appears much more important than economic in shaping more deep-seated beliefs about democratic legitimacy, while economic performance becomes salient (possibly more than political performance or on a par with it) in shaping satisfaction with democracy. However, prolonged economic disaster can magnify the impact on legitimacy of middling to poor political performance, and the long-run effects of economic deprivation and stagnation are not yet apparent. In Latin America, and most of all in the postcommunist states, third wave democracies enjoy a considerable amount of “legitimacy by default,” as citizens still vividly remember the repression of the preceding regimes. These memories have made people patient and sober in their

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<sup>109</sup> Lagos, “The Latinobarometro,” Figure 7. No doubt, Uruguay would be similar to Chile in this regard, but data for Uruguay were not presented in this comparison.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid, figures 8 and 9.

expectations about what democracy can deliver in the short run. But what will happen when these memories fade with generational change? To the extent that a foundation for economic stability has not been laid and democratic commitments firmly locked into place, these regimes are vulnerable to rising discontent over their protracted incapacity to deliver (and distribute) some material progress.

*Trusting Democracy: Confidence in Institutions*

In democracies new and old, much has been made of declining public trust, or confidence in institutions - what Lipset and Schneider labeled the “confidence gap.”<sup>111</sup> In democratic theory, political trust facilitates bargaining and compromise, as well as broad commitment to the rules of the democratic game. Trust also is a key element of the social capital that, in facilitating cooperation through horizontal networks of civic engagement, leads to a more vibrant (and economically prosperous) democracy.<sup>112</sup> Yet, democracies do not need high levels of trust in political leaders and institutions in order to function effectively. The ideal democratic culture is neither blindly trusting nor hostilely rejecting, but inquisitive and skeptical. What a healthy democracy must avoid is cynicism - sweeping distrust of political and social institutions. Even if Western publics have become much less trusting of their parties and politicians, their societies are so richly endowed with autonomous and well functioning institutions that they can find at least

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<sup>111</sup> Seymour Martin Lipset and William Schneider, *The Confidence Gap* (New York: Free Press, 1983).

<sup>112</sup> Robert D. Putnam, *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993). For an analysis emphasizing the implications of trust and social capital for economic scale, efficiency, and flexibility, see Francis Fukuyama, *Trust: The Social Virtues and the Creation of Prosperity* (New York: Free Press, 1995).

some to believe in.<sup>113</sup> By contrast, distrust is much more pervasive in Latin America and the postcommunist states.

Of fifteen political and social institutions that Rose and his colleagues inquired about in postcommunist countries, not a single one is trusted by a majority of the public. Even the most trusted institutions, the army and the church, have the explicit confidence of no more than 30 percent of the people across the nine countries surveyed. With the exception of the presidents of these countries (generally the most trusted political actor), political institutions enjoy little trust. Parties are trusted by only five percent of the people, parliament 9 percent, the courts 17 percent. Yet as Rose, Mishler, and Haerpfer show, the alternative to trust is not necessarily distrust but skepticism - a kind of middling response (of 3, 4, or 5 on a seven point scale of trust) that signals wariness rather than outright loss of confidence or alienation. The good news from the surveys of postcommunist Europe is that skepticism, rather than distrust, is the modal feeling with respect to every institution, usually much larger and often (as for civil servants and the courts) twice as large as feelings of distrust. The bad news is that every institution except the army and the church elicits more distrust than trust, and in some cases the ratios of the two are more than two to one, or four to one (for parliament and trade unions), or even (for parties) nine to one in favor of distrust.

The second piece of bad news is the evidence of a direct relationship between trust and democratic legitimacy, at least for some fledgling democracies. As noted above, institutional trust has significant positive effects both on support for the current regime and on rejection of authoritarian alternatives, and this positive effect appears to be linear. Those who generally trust in institutions are much more likely to support the current regime (76 percent) than skeptics (58 percent) not to mention the distrustful (39 percent).<sup>114</sup> Trust in government may also affect

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<sup>113</sup> Richard Rose, "Postcommunism and the Problem of Trust," p. 252.

<sup>114</sup> . Rose, Mishler, and Haerpfer, *Testing the Churchill Hypothesis*, Figure 7.5 and Table 9.2. The step pattern also holds for rejection of all authoritarian alternatives.

satisfaction with the way democracy works.<sup>115</sup> Thus, improving levels of trust (or at least reducing levels of distrust) is part of the challenge of legitimating - and thus consolidating - democracy. The challenge is particularly serious in those countries (Belarus, Ukraine and Bulgaria) where distrust in institutions is greatest (equalling skepticism, at 44 percent in each of the latter two countries).<sup>116</sup>

As with beliefs about the legitimacy of democracy, so trust - both in institutions, and more diffusely, in people in general - appears to be shaped at least to some extent by more enduring cultural features. Differences in interpersonal trust across countries and regions can be enormous. In South America and in Russia, less than a quarter of the public believes most people can be trusted, but in Korea three-quarters do (even exceeding the highest levels in Scandinavia). Yet while Koreans trust in some institutions more than other peoples do on average, this does not carry over to politics, where only one in five trust parties or the National Assembly.<sup>117</sup> In line with a long tradition of political culture research, Montero, Torcal, and Gunther conclude that in Spain, distrust forms part of a syndrome of "political disaffection" (explored further below) which includes cynicism, inefficacy, disinterest and general estrangement from politics. This syndrome appears entirely independent of legitimacy and satisfaction, but remarkably durable. For Marta Lagos, widespread interpersonal distrust has deep cultural roots in Latin America and is an archetypical feature of its political culture, underlying the very low levels of confidence in institutions.<sup>118</sup> For

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<sup>115</sup> Across three time points in the first decade of Spanish democracy, trust in government was significantly positively correlated (.37 to .40) with democratic satisfaction. McDonough, Barnes, and Pina, "The Growth of Democratic Legitimacy in Spain," Table 5, p.747.

<sup>116</sup> The Czech Republic had the lowest level of overall distrust (18 percent) and was the only one of the nine countries in which distrust did not exceed trust. William Mishler and Richard Rose, "Trust, Distrust and Skepticism: Popular Evaluations of Civil and Political Institutions in Post-Communist Societies," *Journal of Politics* 59, no. 2 (May 1997): Figure 2.

<sup>117</sup> Marta Lagos, "The Latinobarometro" and "Latin America's Smiling Mask," Table 1; Shin and Rose, "Koreans Evaluate Democracy," and Richard Rose and Doh C. Shin, "Discerning Qualities of Democracy in Korea and Post-Communist Countries," paper presented to the International Political Science Association Meeting, Seoul, August 17-21, 1997, pp. 21-22. The Korean figures on institutional trust are not strictly comparable because the response categories were structured differently.

<sup>118</sup> The low levels of interpersonal trust appear quite stable; the figures Lagos reports for 1996 for Mexico

Richard Rose, low levels of trust in post-communist countries are more the result of the atomizing structures and politically alienating experiences of communism. While distrust may be deeply rooted, in both regions political and economic performance also affects levels of trust in institutions, and in Central and Eastern Europe the perception that freedoms have improved exerts “a substantial and positive effect on trust in postcommunist institutions” (both political and market).<sup>119</sup> That perception, along with the perception of increased fairness of the system and expectations for the future national economy, are the three most important factors explaining variation in overall levels of trust in institutions. But other economic evaluations are also important, and they become even more so when explaining trust in political institutions alone. Against the alienating backdrop of communism and its collapse, trust grows when the economy is seen to be doing better.<sup>120</sup>

Interpersonal trust may seem tangential to the stability of democracy. Political trust would seem on the surface much more relevant. Indeed, there is statistical evidence that levels of interpersonal trust do not affect change in the level of democracy: low levels do not seem to impede democratic transition or to undermine democratic persistence, nor do higher levels necessarily promote democratization.<sup>121</sup> But trust in people may well merit more sustained investigation for

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(21%) and Argentina (23%) are about the same as what was reported for those two countries in the 1981-91 period (18% and 21% respectively). For the latter figures, see Edward N. Muller and Mitchell A. Seligson, “Civic Culture and Democracy: The Question of Causal Relationships,” *American Political Science Review* 88, no. 3 (September 1994): Table A-1, p. 648. As that table makes clear, outside Scandinavia, interpersonal trust is not particularly high even in the established democracies, but in those countries the median level of over 40 percent is much higher than in South America.

<sup>119</sup> Lagos, “Latin America’s Smiling Mask;” Richard Rose, “Postcommunism and the Problem of Trust,” *Journal of Democracy* 5, no. 3 (July 1994): 18-30; and Mishler and Rose, “Trust, Distrust and Skepticism.” The quotation is from Mishler and Rose, p. 441.

<sup>120</sup> Mishler and Rose, “Trust, Distrust, and Skepticism,” Tables 3 and 4. Political trust (like democratic satisfaction) may also have a partisan dimension. Between 1978 and 1984 in Spain, people were much more likely to trust in government if the party they supported governed. McDonough, Barnes, and Pina, “Democratic Legitimacy in Spain,” Table 2.

<sup>121</sup> Muller and Seligson, “Civic Culture and Democracy.” Frederick D. Weil, however, finds that interpersonal trust has a positive effect on democratic values in Germany (though not significantly so in East Germany). “Will



several reasons. Theoretically, trust is a foundation of cooperation. If rival political elites do not trust one another to honor agreements, it will be much more difficult for them to institutionalize the pacts, settlements, understandings, and mutual restraints that stabilize politics and consolidate democracy at the elite level. Of course, rational choice theories insist that it is precisely the lack of trust that requires the coordinating mechanism of a constitution and legal institutions for democracy to be stable. From this perspective, trust is more the consequence of, than the prerequisite for, effective institutions.<sup>122</sup> But if trust is low and expectations of fellow citizens are pervasively cynical, institutions will be mere formalities, lacking compliance and effectiveness as most people defect from obedience in the expectation that almost everyone else will.

In fact, this is a central problem in Latin America today, where, as we have seen in earlier chapters, laws are hollow, courts are feeble, and “delegative” presidents run roughshod over the constitution. Data from the Latinobarometro suggests a strong linkage between culture and the institutional hollowness of democracy. In most Latin American countries, most people (from 57 percent in Venezuela to 85 percent in Peru) do not consider their fellow nationals to be honest, and huge majorities - over 80 percent in Argentina, Brazil and Peru - believe their fellow nationals obey the law little or not at all. The only country that clearly departs from this pattern is, once again, Uruguay. Elsewhere in Latin America, lawlessness and distrust appear deeply embedded in social expectations, driving everything from tax evasion to ponderous bureaucratic regulations.<sup>123</sup> The attendant weakness of both the state and the rule of law - and the resulting poor quality of democracy - is a major obstacle to democratic consolidation.

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Democracy Survive Unification in Germany? Extremism, Protest, and Legitimation Three Years after the Fall of the Berlin Wall.” Paper presented to the Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association, Miami, August 13-17, 1993, Table 2.

<sup>122</sup> This is essentially the finding of Muller and Seligson, who show (for 27 countries in Europe and Central America) that interpersonal trust is an effect, not a cause, of democracy (the number of years of continuous democracy since 1900). They conclude that “the institutional opportunities for peaceful collective action afforded by democratic regimes could be expected to promote relatively high levels of interpersonal trust.” “Civic Culture and Democracy,” p. 647.

<sup>123</sup> Lagos, “Latin America’s Smiling Mask,” pp. 128-130.



## Efficacy and Other Orientations

Political culture theory predicts democracy should be more legitimate and stable where there are high - but not polarizing - levels of political efficacy, participation, and information. Where citizens are more knowledgeable, informed, and participant; where they are more confident that their engagement can have some impact on political outcomes (internal efficacy); and where they believe the political system is responsive to their concerns (external efficacy), we should expect higher levels of support for and satisfaction with democracy. It is not possible to test this assumption with the available data. However, there are grounds to question whether the expected relationships hold. There does appear to be some broad association in Latin America between the presence of high levels of political distrust and alienation and the middling progress toward democratic legitimation. But better democratic performance would, our findings here suggest, advance legitimation, even if individual political efficacy and interest remained low.

Evidence from Spain suggests that political disaffection - in the form of low political interest and engagement, and low political efficacy (both internal and external) - is stable across generations and can coexist for a long time with high levels of democratic legitimacy. Since the early 1980s, the percentage of Spaniards expressing little or no interest in politics has generally ranged from 70 to 80 percent. On several measures dating from 1978, solid majorities (usually 60 to 70 percent) have lacked political efficacy, finding politics too complicated to understand and politicians not caring what they think. Yet legitimacy has been consistently high and even rising, while democratic satisfaction has fluctuated with objective conditions. Statistically, low political interest, engagement, information, and efficacy cluster together in a syndrome of "affective estrangement" that is quite distinct from legitimacy and satisfaction and appears to be "a stable, if not permanent, feature of Spain's political culture."<sup>124</sup>

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<sup>124</sup> Montero, Gunther, and Torcal, "Democracy in Spain: Legitimacy, Discontent, and Disaffection," p. 22. While their analysis is convincing, one may question just how low political efficacy in Spain really is. On two other measures of political efficacy, Spaniards appear much more confident of their ability to have some impact on the political system. In 1991, 47 percent disagreed that "people like me don't have any say about what the government

This puts the high levels of inefficacy and cynicism in other new democracies (including those elsewhere in Southern and Eastern Europe<sup>125</sup> in a less apocalyptic light. The 60 percent of Taiwanese who believed (in 1996) that people like themselves cannot influence government policies is almost identical to the proportion giving this response in Spain (64 percent in 1993).<sup>126</sup> The one-quarter of Taiwanese who disagree that “people like me can’t possibly influence government policy” may seem like a trifling level of political efficacy, but it is twice as large as the typical proportion of postcommunist publics who so respond, even in democratically consolidating Hungary and Poland (Table 8). Yet, on other indicators of efficacy, Hungary and Poland (and to some extent other countries) show higher levels of efficacy, raising the question of measurement (see below).

In fact, it is much too early to dismiss individual political efficacy and engagement as inconsequential in shaping overall attitudes toward the democratic system. Evans and Whitefield found a significant effect of efficacy on normative commitment to democracy in postcommunist countries. People who disagree that there is “no point in voting because the government can’t make any difference” are more likely to support democracy, as are those who perceive some potential to influence the government through elections, and also those who support a political party. As in other surveys, citizens of Russia and Ukraine show the lowest levels of both personal and system efficacy - and the lowest levels of commitment to democracy.<sup>127</sup>

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does,” and 78 percent agreed that “voting gives people like me some say about how the government runs things” (Table 8). The latter percentage was (with France) the *highest* among six Western publics and over 20 percentage points higher than in Britain. The former response may seem a bit low, but was also higher than in the U.S., Britain, and West Germany.

<sup>125</sup> Maravall, *Regimes, Politics, and Markets*, pp. 234-237.

<sup>126</sup> Montero, Gunther and Torcal, “Democracy in Spain: Legitimacy, Discontent, and Disaffection,” pp. 20-21. The Taiwanese data are from the 1996 National Taiwan University survey on “The Changing Political System and Electoral Behavior.” The questions used in the two countries were virtually identical.

<sup>127</sup> Evans and Whitefield, “The Politics and Economics of Democratic Commitment,” Tables 1, 4, and 5.

## **Conclusion**

Despite the recent proliferation of data, we are still at an early stage in understanding both the trends and the causal dynamics underlying democratic legitimacy and other dimensions of political culture in third wave democracies. For one, most of these democracies are either recently established or have only recently begun to be surveyed intensively. It will thus be some time before we have a clear picture of the longitudinal trends. Second, mountains of survey data have yet to be thoroughly analyzed. Many interesting indicators of democratic attitudes and beliefs have yet to be analyzed systematically, and rather little has been done to try to establish a more comprehensive causal structure among different subjective and objective indicators.

Third, causal dynamics probably vary across countries with different historical and cultural legacies, and across different periods of time and stages of development. We cannot assume that the determinants of democratic legitimacy in the immediate aftermath of a transition will be the same ten or twenty years later, once the historical context has changed, generational replacement has occurred, and democracy has become routinized to some degree. Thus, legitimacy and other democratic norms may have different correlates and causes in new democracies than in old, established ones. Neither is it obvious that the determinants of legitimacy will be the same in a relatively rich Western country and a relatively poor non-Western one, even at similar points in the transition process. Differences in causation might also be expected between the postcommunist states, with their much more comprehensive and heavily discredited legacies of dictatorship, and the East Asian newly industrialized states, where authoritarianism was more successful and democracy came into being in large part because of that success. Even among the postcommunist states, economic factors may matter more in the post-Soviet states that are more deeply mired in economic crisis.

The biggest problem with comparison and generalization lies with the specific measures used. The lack of standardization across countries and studies is one of the biggest challenges confronting cross-national analysis of political culture. Table 1, for example, presents seven different measures of legitimacy, or support for democracy, used in different countries and regions. Many of these measures seem quite similar to one another, if not nearly identical, and all seem to be tapping the commitment to democracy as the best form of government. Yet, responses are very sensitive to the wording of the question. In several cells of Table 1, we observe quite different levels of support for democracy - in the same country, in the same year - between two different questions. Spaniards were much more likely to agree in 1988 that “democracy is the best system *for a country like ours*” (my emphasis) than that “democracy is preferable to any other form of government,” though both measures elicited broad support. Poles were much more likely in 1992 to reject the preference for a “strong leader” instead of parliament and parties than they were to positively affirm that democracy is always preferable. Similarly, postcommunist publics in 1993 were generally much more likely to say that they would disapprove “if parliament was suspended and parties abolished” than to support the more general “*aim* of introducing democracy” in their country. And still different levels of support - generally lower than the former question but higher than the latter - obtain in postcommunist societies when people are asked if they approve of the current system of government “with free elections and many parties” (see Table 6). Quite different measures of internal political efficacy also register sharply different responses in most nations (see Table 8).

<b>Table 8. Individual Political Efficacy</b>			
<b>Country</b>	<b>Voting Can Change the Way Things Will Be in the Future</b>	<b>Votes of People Like Me Have “a lot” or “some” influence on the way the country is governed</b>	<b>Disagree: People like me don’t have any say in the making of government policy</b>
<b>Latinobarometro 1996</b>			
Spain	67	78 (1991) <sup>1</sup>	47 (1991)
Argentina	63		
Brazil	61		
Ecuador	58		
Peru	52		
Bolivia	51		
Venezuela	49		
Chile	49		
Mexico	46		
Colombia	43		
Korea 1997		68	
Taiwan, 1993, 96			25 27
<b>Postcommunist states, 1991 &amp; 1993</b>	<b>Disagree: There is no point in voting because the government can’t make a difference</b>	<b>Everyone has an Influence on the Election of the Government</b>	<b>Disagree: People like me have no say in what government does</b>
Hungary 1991	53 <sup>2</sup>		14
1993	58	50	11
Poland 1991	44 <sup>2</sup>		10
1993	43	50	11
Romania	76	39	11
Bulgaria 1991	86 <sup>2</sup>		22
1993	49	44	14
Estonia	39	20	8
Lithuania	39	47	11
Russia	33	24	15
Ukraine	23	23	11
<p>1. This wording was “Voting gives people like me some say about how the government runs things.”</p> <p>2. Item was the same as in note 1 above, and thus efficacy is indicated by agreement rather than disagreement.</p> <p>Sources: For Spain and Latin America, Marta Lagos, “The Latinobarometro: Media and Political Attitudes in South America.” Paper presented to the 1996 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, San Francisco, August 29-September 1. For Korea, Shin and Rose, “Koreans Evaluate Democracy.” For Taiwan, National Taiwan University, Department of Political Science, Surveys of Political System and Electoral Behavior. For the postcommunist states 1993, Geoffrey Evans and Stephen Whitefield, “The Politics and Economics of Democratic Commitment: Support for Democracy in Transition Societies,” <i>British Journal of Political Science</i> 25 (1995): Table 4. For Spain and the postcommunist states, 1991, Max Kaase, “Political Culture and Political Consolidation in Central and Eastern Europe,” <i>Research on Democracy and Society</i> 2 (1994): Table 7.</p>			

The problems of comparability, and more fundamentally of inference, derive not just from questionnaire wording but from the responses that are offered. To what extent will different surveys find the same level of support for a democratic regime when one measures approval with a five-point scale (strongly or moderately approve, strongly or moderately disapprove, and neither approve nor disapprove), one with a four-point scale (without the “neither” option), one with a seven-point scale (adding the options of “slightly” approve or disapprove), one with a six-point scale (again no “neither”), and yet another with a 201-point scale - Rose’s famous “heaven/hell” index? To what extent are approval levels measured by the wider-scale options higher than those uncovered with the narrower scales merely because they suck up respondents with a slight feeling that is otherwise classified as sitting on the fence? The same problems apply with all Likert or thermometer scale measures. Similarly, does it matter whether respondents are asked simply to agree or disagree (strongly or not) that “democracy is preferable to any other form of government,” instead of being offered the option that “in some cases an authoritarian regime is preferable,” or even a third option that “for people like me it’s all the same”? In all likelihood, levels of legitimacy observed will vary depending on the options the respondent is given. And this is even prior to the question of substantive difference, including whether it is unconditional or instrumental, specific or diffuse legitimacy that is being tapped. There is also the well known problem of “acquiescence bias,” the tendency of respondents to want to agree with the question asked (or statement read), and thus the greater likelihood of a value or policy being embraced if the indicator of it is agreement rather than disagreement with the item. In a recent Russian survey, Gibson has shown this to be a serious problem.<sup>128</sup>

All of this is to underscore a methodological point that will be tedious to some readers but is vital to understanding how the culture of democracy evolves across countries and over time. We need much more systematic research with these political items to determine how responses vary

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<sup>128</sup> James L. Gibson, “Democratic Political Culture in the Transitional Russian Polity.” Paper presented to the 1996 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, San Francisco, August 29-September 1, pages 8-9 and Table 1.



according to the wording of the question and the structure of the response, and we need much more collaboration across countries and surveys to apply standardized items that can be confidently compared. (Even then, there are limits to confidence, given the challenge of trying to convey precisely the same meanings across different languages and cultures).

These problems particularly complicate the task of comparing levels of support for democracy (whereas other items, such as satisfaction with the way democracy works, tend to be more standardized in wording). The many sources of divergence, error, and “noise,” combined with additional errors that can come in sampling, interviewing, and coding, should make it less likely that we would find any regularities in the structure of causation. Yet, as we saw, across several widely different studies and regions, a similar pattern emerges: political factors - especially relating to how democratically the regime is performing or being seen to perform - are much more important than economic ones in shaping perceptions of legitimacy.

Given the evident differences in causal patterns, and the rather scanty causal analysis available, it may seem foolhardy to advance anything like a comprehensive model to explain how the political attitudes and values reviewed in this chapter relate to one another. Nevertheless, there is now sufficient theory and evidence at least to propose a model for further testing. Regime political performance - in terms of increased freedom, responsiveness, and transparency (as mediated through public perceptions) - has a direct positive effect on democratic legitimacy, while it is mainly economic performance (and economic evaluations) that affect satisfaction with the way democracy works. Support for democracy (as well as internal efficacy) is also generally increased by education, but not by other objective attributes of the individual. Exposure to Western culture, which is also stimulated to some extent by socioeconomic development, may have a further modest effect on the commitment to democracy; although this remains to be tested generally, it has been demonstrated for East Germany.<sup>129</sup> Whether out of perceived interest or a more coherent ideology,

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<sup>129</sup> Weil, “Will Democracy Survive Unification in Germany?”

those who support the market also are more supportive of democracy in the postcommunist states (a relationship that does not appear to hold in Latin America).<sup>130</sup> Trust, both as a generalized social phenomenon and as confidence in political institutions, increases political patience and the readiness to compromise and cooperate. At least indirectly, it should smooth the way to democratic consolidation by improving the stability and performance of the political system, although Rose's study finds direct positive effects of institutional trust on support for democracy. Logically, it should also be the case that trust or confidence in political institutions is related to satisfaction with the way democracy works, although causation here could well be reciprocal. Satisfaction is increased by identification with the ruling party (and that relationship, in turn, appears to be mediated by political institutions, with consensual systems showing less decline in satisfaction among losers than systems with majoritarian institutions).<sup>131</sup> Political institutionalization, particularly the strength and coherence of the party system, also has an important impact on democratic satisfaction (and by extension, quite possibly legitimation) both directly and through its positive effects on economic performance and assessments of system efficacy (the overall capacity to deal with the problems of society).<sup>132</sup> Internal political efficacy should increase the likelihood of party identification (and other forms of participation), and both efficacy and participation will tend to increase (or be correlated with) support for democracy.<sup>133</sup> These latter

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<sup>130</sup> Evans, "Mass Political Attitudes and the Development of Market Democracy in Eastern Europe;" Evans and Whitefield, "The Politics and Economics of Democratic Commitment;" Miller, Hesli, and Reisinger, "Reassessing Mass Support for Political and Economic Change in the Former USSR."

<sup>131</sup> Anderson and Guillory, "Political Institutions and Satisfaction with Democracy."

<sup>132</sup> In Frederick Weil's research, incoherent party systems, with high levels of political polarization and legislative fractionalization, appear negatively associated with democratic satisfaction and legitimacy in Western Europe. This coincides with other analytic inferences about the relationship between party system coherence and government performance, for example with respect to economic reform. (On the latter point, see Stephan Haggard and Robert Kaufman, *The Political Economy of Democratic Transition*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995). It also coincides with evidence that Brazil and Peru (with uncertain legitimacy) have two of the most volatile and least institutionalized party systems in Latin America (compared to democratically consolidated Uruguay and Costa Rica), while Russia has one of the least institutionalized party systems of any democracy analyzed (*The Party System and Democratization in Brazil: Rethinking Party Systems*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999, forthcoming).

<sup>133</sup> Miller, Hesli, and Reisinger found that Russians and Ukrainians who identified with a political party were more likely to emphasize freedom and majority rule and significantly less likely to make negative comments when asked

effects and associations (and some others) appear in Central and Eastern Europe but not in Spain. Only further analysis will tell us how universal are these causal linkages.

In an important respect, however, the data from Spain and the postcommunist states agree. Much more than satisfaction and related performance evaluations, normative commitment to democracy is heavily shaped by history and by early socialization experiences. Thus, in Spain (and one may also surmise, Greece), favorable views of democracy had already formed prior to the transition - partly through generational transmission from the democratic past, partly through social change, and partly through an “intense process of learning” and “collective reflection” by various social groups.<sup>134</sup> These beliefs were then quickly increased and hardened by the initial period of democratic functioning after the transition. However, considerable differences existed and persisted between generations in Spain, based on different formative experiences and collective memories. In Spain, “the younger the cohort, the greater the support for democracy.”<sup>135</sup> No effect of age is apparent in the merged postcommunist samples of Rose, Mishler and Haerpfer (although younger voters have been more likely to support democratic party alternatives in Russia).<sup>136</sup> However, they do find that earlier life experiences, arising from the social structure (especially level of education) and the national context in which one comes of age, account for a third to a half of the variance explained in support for democracy (depending on which measure of support is used). Adding in another historical variable, the evaluation of the previous communist regime, raises to three-quarters the proportion of the causal explanation (for rejection of authoritarian alternatives) that comes from historical or structural factors, as opposed to current political and economic performance. From this analytic perspective (and for this measure of “authoritarian rejection” more

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about the meaning of democracy. “Understanding Democracy: A Comparison of Mass and Elite in Post-Soviet Russia and Ukraine,” p. 20.

<sup>134</sup> Maravall, *Politics, Regimes, and Markets*, pp. 208-211; quoted from 210.

<sup>135</sup> Montero, Gunther, and Torcal, “Democracy in Spain,” p. 31.

<sup>136</sup> Whitefield and Evans, “Support for Democracy and Political Opposition in Russia, 1993-1995,” Table 241.

than support for the current regime), legitimacy is heavily historically determined. Using different measures of support for democracy, Weil comes to a similar conclusion for post-unification eastern Germany, which “appears to have been born strongly democratic” as a result of its unappealing past regime and its familiarity with prestigious foreign models of democracy that serve as a “reference group.”<sup>137</sup>

The implications of this finding appear salutary for some countries and disquieting for others. For those countries such as Spain, Greece, the Czech Republic, and Uruguay - where national political traditions, social structure, and the experience of the prior regime all confer a huge “democratic legitimacy bonus” at the inception of the new regime - democratic consolidation may not be “historically determined” but it is greatly advantaged by the legacy from the past. Even then, however, initial democratic legitimacy depends on how the historical legacy is distilled, recreated, and shaped into “founding myths” by intellectuals, political elites, and the mass media.<sup>138</sup> Other countries like Brazil, Peru, Russia, and Ukraine are clearly haunted by the authoritarian, alienating, distrusting past. Are they therefore condemned to relive it?

It would seem that history and early socialization constitute a powerful determinant of culture. But they are not destiny. Later life experiences also shape beliefs about democracy, and

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<sup>137</sup> Frederick D. Weil, “Will Democracy Survive Unification in Germany?” p. 3, and “The Development of Democratic Attitudes in Eastern and Western Germany in a Comparative Perspective,” *Research on Democracy and Society* 1 (1993): 195-225. See also his “Sources and Structure of Legitimation,” pp. 699-700. Whitefield and Evans come to an entirely different conclusion about the relative weight of historical/cultural factors versus more recent, performance-based effects. In analyzing differences in support for democracy between their Czech and Slovak national samples in 1994, they find that the effect of country melts away when measures of democratic performance (system efficacy, personal efficacy, and evaluation of democratic practice) are added to the regression, and again when economic assessments are added in. (Stephen Whitefield and Geoffrey Evans, “Political Culture vs. Rational Choice: Explaining Responses to Transition in the Czech Republic and Slovakia,” *British Journal of Political Science*, 1998, forthcoming). However, both national samples shared an earlier national experience with democracy in the interwar Czechoslovak republic, and it is this common experience which Rose, Mishler, and Haerpfer speculate accounts for the very considerable effect that living in the Czech Republic or Slovakia has on support for democracy and rejection of authoritarian alternatives in their wider sample of postcommunist publics.

<sup>138</sup> I am grateful to José Ramón Montero for expressing this point to me.

the evidence from Taiwan suggests that gradually over time, this post-transition political learning can shift even more deep-seated values (not to mention more pragmatic assessments of a regime) in a democratic tradition. Those regimes - the vast majority of third wave democracies - that do not enjoy a legitimacy bonus from the moment of transition are not condemned to public cynicism and hostility. But they will have to struggle harder to legitimate themselves, and they will only be able to do so gradually, through their political and economic performance. For these less fortunate democracies, the quest for consolidation will likely be protracted. It will only succeed if they demonstrate their capacity to deal with the major economic and social problems of the country, and to deliver the political freedom, fairness, transparency, and order that their people expect from democracy.<sup>139</sup> This, in turn, demands from politicians some attention to the “moral and pedagogical aspects of politics.”<sup>140</sup> And it requires building the institutions of a democratic state, party system, and civil society - in other words, developing democracy.

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<sup>139</sup> Support for political liberty in Russia - and by extension, democracy - appears to be quite contingent on the political context. In a 1996 survey, only 30 percent said they would oppose martial law if there was widespread political unrest. The more Russians perceive a threat to order, the more they are willing to support the suspension of political rights and freedoms - a worrisome sign given the weakness of legal institutions. James L. Gibson, “The Struggle Between Order and Liberty in Contemporary Russian Political Culture,” *Australian Journal of Political Science* 32, no. 2 (1997): 271-290.

<sup>140</sup> Maravall, *Politics, Regimes, and Markets*, p. 239.

their senior collaborator at National Taiwan University, Hu Fu, who originally developed the questionnaire that is depicted in Table 7. Finally, I think Nathan Batto and Chin-En Wu for their research assistance with the data in Table 7.