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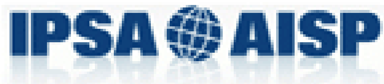

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The Quality of democracy in Asia-Pacific: issues and findings

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Abstract

In the comparative research we present here as the introduction to a set of case studies, we first assess the quality of democratic procedures, content and outcomes in eight countries in the Asia-Pacific region on the basis of quantitative and qualitative data. Second, we investigate whether, to what extent, and how democratic qualities relate to one another. These investigations are carried out by applying an analytical framework that we developed elsewhere. In contrast to our previous empirical findings demonstrating that all the qualities go hand in hand, that participation and competition are the main determinants of democratic qualities, and that the democratic qualities form a funnel of causality, the present study suggests a different set of conclusions. In the Asia-Pacific region, the democratic qualities are weakly related to one another, do not form a funnel of causality, and participation and competition are not the main drivers of democratic quality. The data presented in the empirical section of the paper claim the existence of an Asia-Pacific exceptionalism. By carefully examining the cases included in our sample, we provide a detailed explanation for why, at least as far as democratic qualities are concerned, the Asia-Pacific region may be exceptional and unique. We reach the conclusion that responsiveness could be achieved by a transition from a rule *by* law – often coupled with the prominence of patronage, patrimonialist practices and privileges for the elite – to a proper rule *of* law.

Keywords

accountability, Asia, democracy, quality, rule of law

Introduction

As democracy has spread to the majority of the world's countries, scholars have begun a debate about its quality (Altman and Perez-Linan, 2002; Diamond and Morlino, 2005; Hutcheson and

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Korosteleva, 2006; Morlino, 2004, 2011b; Morlino and Palombella, 2010; O'Donnell et al., 2004; Roberts, 2010; Thomas and Silander, 2011). Moving away from simply explaining regime transitions the debate now reflects more general scholarly concerns about the state of democratic practice in many democracies, new and old. These concerns may be related to growing public dissatisfaction with politics in established democracies, and to a recognition that in many newer democracies elites have found ways to evade or distort democratic institutions, thereby not only failing to deliver expected political and economic benefits, but often also supporting what are at best quasi-democratic practices, and at worst orchestrating an outright reversal of authoritarian patterns (Carothers, 2002; O'Donnell, 1999; Pharr and Putnam, 2000; Roberts, 2005).[1]

In this special issue, we turn attention to assessing the quality of democracy in Asia-Pacific on the basis of both quantitative and qualitative data from an eight-country study. In doing so, we seek to make a contribution to the debate both empirically and conceptually.

Empirically, our project is the first effort, to the best of our knowledge, to apply an analytical framework we developed elsewhere in assessing the democratic qualities of Asian-Pacific countries. The empirical gap is perhaps not surprising. While democracy has evolved in Asia-Pacific, as in the rest of the world, in broad waves of advance and retrenchment, the region still has an exceptional degree of regime diversity that defies theoretical predictions based on socioeconomic indicators (Calder, 2003; Pei, 1998). Rapid and constant change characterizes political and government institutions, and countries within the region differ substantially from Western democracy in institutional arrangements, ideological values, and leadership practices. Asia continues to demonstrate persistent challenges to the Western liberal democratic model, not just from Communist authoritarian regimes, as in China, Vietnam, Laos, and North Korea, but perhaps even more so from the apparent success of such hybrid regimes (Morlino, 2011b) as Singapore and Malaysia. Consider also the recent military coups in Thailand and Fiji and the gradual erosion of democracy in Cambodia, not to mention calls for political reform and persistent dissatisfaction with democracy in Japan, the Philippines, and South Korea. Hence, through our assessment of the quality of democracy in Asia we aim to provide distinctive – and long overdue – insights into the practice of democracy in one of the most complex and rapidly changing regions in the world.

Conceptually, although studies of the quality of democracy are proliferating, many are characterized by what Case (2007: 637) describes as 'fuzzy classifications, ambiguous impacts, false readings and selective scrutiny.' In other words, despite substantial and widely shared concerns about democratic quality, scholars rarely agree about measurements and classifications; nor can most current models fully adjudicate issues of directionality, endogeneity, and potential trade-offs between measures of 'good' democracy. We believe that our study advances the debate in two important respects. First, combining qualitative and quantitative analysis and specifically drawing attention to how various democratic qualities are related, we bring new rigor to assessing the quality of democracy. Moreover, in applying our assessment model to a fairly diversified sample of Asian countries, we also venture beyond earlier applications of the model and offer directions for conceptual advancement.

The resulting findings seem to support a different understanding of democratic practice in Asia-Pacific than in other regions of the world. Most notably, in other regions where our framework has been employed (see Morlino, 2011b) the analysis revealed that 'good things go together' – that is, the quality of democratic procedures affects and is affected by the quality of the democratic content, and both are relatively important determinants for the quality of the democratic output. This is not the case in the Asia-Pacific region, where 'good' democracy is apparently animated by different factors from those in other regions. Moreover, the pattern in this region is likely to be very different for years to come, with features that are far from congruent with those of liberal

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democratic practice in the West. What will ultimately determine the success of these new regime types is how well they perform – and for whom.

To develop these arguments and contextualize the case studies, this introduction will proceed as follows: in the first section, we situate our research within the broader literature; in the second, we present both quantitative and qualitative results of our empirical analysis; and in the third, we discuss how the rest of this special issue is organized.

From quality to qualities

The literature that was long concerned with conceptualizing democracy – its origins, installation, consolidation or crisis, and survival – has in recent years expanded in scope by identifying, addressing, and assessing its quality. Scholars have investigated not only how democratic quality should be conceptualized and what factors are responsible for variations in quality, but also the consequences of these variations. For example, there have been investigations whether, how, and to what extent higher quality was responsible for democratic consolidation and, ultimately survival or whether these variables were orthogonal (Günther et al., 1995).

The merits of these investigations aside, the traditional approach suffered from a variety of shortcomings. For instance, it implicitly neglected the multi-dimensional nature of democracy; it assumed that all democratic qualities go together; and it created a system that could be used to rank countries on the basis of how well they fared in terms of democratic quality.

In reaction to these shortcomings, and after Lijphart's (1999) preliminary effort to switch the focus of inquiry from the quality to the qualities of democracy, we articulated a more explicit framework for how this could be done. Indeed we argued that because democracy is multi-dimensional, attention should be paid to how the system operates procedurally; to how much freedom and equality the political system promotes; to how much responsiveness democracy is able to secure and to how much legitimacy it is able to enjoy from its procedural and content-based performance (Huntington, 1991; Lipset, 1959; Morlino, 2010a).

The current study represents a step forward in at least two respects: first, it provides a theoretical justification for identifying three spheres of democracy and their sub-dimensions; second, it enables the analyst to test empirically whether and to what extent these various dimensions of democracy are actually related to each other. Our framework thus avoids not only the problem of ranking countries according to their alleged democratic virtue (in the singular), but also the problem of creating a framework that assumes a priori that all good (democratic) things must go together. Instead it acknowledges the theoretical possibility that a country can perform well on some democratic sub-dimensions and not so well on others.

Our framework allows us to appreciate the variously democratic systems that fall between the perfectly democratic and the patently nondemocratic. In other words, we provide theoretical foundations for recognizing and analyzing the in-between democratic category that has been variously defined as illiberal, imperfect, informal, or, better, hybrid (Morlino, 2011b). The question, then, is no longer and exclusively whether countries are more or less democratic, but how differently they are democratic.

The purpose of this special issue is to apply our analytical framework where it has never been applied before: the Asia-Pacific region. By doing so we can not only show how much variation there is in terms of democratic qualities, but also how various democratic dimensions are related to each other and, notably, why such diversity has emerged in the region. While each country study that follows offers in-depth analysis of a single case, in this introduction we limit ourselves to a comparative overview, detecting general trends and highlighting some preliminary findings.

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Table 1. Quality of Democracy: domains and dimensions

Domain	Dimension
Procedure	Rule of law
	Electoral accountability
	Inter-institutional accountability
	Political participation
	Political competition
Content	Freedom
	Equality
Outcome	Responsiveness

Quantitative empirical analyses

We have long recommended that instead of investigating democratic *quality*, scholars should investigate democratic *qualities* in the plural, because democracy is an inherently multi-dimensional phenomenon. Specifically we suggested that democratic qualities have three theoretically distinct dimensions – procedural, content-based, and outcome-based – each with its own sub-dimensions (Diamond and Morlino, 2005; Morlino, 2009, 2010b).

Previous empirical applications of our framework have shown how such qualities vary between countries, how they relate to and are connected with one another, and how they form a funnel of causality. They have also shown that participation and competition are crucial sub-dimensions of the procedural dimension and vital determinants of how well countries perform in terms of content and outcome (Morlino and Sadurski, 2010).

In this assessment of the qualities of democracy in the Asia-Pacific region, we will first highlight the variation in democratic qualities, both synchronically between countries and diachronically within countries, and then investigate the extent (if any) to which democratic qualities relate to one another.

To do so we apply the assessment methodology formulated by Morlino (2005, 2009, 2010b), which seeks to evaluate the character of democratic regimes in terms of *procedure*, *content* and *outcome*, and the eight related dimensions of rule of law, electoral accountability, inter-institutional accountability, political participation, political competition, freedom, equality, and responsiveness (see Table 1).

Each dimension is assessed on the basis of a plurality of indicators. Among the procedural dimensions, *rule of law* is assessed on the basis of government respect for the physical integrity of its citizens, government effectiveness, and the degree of corruption. *Electoral accountability* is measured on the basis of freedom of the press and electoral self-determination.[2] *Inter-institutional accountability* is measured on the basis of oversight capacity and the effectiveness of constraints on the executive power. *Political participation* is measured on the basis of voter turnout, and *political competition* on the basis of the number of parties and the difference in the number of parliamentary seats held by the largest and the second largest party.

The content of democracy dimension pertains to the ability to promote freedom and equality, which we measure respectively on the basis of the Freedom House index and the Gini coefficient. Finally, the quality of democracy is assessed in terms of outcome on the basis of how satisfied citizens are with the way democracy works in their country.

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The procedural dimension

We will discuss in order the five procedural dimensions (rule of law, electoral accountability, inter-institutional accountability, participation, and competition) and then measure whether and how well they relate to one another.

Rule of law

There is considerable variation in regard to the rule of law both synchronically and diachronically. For example, between 2002 and 2009, physical integrity was fairly stable in Australia, South Korea, and Taiwan; improved in Indonesia and Japan; worsened in Cambodia, Fiji, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Thailand; and fluctuated in Singapore. The highest respect for citizens' physical integrity was recorded in Japan in 2006 and 2007, in Singapore in 2003 and in Taiwan in 2006, the year when the Philippines received the worst score of the period for the whole region.

While government effectiveness was fairly stable in Australia and Cambodia, it improved in each of the countries under consideration, with the lone exception of Thailand. Cambodia was consistently the most ineffective government in the region and Singapore consistently the most effective.

The level of corruption remained stable in Australia, Japan, the Philippines, Singapore, Taiwan, and Thailand – though there was considerable variation among these countries in the actual level: Singapore, Australia, and Japan are the least corrupt countries in the sample, Taiwan is moderately corrupt, and the Philippines is one of the three most corrupt countries in the sample. Corruption increased in Cambodia and Malaysia, fluctuated in South Korea, and declined in Indonesia. While the civil government was overthrown in Fiji for its inability to curb corruption, the lack of data does not allow us to assess how much the level of corruption has changed since the democratic breakdown in 2006.

Electoral accountability

Variation is again evidenced in the region both in terms of freedom of the press and in voters' electoral self-determination. The press is most free in Australia, Japan, and Taiwan and least free in Malaysia (but one should keep in mind that no data are available for Singapore). Furthermore, the historical series reveal that the freedom of the press declined to varying degrees significantly in Australia, Fiji (after the coup), Japan, the Philippines, South Korea, Thailand, and, after an initial improvement, Taiwan. Cambodia is the only one of our cases where freedom of the press improved during the study period. Electoral self-determination held fairly stable in the whole region, except for declines in Cambodia, Fiji, and Thailand.

Inter-institutional accountability

Constraints on the executive proved to be least effective in Cambodia and most effective in Australia, Japan, and Taiwan; while they were somewhat ineffective in Fiji, Singapore, Thailand, and Malaysia. However, the data also reveal that the effectiveness of executive constraints worsened in Fiji, but improved in Malaysia and Taiwan.

The data on oversight capacity, which are not available for Fiji, reveal no diachronic variation, but the Cambodian parliament was least equipped to oversee the executive, and the Malaysian one best equipped. This finding has an obvious implication: oversight *capacity*, as highlighted by Malaysia,

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does not automatically translate into oversight *activity* and *effective* oversight. Correlating oversight capacity with oversight effectiveness yields a strong, positive, and statistically significant coefficient (r = .579, sig. = .000), which means that oversight capacity accounts for about one-third of the variance in oversight effectiveness.

Political participation

Political participation varies considerably both within and between countries. Turnout rates were above 83 percent in both the 2003 Cambodian and the 2004 Indonesian elections but have traditionally been much lower in Singapore, where voters are a fairly low percentage of the population (20 percent in the 2001 elections and 26 percent in the 2006 elections).

Political competition

When we assess political competition in terms of the number of parties represented in parliament, we find considerable variation. In fact the number varies from just 3 in Singapore (2006) and Taiwan (2008) to 13 in Indonesia (2004) and the Philippines (2004). Sartori (1976) lamented that the sheer number of parliamentary parties may not provide an adequate indication of whether and to what extent a legislature is fragmented because some parties, though present in parliament, are irrelevant to the functioning of the political system. A similar objection could be raised against the decision to assess the degree of competition in a political system on the basis of number of parties alone. A parliament in which three parties each control a third of the seats is quite different from one where one party controls nine-tenths of the seats and the other two parties split the rest. To avoid the risk of being misled by the information conveyed by the number of parties alone, we also look at the difference in number of seats between the strongest and the second strongest party in a legislature.

That difference shows great variation. The closest election was the 2004 Indonesian elections where the difference in representation of the two largest parties amounted to 3.5 percent of parliamentary seats; the least competitive was in Singapore in 2006, when the incumbent party was returned to power and won a staggering 95.2 percent of seats.

The content dimensions

The content of democracy is measured, as noted, on the basis of the level of freedom and the level of equality as reflected by the Gini coefficient. Freedom varies from a minimum of 5.5 (Freedom House index) in Cambodia to a maximum of 1.5 in Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan, the best performing cases in our sample apart from Australia (1). In the 2002–2009 period the level of freedom remained unchanged in Australia, Cambodia, Japan, and Singapore; improved in Indonesia, Malaysia, South Korea, and Taiwan; and worsened in Fiji, the Philippines, and Thailand.

Inequality varies from a minimum of 31.36 in Taiwan to a maximum of 47.35 in the Philippines. The absence of time series data prevents us from empirically assessing whether and how much the level of equality has changed in the region.

The outcome dimension

Outcome is measured on the basis of the legitimacy of democracy, computed by calculating the percentage of survey respondents who indicate that they are either very or fairly satisfied with

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democracy in their country. The value ranges from a minimum of 38 percent recorded in the Philippines in 2005 to a maximum of 90.5 recorded in Thailand in 2002.

How the dimensions connect

We performed several analyses to test the extent to which content dimensions are related to procedural qualities; whether the outcome dimension is related to procedural qualities; and finally whether outcome quality is related to democratic content qualities. Before testing whether the level of freedom in the countries studied is affected by their procedural qualities, we need to spell out how freedom is operationalized on the basis of two Freedom House measures: the political rights (PR) index and the civil liberties (CL) index. The correlation between these two measures is strong (r = .877), positive, and statistically significant. Furthermore, when we combine them to create the Freedom House Index of Freedom [(PR+CL)/2] we find that the correlation between that index and PR yields a Pearson coefficient of .980 while the correlation with CL yields a Pearson coefficient of .955 – both significant at the .000 level.

To test whether the level of freedom registered is affected by procedural qualities, we run five regression models using the PR index as dependent variable, five regression models using the CL index as dependent variable, and five regression models using the Freedom House index as dependent variable.

First, the inter-institutional accountability model (IIA-M) enables us to assess whether freedom is a function of the effective constraints on the executive as measured by Polity IV and of the oversight capacity of legislatures as measured by the number of oversight tools at their disposal (Pelizzo, 2008; Pelizzo and Stapenhurst, 2006).

Second, the electoral accountability model (EA-M) allows us to test whether the level of freedom is affected by freedom of the press as measured by Freedom House and by Cingranelli's index of electoral self-determination.

Third, we use the rule of law model (RL-M) to regress freedom against Cingranelli's index of physical integrity (PHYSINT), which measures the level of individual security and civil order in a given polity; government effectiveness as measured by the World Bank governance indicators; and the level of corruption as measured by the Corruption Perception Index (CPI) devised by Transparency International.

In the fourth model, the participation model (P-M), freedom is viewed as a function of electoral turnout.

With the competition model (C-M) we test whether the level of freedom is affected by the competitiveness of electoral competition, which we measure on the basis of the number of parties winning parliamentary representation and of the difference in the number of seats won by the largest and the second largest party.

In terms of variance explained, the inter-institutional accountability and the electoral accountability models perform equally well regardless of how freedom is operationalized; the participation model performs equally poorly regardless of how freedom is operationalized; and the rule of law and the competition models explain more of the variance in the CL level liberties than in the PR level.

More importantly, these analyses reveal that while all the independent variables used in the inter-institutional and the electoral accountability models have a statistically significant impact on the level of freedom, most of the independent variables used in the other models do not have a significant impact. In fact, only the regression coefficients for PHYSINT in the rule of law models predicting CL, and Gastil index, and the difference in the number of seats of the two largest parties

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in the competition model predicting the level of civil liberties achieved, have a statistically significant impact on the dependent variable.

In other words, while freedom is a function of accountability (electoral and inter-institutional), it is not a function of participation and is only minimally affected by the rule of law and competition. This evidence from the Asia-Pacific region contrasts vividly with what Morlino (2010b) found in his analysis of Europe and Latin America, where the rule of law model explained 81.8 percent and the participation models 80.6 percent of the variance in level of freedom (see Table 2).

To test whether the degree of inequality is affected by procedural dimensions, we apply the four models we used to assess the determinants of the level of freedom in the region (see Table 3). When we measure inequality on the basis of the average Gini coefficient, none of the independent variables included in the participation or the competition model has a statistically significant impact on the level of inequality. By contrast, at least one of the independent variables included in the electoral accountability and the rule of law models is significant, and all the independent variables included in the inter-institutional accountability model are significant.

Table 2. Freedom, Accountability, Rule of Law, Participation, and Competition (Regression Models)

Model	Dependent Variable					
Inter-institutional accountability model		Intercept	Effective Constraints on the Executive	Oversight Capacity		R-squared
	FH Political Rights	5.358 (.000)	−.889 (.000)	.380 (.001)		.789
	FH Civil Liberties	4.474 (.000)	−.576 (.000)	.271 (.000)		.760
	Gastil Index	4.916 (.000)	−.732 (.000)	.325 (.000)		.815
Electoral accountability model		Intercept	Freedom of the press	Elecsd		
	FH political rights	3.417 (.000)	.051 (.000)	−1.504 (.000)		.724
	FH civil liberties	1.379 (.000)	.053 (.000)	−.405 (.004)		.808
	Gastil Index	2.454 (.000)	.054 (.000)	−1.028 (.000)		.774
Rule of law model		Intercept	Physint	WB gov't effectiveness	CPI	R-squared
	FH political rights	2.302 (.025)	−.317 (.053)	−1.214 (.129)	+.578 (.076)	.128
	FH civil liberties	3.030 (.000)	−.273 (.012)	−.923 (.081)	.361 (.089)	.271
	Gastil Index	2.666 (.002)	−.295 (.025)	−1.073 (.096)	.470 (.071)	.189
Participation model		Intercept		Electoral turnout		R-squared
	FH political rights	2.660 (.194)		.002 (.952)		.000
	FH civil liberties	3.070 (.033)		−.003 (.856)		.002
	Gastil Index	2.865 (.000)		−.001 (.970)		.001
Competition Model		Intercept	Number of parties	Difference in the number of seats		
	FH political rights	2.826 (.027)	−.112 (.432)	.025 (.145)		.186
	FH civil liberties	1.425 (.070)	.094 (.298)	.028 (.015)		.305
	Gastil Index	2.125 (.037)	−.009 (.938)	.027 (.060)		.207

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Table 3. Equality, Accountability, Rule of Law, Participation, and Competition (Regression Models)

Model	Dependent Variable					
Inter-institutional accountability model		Intercept	Effective constraints on the executive	Oversight Capacity		R-squared
	Gini	37.301 (.000)	−1.154 (.006)	1.648 (.015)		.134
Electoral accountability model		Intercept	Freedom of the press	Elecsd		
	Gini	45.836 (.000)	.039 (.406)	−4.955 (.005)		.243
Rule of law model		Intercept	Physint	WB gov't effectiveness	CPI	R-squared
	Gini	42.756 (.000)	−1.948 (.002)	−.253 (.931)	1.19 (.302)	.190
Participation model		Intercept		Turnout		R-squared
	Gini	33.017 (.000)		.092 (.303)		.066
Competition model		Intercept	Number of parties	Difference in the number of seats		
	Gini	36.948 (.000)	−.112 (.814)	.085 (.149)		.150

These results, thus, sustain the claim that while equality is a function of inter-institutional accountability, and to a lesser extent of electoral accountability and the rule of law, it is indifferent to variation in the level of participation and competition.

The results presented in Table 3 contrast starkly with what had previously been documented. For example, in an analysis of the determinants of equality Morlino (2011a) found that each of his models (rule of law, electoral accountability, inter-institutional accountability, participation, and competition) explains more than 40 percent of the variance of equality; that at least one regression coefficient had a significant impact on equality; and that the rule of law, the participation, and the competition models each had more than one significant regression coefficient. In the present case no model explains more than 25 per cent of the variance; only one model (IIA-M) has more than one significant regression coefficient; and no coefficient in the participation and competition models affects equality in a significant way. In short, the results presented in Tables 2 and 3 show that the connections between procedural qualities and content qualities in the Asia-Pacific region are not as strong as they are elsewhere.

What is responsible for the quality of democracy in terms of outcome? Does satisfaction with democracy vary because of variations in the quality of democratic procedures and content? The results (see Table 4) indicate that, unlike what previous studies had found, the rule of law, participation, and electoral accountability models explain a relatively negligible portion of the variance in satisfaction with democracy and that no variable in these models has a statistically significant impact on satisfaction with democracy. The competition model, on the contrary, does explain a sizeable portion of the variance in satisfaction with democracy, but contrary to what might be expected given previous studies conducted on the quality of democracy elsewhere, as the gap between the size of the largest and the second largest party widens and as the system becomes less competitive, satisfaction with democracy increases. Finally, inter-institutional accountability

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Table 4. Satisfaction with Democracy, Accountability, Rule of Law, Participation, and Competition (Regression Models)

Model	Dependent Variable					
Inter-institutional accountability model		Intercept	Effective constraints on the executive	Oversight Capacity		R-squared
	Satisfaction with democracy	64.373 (.011)	−9.313 (.010)	9.508 (.090)		.702
Electoral accountability model		Intercept	Freedom of the press	Elecsd		R-squared
	Satisfaction with democracy	41.427 (.230)	.603 (.317)	−.427 (.967)		.229
Rule of law model		Intercept	Physint	WB gov't effectiveness	CPI	R-squared
	Satisfaction with democracy	67.837 (.167)	1.368 (.750)	13.22 (.736)	−3.737 (.792)	.099
Participation model		Intercept		Turnout		R-squared
	Satisfaction with democracy	84.922 (.283)		−.253 (.784)		.111
Competition model		Intercept		Difference in the number of seats		R-squared
	Satisfaction with democracy	52.548 (.178)		.379 (.371)		.697

appears to be the single best predictor of satisfaction with democracy. But while Asian voters are more satisfied in countries where the legislature has a wider arsenal of oversight tools that can be employed to monitor the actions of the executive, they are less satisfied in countries where such oversight activities are performed more effectively.

In short, if the coefficients in all the regression models were significant, our analysis would suggest that Asian voters are happier with democracy when the executive is not scrutinized too closely, freedom of the press is lower, electoral turnout is lower, the gap between the largest and the second largest party is wider, and government is more effective.

A final word: it might, of course, be said that one reason we fail to detect significant relationships between satisfaction with democracy, on the one hand, and procedural qualities, on the other, is that some procedural qualities (electoral and inter-institutional accountabilities) are significant determinants of content qualities (freedom and equality) and that while they do not seem to have a significant direct influence on the quality of democracy, they have a strong and significant indirect influence.[3] To see whether this is indeed the case, we need to test the extent to which satisfaction with democracy is a function of freedom and equality.

From this perspective Table 5 suggests that when satisfaction with democracy is predicted against equality, satisfaction is higher in countries that have greater inequality. When we regress satisfaction against freedom, we find that satisfaction is higher in countries that have less freedom and this negative relationship between freedom and satisfaction with democracy remains unchanged

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Table 5. Regressions on Satisfaction with Democracy

Dependent Variable				R-squared
	Intercept	FH Index	Gini Index	
Satisfaction	61.513 (.000)	2.835 (.405)		.070
Satisfaction	49.354 (.189)		.496 (.577)	.032
Satisfaction	49.61 (.198)	2.49 (.502)	.311 (.744)	.082

even when we control for equality – whereas, when we control for levels of freedom, satisfaction with democracy is inversely related to inequality.

The fact that satisfaction with democracy not only has little to do with the content of a democratic system, but also with its procedures suggests that what is valued in the Asia-Pacific region is not so much democracy, but rather 'good governance,' understood here in a narrow technocratic sense.

Qualitative empirical analyses

How can we explain these surprising results? A further contextualization of some of the findings from a qualitative perspective might be helpful.

Legacies of the past

Except for Japan's pre-war proto-democracy (1868–1940) and the short-lived first republic in the Philippines (1899–1901), democracy did not arrive in the region until after World War II, when it was part of the global wave of democratization linked to US occupation and tutelage (Japan, South Korea) and the collapse of colonialism (the Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia). As elsewhere, reversal came quickly, paving the way for dominance by authoritarian regimes in the 1960s/70s. Later on, as part of the third wave of democratization in the 1980s some new democracies were established in the region, though with dramatic differences in form and practice.

But commonalities risk clouding unique instances of democratic evolution in the region that still shape debates about what is a quality democracy. First, the early collapse of a number of new democracies due to political and social instability, inadequate government capacity, creeping authoritarianism, and international drivers, such as shifting US attitudes toward regime stability during the Cold War, left democratic practice in the region with only weak roots (except in Japan). It also paved the way for comparatively successful authoritarian developmental states that could claim considerable legitimacy. Indeed, benefiting from both Japan's rapid economic recovery and regional leadership and US geostrategic interests in the region, industrialization spread rapidly first to Northeast Asia (South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong) and later Southeast Asia (Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, and Indonesia). This in turn formed the basis for a wider 'imagined community of developmental dictatorships' (Thompson, 2007: 2) that deliberately emulated the trajectory of political development in East Asian economies, combining soft authoritarianism (particularly aimed at demobilization of the left and control of civil society) with state-led interventions in the economy to achieve high economic growth.

The legacies of the developmental state trajectory cannot be overstated. In fact, despite the return of democracy in the late 1980s and 1990s as a result of rapid economic development and

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associated socioeconomic changes (urbanization, growth of the middle class); internal decay (Philippines); evolutionary changes within authoritarian regimes (Taiwan, Korea); or the erosion of regime legitimacy due to the Asian financial crisis (1997) and new demands for good governance (Indonesia, Thailand), that legacy continues to animate struggles over dimensions of democratic quality. For instance, despite the emergence of new social demands as part of modernizing change, countries in the region on the whole continue to battle to differing extent with legacies of executive dominance; weak intermediary and formal institutions (parties, parliaments, courts); authoritarian enclaves (military, dominant elite groups); and political and economic exclusion. Perhaps, even more important is the notable ambivalence of many middle-class constituencies about how far democratic practice should extend (Brown and Martin Jones, 1995; Jayasuriya and Rodan, 2007). Perhaps because they themselves are a legacy of the developmental state model, these constituencies seem to be at best 'contingent democrats' (Bellin, 2000). They are concerned with issues of stability and performance, but deeply skeptical about expansion of the franchise to formerly disenfranchised groups. The result is what has been described as a regional cycle of 'democratic revolution, populist challenges, and reformist reaction' (Thompson, 2007: 3). How are these legacies playing out?

Procedural dimensions: more form than substance?

As already highlighted in the previous section and as will be elaborated in the case studies that follow, political liberalization and democratization have brought about considerable expansion and deepening of the many procedural dimensions of democracy in Asia-Pacific but have proved remarkably less successful in securing adequate implementation of these procedures.

The region's continuous struggle with establishing the rule of law is a case in point. Despite sweeping constitutional and other legal changes aimed at strengthening rights and the judiciary (most notably through new bills of rights and establishment of judicial review), rule of law indicators not only vary widely across the region, but are for the most part low relative to elsewhere, for a number of reasons. For instance, in a number of countries, widespread corruption, authoritarian enclaves, and inadequate state capacity have effectively undermined the rule of law, as is vividly illustrated by extrajudicial killings in the Philippines and widespread abuses in the Indonesian judicial system.

Perhaps, even more important are the legacies of fragile judicial independence due to executive dominance; a culture of impunity for powerful elite actors (many of whom view themselves as above the law, if not the constitution); and political manipulation of the judiciary consistent with an understanding of rule *by* rather than *of* law. Consider the intimidation of the judiciary under Prime Minister Hun Sen in Cambodia; manipulation of the trials of opposition leader Anwar Ibrahim in Malaysia; or recent events in Thailand that saw the courts emerge as powerful allies of Thailand's traditional elites in their efforts to reverse the outcomes of general elections. Even in Singapore, a country consistently ranking high on rule of law indicators, there is a question of whether government authority is actually subject to law, given that the government can alter laws at will. Hence, together with the close relationship between judiciary and government in Japan and Taiwan, it is certainly true that the region is still marked by a more utilitarian understanding of rule *by* rather than *of* law – although ever more competitive and pluralist politics also suggest that a move in the other direction might not only be necessary but possible.

Similarly, while accountability procedures – electoral and inter-institutional – have gained great importance in the region, their effects on democratic practice are far from clear. For instance, with several countries conducting free and fair elections and even experiencing alternations in

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power, it is not surprising that electoral accountability has gained prominence, especially where it is complemented by reinvigorated media. But progress has been uneven, and electoral accountability is still weak, for a number of reasons. Except where single parties dominate (e.g. Japan, Singapore, Malaysia, Taiwan), political parties are not well institutionalized. Because they tend to lack any programmatic orientation and rely on powerful factions or clientelistic networks for financing and mobilization, they fail to fulfill many basic functions, and vote- and candidate-buying remain widespread. Elite capture of representative institutions (Philippines); electoral manipulation (Singapore, Malaysia); outright intimidation (Cambodia, Fiji); and legacies of hereditary politics (Japan, Korea) severely constrain chances for more effective routes of electoral accountability. Recurrent popular protest and growing populist challenges are perhaps best understood in this context, though recent middle-class reformism in Thailand also suggests that many actors are willing to resort to extra-constitutional means if they cannot see their policy preferences achieved through the ballot box (Nelson, 2007; Surin, 2006; Ukrist, 2008).

This may explain the noticeable emphasis on dimensions of inter-institutional accountability in the region. As part of the latest constitutional wave, a number of countries have not only strengthened the separation of powers, but also added new constitutional oversight instruments, such as powerful anticorruption and human rights commissions, supreme audit institutions, and specialized courts, in the hope that these would both provide a bulwark against future democratic erosion and help to deepen the democratic process (Ginsburg and Chen, 2009; Harding and Nicholson, 2010). Questions remain, however, as to whether democratic processes improved in the wake of the reformist wave. For instance, in the Philippines – the frontrunner for many of these developments – commissions have had little effect; they may even have exacerbated persistent political deadlock. And, as illustrated in Thailand, some of these institutions also seem to reflect deep distrust of the electoral process and representative institutions.

Indeed, what is often expressed as governance reform contains an implicit technocratic agenda that seeks to depoliticize the political process, particularly its locus, parliament. In Thailand quasi-judicial commissions and the judiciary have stripped MPs of election victories and helped topple several prime ministers, markedly altering the political balance (Dressel, 2010). In short, while partly animated by the desire of reform constituencies for better governance, the new emphasis on inter-institutional accountability structures is in considerable part driven by notions of technocratic governance directed at mitigating the vagaries of an increasingly contentious political process.

Finally, this plays into the unique pattern of the dimensions of participation and contestation that the region exhibits. For instance, although as a result of political liberalization the region has seen a rapid increase in political participation, both formal (voting) and informal (strikes, civil society activity, new types of political leadership), these activities have hardly been uniform or consistent. In some countries civil society has been active in advancing liberalization (Taiwan, South Korea, Philippines, Indonesia); in others it has been complementary to, if not dependent on, the state (Japan, Singapore). Meanwhile, certain groups – particularly from labor and the organized left – have been sidelined.

Noteworthy, too, is the fact that despite regular popular outbursts and comparatively high voter turnout in the region, political participation rates have been traditionally low between election cycles, and surveys indicate a general lack of confidence in citizens' ability to influence political processes. Many citizens seem to rely on informal forms of participation, from petitions to street protests. Nevertheless, many regimes have become quite successful in channeling the new-found levels of participation, whether in the form of neo-corporatist arrangements and civil society consultation (Thailand, Japan, Malaysia); reserved seats in parliament (Philippines); or administrative structures for individualizing participation in such forms as Singapore's feedback units.

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Similar observations might hold true for aspects of political competition, which has notably increased with the party and electoral system reforms that have accompanied democratization. For instance, laws passed in Korea (e.g. Integrated Election Act, Political Fund Act) and Japan (Political Reform Bill) in the 1990s directly addressed issues of political funding, factionalism, and the organization of political parties. Similarly, changes in the political system have forced former mass-bureaucratic parties like Indonesia's GOLKAR and Taiwan's KMT to accept more intraparty competition and clearer separation of party and business interests. Electoral reforms, meanwhile, have aimed to address legacies of single-party dominance, money politics, and regionalism through rules that incorporate elements of proportional representation (Japan, Indonesia, Thailand) and foster greater accountability through local elections (Philippines, Indonesia) and direct elections of the executive or head of state (Indonesia, Taiwan, Singapore). Yet there is still continuous elite dominance in both houses of the Philippines Congress, emerging tendencies toward party cartelization in Indonesia, and a persistence of dominant, or rather hegemonic, party systems (Sartori, 1976) in Malaysia, Singapore, and Cambodia. In Taiwan and Japan former dominant parties have returned to power, and traditional politicians and families continue to exercise political power in Indonesia, the Philippines, Japan, and Thailand.

The unique dynamics of participation and competition bring into focus larger deficiencies of political representation in Asia-Pacific. Traditional elite groups often continue to dominate the political process, exacerbating political and economic exclusion. Efforts to reserve seats for disenfranchised groups (Philippines) or nominate members to parliament (Singapore) have done little to reverse this trend, instead acting as a means by which governments stifle opposition, particularly from the organized left. Perhaps most problematic, collective middle-class backlash against some populist regimes demonstrates that many key constituencies in the region are still deeply skeptical about expanding political representation to nontraditional groups, to the point where they are willing to accept limits to political participation and competition (particularly when electoral dynamics are unlikely to work in their favor). In Thailand, this has led to a return to a partially appointed Senate and rules that make it harder for nontraditional politicians to win seats.

In short, despite remarkable procedural progress over two decades, persistent deficiencies and choices among procedural dimensions reflective of the past suggest that many powerful groups in Asian Pacific countries may have a very restricted understanding of what constitutes good democracy – or are committed to restricting democracy in order to preserve their privileges.

Content: freedom and equality vs. illiberal democracy

As the articles that follow will illustrate, in Asia-Pacific the relevance of dimensions of freedom and equality – traditionally at the heart of the liberal democratic model – is continuously challenged by legacies of authoritarianism, technocratic developmentalism, and debates about a unique way of governance based on Asian cultural traits, values, and political thought.

True, many regimes in the region have moved towards constitutional governance and stronger civil and political rights through expanded bills of rights, constitutional courts, and human rights commissions. But in many countries there remains the traditional emphasis on rule *by* law (as shown by the continual invocation of the colonial-era internal security act in Malaysia and Singapore); a culture of impunity for human rights abuses by members of the security services (Thailand, Indonesia); and what many see as a clash between Western conceptions of individual autonomy and capacity to shape one's own world – inherent in the notion of freedom – and 'Asian values' that are family-centered, order-oriented, community-privileged, and rooted in such cultural traditions as Confucianism.

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Similar dynamics and deficiencies might apply more generally to aspects of equality in terms of the marginalization of certain groups from the political process based on ethnic background (indigenous communities, Chinese minorities); political orientation (groups on the left); gender; and persistently high levels of social inequality resulting from decades of industrialization and economic development that have emphasized rapid growth over equity. In nation-building, states struggling with multiracial societies have often relied on formal policies of ethnic discrimination (NEP, Malaysia); communitarian ideologies (Singapore); or informal compacts for the division of economic and political power (Thailand, Indonesia), in the process cementing ethnic dominance. Even in more homogeneous societies (Japan, South Korea, Taiwan) progress has been slow in addressing political and economic inequalities. Some authors therefore argue that despite firmly egalitarian ideas found in Asian social and political theory, such as the Confucian emphasis on meritocracy and equality before the law, hierarchical world views (e.g. paternalism, bureaucratic decision making) are deeply entrenched. These hierarchical world views help shape the distinct ways in which politics is conducted in the region.

Thus, despite democratization and correlative progress on both content dimensions, for historical, institutional, and cultural reasons Asian political systems remain reluctant to expand freedom and equality, particularly when they risk conflicting with collective aims articulated by the state, such as economic development, social harmony, or political stability. This helps explain the appeal of illiberal democracies in Asia-Pacific despite challenges by civil society and new social movements.

Outcome: responsiveness and performance legitimacy

Notwithstanding shortcomings in dimensions of procedure and content, there is little doubt that responsiveness and performance legitimacy, more generally, are critical to current democratic practice in Asia-Pacific. This is hardly surprising given the legacies of highly successful developmental states there, which applied technocratic-managerial policies to generate the fastest economic development in history and the largest expansion of wealth ever seen. The shared experiences of the 1997 financial crisis and more recent uncertainties about the global financial crisis that unfolded in 2008 have if anything reinforced demands for stable and efficient technocratic governments that would ensure future economic success. Illiberal and authoritarian regimes, meanwhile, are particularly keen to maintain responsiveness and entertain performance legitimacy, not least as a buffer against demands for further political liberalization.

As will be seen, middle-class constituencies in Asia-Pacific have emerged as particular drivers of the emphasis on the outcome dimension. Socialized under developmental state models and disproportionately benefiting from state-led development policies and employment, middle-class actors in Asia have proved particularly willing to subordinate procedural or content aspects of democratic practice to the cause of a rationally managed and efficient state that ultimately caters to their needs. It is only when states fail to do so – as during the Asian financial crisis – that these constituencies are likely to withdraw support, instead of animating a reformist discourse on good governance that seeks to re-establish the managerial and technocratic autonomy of the state to ensure economic development. By the same logic, states that proved apt at managing the economy in times of crisis (Malaysia, Singapore) have often been able to count on increased support, despite considerable democratic deficiencies. Once again this reveals the contingent nature of middle-class support for democracy.

As shown by recent political crises in the region, however, outcome dimensions have also become more contentious. The rise of populist features and movements in Thailand, Korea, and the

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Philippines testifies, for instance, to the emergence of a new cleavage structure that, by combining class with urban–rural cleavages, juxtaposes the rural poor to the urban middle class, in terms of both distributional needs and policy choices. Furthermore, with the ever-growing integration of Asian states into the global economy, countries have become more vulnerable to external shocks and more constrained in ensuring shared and inclusive growth (see the unraveling of the ethnic compact in Malaysia). Lastly, even mature high-quality regimes find it hard to escape these dynamics; they face not only increasing structural constraints (an aging population, saturated growth), but also the challenge of maintaining a state-led model of development as they approach the uncertainties of the technological frontier, as illustrated by Japan's decade-long stagnation.

In sum, while responsiveness and performance legitimacy aspects are likely to remain critical for the conception of democratic quality in the region, there is a question whether a single-minded emphasis on the outcome dimension will be sufficient in the long run or would need to be complemented by the elevation of procedural and content dimensions to ensure stability.

Conclusion and structure of the issue

With these parameters in mind, we now turn our attention to the six country case studies by our contributors. These were selected from a continuing research project for their instructive insights into issues highlighted here.

Federico Ferrara examines the Thai case. Written against the backdrop of widening political instability since the 2006 military coup, the paper draws a sobering picture of the quality of democracy in Thailand, where traditional power structures actively undermine the procedural and content dimensions of democratic governance. And yet, Ferrara argues, given recent challenges by pro-democracy red shirt protesters, and new patterns of authoritarianism that are only weakly institutionalized, transformation of the current situation, while difficult to predict, might also hold the potential for deepening aspects of democratic quality in Thailand.

Björn Dressel examines the case of the Philippines, Asia's oldest democracy. The article highlights the paradoxes besetting the Philippines – from electoral exuberance and rights euphoria to a deeply flawed elite-dominated political process that has disenfranchised large parts of the population and failed to uphold the ideals and deliver to the demands of the majority of the population. The author also provides a careful analysis of how procedural shortfalls have not only undermined content dimensions in areas of freedom and equality but have also led to a general crisis of legitimacy for the state that will demand critical attention from reformist president Benigno 'Noynoy' Aquino.

Kheang Un's analysis of the Cambodian case reveals that the political regime has acquired more legitimacy in spite of a decline in the overall quality of democracy for the Cambodian population. Indeed, as we suggest in this introduction, the case confirms that Cambodians are more concerned with the ability of the political system to cater to their needs and ensure economic growth and development than with electoral representation.

In his article in this collection, Stephen McCarthy turns attention to Fiji. McCarthy's analysis of this case from the Pacific sustains the claim that the chronic instability of democratic rule in Fiji – the deterioration of democratic quality before the 2006 coup and the consequent democratic breakdown – can to a large extent be explained by social factors (deep ethnic cleavages, the legacy of traditional modes of governance, and inter-elite struggle) that prevent democracy not only from functioning effectively but also from legitimizing itself as the only game in town. This is a good illustration of how procedures affect results.

Hyug Baeg Im's description and analysis of how the eight democratic qualities evolved in South Korea identify major democratic flaws, in particular on dimensions of accountability, but

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also illustrate how improvements in several democratic qualities correlate with persistently high economic growth in the wake of the transition. His main point is that without democratization and the subsequent improvement in the main democratic dimensions, Korea could not have sustained high economic growth and would in all likelihood have failed to adjust to the dramatic changes in the competitive environment brought about by the end of the Cold War, the rise of the IT revolution, and expanding globalization.

Chang, Chu and Huang's study of Taiwan details variations across democratic qualities and over time. The study indicates quite convincingly a point emphasized in this essay, namely, that democratic qualities do not always go hand in hand, or, to use more technical jargon, they do not co-vary. In fact, the Taiwanese case makes it quite clear that although electoral participation, competition, and possibly individual freedoms have increased, corruption, rule of law and equality have remained unchanged or slightly worsened.

A few final observations can be drawn from an assessment of these cases taken together. One is methodological: In this study, we took an analytical tool originally developed solely for democracies and applied it to hybrid and authoritarian regimes. While some might object to such an expansive use of the approach, transplanting the model to a different setting proved effective. Our analysis clearly identified what needs to change if a hybrid regime is to achieve some semblance of democracy. Similarly, for authoritarian cases our analysis was useful in helping to identify the regimes most distant from and least likely to undergo democratic change. These insights were made possible by the fact that, unlike previous studies of transitions, we treated democracy as the multi-dimensional phenomenon it is: we identified its various dimensions, disaggregated them and then investigated empirically whether, how and to what extent they are related.

The approach also illustrated that the Asia-Pacific region is characterized by a variety of uniquely distinctive and intertwined factors. Indeed, in contrast to other regions, such as an enlarged Europe or Latin America, where the dimensions of democracy are tightly related to each other and create a funnel of causality (see Morlino, 2011b), we found that in the Asia Pacific region, democratic sub-dimensions are far more weakly related and there is no clear funnel of causality. This is illustrated by the fact that outcome variables were more strongly related to procedural sub-dimensions than to content dimensions.

The reasons for this are complex. First, since World War II, authoritarian and communist governments have largely dominated domestic politics in the region. Because both types of government have generally performed well economically, democracy with its procedural components is acceptable only if it can sustain similar levels of growth and improvements in the standard of living (see, for similar findings, Yun-Han et al., 2008). As demonstrated in the Taiwanese case and others, this affective dimension depends considerably on perceptions that can easily be manipulated and distorted by partisan action. Indeed, the way in which political actors present and represent the democratic reality is crucial to how democracy is perceived, accepted and legitimized. Democratic actors can help legitimize democracy by explaining to citizens, who are very much concerned with performance, that democracy is a necessary adjustment to the new global environment and the only way to preserve a thriving economy. This kind of message conveyed by new democratic elites was very effective in creating acceptance of democracy in Spain and Portugal; it was able to convince citizens with positive recollections of Franco and Salazar to accept democracy as the new 'only game in town' without destroying past memories (see Morlino, 1998). In Southeast Asia, where nostalgia for authoritarianism continues in many places (see Chang et al., 2008), a similar message might be required to effect the necessary change.

But the uniqueness of the Asia-Pacific region has other consequences. Freedom and equality, the core values of democracy that relate to content, are not as salient here as in other parts of the

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world. While freedom may be appreciated in the Asia-Pacific region, at least as far as the protection of basic rights is concerned, equality is much less likely to be a concern. Citizens may regard it as unrealistic or fail to appreciate it for structural or cultural reasons. This was most apparent in the Philippines, where equality concerns are hampered by entrenched elite interests, but it can also be seen elsewhere.[4]

Analysis of the quality of democracy in the Asia-Pacific region also reveals the issue of 'emptied' democracies, political regimes that possess the formal aspects of democracy but not its substance. For instance, in many places electoral and inter-institutional accountability are very weak because of low levels of electoral participation and few candidates. These problems are exacerbated by vote-buying, patronage and other forms of electoral fraud.

What are the implications of this analysis for democracy in the Asia-Pacific region? Our research demonstrates that facilitating democracy in the region and increasing its responsiveness and legitimacy could be achieved by a transition from a rule *by* law – often coupled with the prominence of patronage, patrimonialist practices and privileges for the elite – to a proper rule *of* law. Growth in all the sub-dimensions of the rule of law, especially administrative capacity, independence of the judiciary and integrity, would constitute a crucial step toward building a more solid foundation for responsiveness and superior democratic outcomes. If our analysis is correct, what is needed in the Asia-Pacific region is effective rule of law. Only after that has been secured can competition and participation function as the engines of democracy that Diamond and Morlino (2005) suggest they are.

It is obvious that taking such a step is challenging, not only for democratic forces operating in authoritarian or hybrid regimes but for all countries in the region. This study thus, in effect, sets out two agendas: one for political actors, both collective and individual, and the other for scholars of democracy. The former need to understand how to promote the necessary aspects of the rule of law within their own countries, securing growth and promoting democratic values among their citizens. The latter need a more refined understanding of the rule of law in all its aspects and what the possibilities are for its effective implementation. We believe that this special issue provides a starting point for further research on this question, and hopefully real progress.

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Notes

1. Indeed, over the last decade, about one in five countries worldwide has either reverted to authoritarianism or experienced a significant erosion of democratic institutions. Freedom House has noted that 2009 marked the fourth consecutive year in which freedom declined around the world – the first time since ranking began 40 years ago (Freedom House, 2010).
2. Though recognizing that a free press, acting as a watchdog, may facilitate inter-institutional accountability, in this study we have decided to use it as a measure of vertical accountability because we believe that a free press is an essential condition for the expression of suffrage. In fact, if the press is not free, parties have no means to make voters aware of their values and policy stances, and voters are unable to make informed decisions at the ballot box. Furthermore, insofar as a free press reveals their failures and the successes, it allows voters to decide whether incumbents should be punished or rewarded. It is precisely because a free press enables voters to keep governments accountable at election times, that we use free press as an indicator of electoral accountability.

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3. Another objection might be that our estimates may be biased by multicollinearity. Correlation analysis reveals that the absence of collinearity is by itself insufficient to show a lack of multicollinearity. To see whether the variables included in our models are multicollinear, we regress each independent variable employed in each model against the other independent variables and treat a high R-squared as an indication of multicollinearity. While there is no trace of multicollinearity for the electoral accountability, inter-institutional accountability, participation, and competition models, the variables in the rule of law model are multicollinear because a combination of any two explains more than 90 percent of the variance of the third. To avoid this multicollinearity problem, which by expanding the standard deviation of our estimated slope coefficient, makes our coefficients appear less significant than they are, we create a rule of law factor on the basis of the three variables included in the model. We then regress the Freedom House index (FH) against the rule of law factor and find that the model explains 10.3 percent of the variance (R^2 = .103) and takes the following form (Sig.): FH = 2.819–.462 rule of law factor (.000) (.014). This rule of law factor is not a significant predictor of either equality or satisfaction with democracy. Furthermore, for each of the models, we have saved the residuals and plotted them against the various independent variables to detect whether there were problems of heteroskedasticity or nonlinearity, or whether the residuals were not randomly distributed relative to the independent variables. The diagnostic plots revealed no clear systematic relationship between residuals and independent variables and no trace of either nonlinearity or heteroskedasticity.
4. This finding does not contradict earlier findings by Yun-Han et al. (2008), who stress – based on survey data – how 'democratic performance', defined as the regime's performance in providing freedom, seems to matter more than policy performance (what we call here responsiveness). However, our assessment of the findings does differ and this can possibly be attributed to the different types of data used by the previous study and the period the survey was conducted (2001–2003).

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