

# AFRO BAROMETER

Afrobarometer Paper No. 19

## WIDE BUT SHALLOW: POPULAR SUPPORT FOR DEMOCRACY IN AFRICA

by Michael Bratton

**A comparative series of national public  
attitude surveys on democracy, markets  
and civil society in Africa.**



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AFROBAROMETER WORKING PAPERS

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by Michael Bratton

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## AFROBAROMETER WORKING PAPERS

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## WIDE BUT SHALLOW: POPULAR SUPPORT OF DEMOCRACY IN AFRICA

In his pocket guide to democracy, Dahl asks a disturbing question: “might what is called ‘democracy’ become both broader in reach and shallower in depth, extending to more and more countries as its democratic qualities grow ever more feeble?”<sup>1</sup> As Przeworski and colleagues have reminded us, the consolidation of democracy cannot be depicted by mere quantities such as the number of countries that hold elections or the span of years that elected governments survive.<sup>2</sup> At heart, regime consolidation involves qualitative change within political institutions and political cultures, processes that Diamond has described as democratic *deepening*.<sup>3</sup> In different ways, all of these authors wonder whether the global expansion of the formal institutions of political competition, elections, and popular sovereignty are simply a veneer. Beneath the surface, are democratic preferences, procedures and habits actually taking root?

In addressing this question, this chapter draws on a grand tradition of comparative research on mass attitudes to democracy and extends it into uncharted territory. It applies and adapts to sub-Saharan Africa approaches used in Norris’s “world-wide audit of support for representative democracy at the end of the twentieth century.”<sup>4</sup> Via the test-case of African public opinion, it is possible to observe how broadly and deeply popular attachments to democracy have spread under conditions that are among the least propitious in the world. Preliminary results from a large-scale, systematic survey research project, known as the Afrobarometer,<sup>5</sup> show that impressively large proportions of people in Africa’s new multiparty regimes say that they support democracy. They especially value the political liberalization that has recently occurred in their countries, especially when comparing present political arrangements with previous *ancien régimes*. But, for a variety of reasons analyzed below, their support is partial, formative, dispersed and conditional. In short, while expressed support for democracy in Africa may be wide, it is also shallow.

This argument is made with reference to six claims, each supported with survey and other evidence:

- 1) Popular conceptions of democracy are tractable;
- 2) Enclaves of non-democratic sentiment remain;
- 3) Rejection of authoritarian alternatives does not amount to support for democracy;
- 4) Democratization is far from complete;
- 5) Support for democracy is dispersed; and
- 6) Liberalization does not amount to democratization.

### Democracy Enjoys a Wide Base of Popular Support

First, the good news: democracy enjoys a wide base of popular support in those parts of Africa that have recently undergone electoral transitions. The Afrobarometer asks a standard question about support for democracy using wording frequently employed to track such commitments. Because the merits of this question are debatable, it is worth quoting in full. It asks: “Which of these three statements is closest to your own opinion? A. Democracy is preferable to any other form of government. B. In certain situations, a non-democratic government can be preferable. C. To people like me, it doesn’t matter what form of government we have.” This question has been asked in similar form in the Eurobarometer, the Latinobarometer, and the World Values Survey, thus inviting broad cross-national and cross-continental comparisons.<sup>6</sup>

By this measure, two out of three citizens (69 percent) in 12 African countries say that they prefer democracy to other forms of government (see Table 1, Row 1). This distribution marks a solid

base of pro-democracy sentiment in post-transition regimes on a continent that is usually held to lag behind the rest of the world in indicators of democracy and development. The mean score on support for democracy for the Afrobarometer countries falls squarely between the mean scores for Western Europe (82 percent in the 1990s) and Latin America (59 percent in 2000).<sup>7</sup> As in Latin America, however, cross-country variance in country scores is wider than in Western Europe, suggesting an African region whose populations have yet to fully agree about the virtues of democracy.<sup>8</sup>

**Table 1: Popular Attitudes to Democracy, Selected African Countries, 1999-2001<sup>i</sup>**  
(percentages of national samples, including “don’t knows”)

	Bot	Gha	Les	Mwi	Mal	Nam	Nig	Saf	Tan	Uga	Zam	Zim	AFRO
<b>SUPPORT FOR DEMOCRACY.</b>													
“Democracy is preferable to any other kind of government.”	83	77	39	66	60	57	81	60	84	80	74	71	<b>69</b>
“In certain situations, a non-democratic government can be preferable.”	7	9	11	22	16	12	9	13	12	8	9	11	<b>12</b>
“For someone like me, it doesn’t matter what form of government we have.” (percentage choosing these options)	6	15	23	11	24	12	10	21	5	8	12	13	<b>13</b>
<b>UNDERSTANDINGS OF DEMOCRACY</b>													
“What, if anything, do you understand by the word ‘democracy’?” (percentage able to offer a meaning)	68	74	51	92	70	66	94	90	83	69	74	70	<b>77</b>
(percentage saying civil and political liberties)	24	37	15	68	21	46	28	49	48	25	56	24	<b>36</b>
<b>SATISFACTION WITH DEMOCRACY.</b>													
“Overall, how satisfied are you with the way democracy works in (your country)?” (percentage saying “fairly” or “very” satisfied)	75	54	38	57	60	63	84	52	70	62	58	18	<b>58</b>
<b>REJECTION OF AUTHORITARIAN RULE.</b>													
Military rule.	85	88	69	82	70	58	90	75	96	89	94	79	<b>81</b>
One man rule.	86	87	69	87	73	56	84	67	92	84	89	78	<b>79</b>
One party state.	78	78	51	77	74	63	88	56	60	53	80	74	<b>69</b>
Traditional leaders.	74	71	59	71	47	54	74 <sup>ii</sup>	64	88	80	80	63	<b>69</b>
Reject authoritarian rule (all 4 alternatives) (percentage disapproving these forms of rule)	65	56	37	52	35	39	61 <sup>i</sup>	40	52	43	72	52	<b>51</b>
<b>EXTENT OF DEMOCRACY.</b>													
(Our country is)													
“A full democracy.”	46	---	24	34	24	29	17	26	19	21	24	9	<b>23</b>
“A democracy, but with minor problems.”	36	[69 <sup>iii</sup> ]	13	28	21	41	33	34	35	27	38	18	<b>27</b>
“A democracy, but with major problems.”	8	---	13	23	37	15	46	24	28	27	20	17	<b>21</b>
“Not a democracy.” (percentage choosing these options)	5	12	17	12	6	3	1	8	8	5	7	38	<b>10</b>

<sup>i</sup> In Nigeria, rejection of traditional rule is measured as percentage of respondents rating traditional rule between 1 and 5 on a scale of 1 to 10.

<sup>ii</sup> In Nigeria, rejection of traditional rule is measured as percentage of respondents rating traditional rule between 1 and 5 on a scale of 1 to 10.

<sup>iii</sup> This question was asked only in binary form in Ghana, i.e. “In your opinion, is Ghana today a democracy or not a democracy?”

Nevertheless, a majority of citizens expresses support for democracy in 11 out of 12 Afrobarometer countries, with the residents of Tanzania, Botswana and Nigeria being the most supportive (above 80 percent). Tanzania's high score is raised by the Zanzibar islands, where fraud and violence in recent elections have apparently served only to strengthen the population's preference for (real) democracy.<sup>9</sup> And expectations for democracy in Nigeria, which were measured less than a year after an historic founding election, may be inflated by transition euphoria.<sup>10</sup> Despite these reservations, however, the form of government commonly called democracy clearly attracts wide support in various sub-Saharan African countries.

The Africans we interviewed also claim to understand the meaning of democracy. Three out of four survey respondents (77 percent) can venture a definition of the term, with the remainder saying that they "don't know" or have "never heard of democracy" (see Table 1, Row 2). Perhaps unexpectedly, fully one-third offer universal and liberal definitions, associating democracy with civil liberties (28 percent), notably freedom of expression, and with political rights (8 percent), that is, the right to participate in competitive elections.<sup>11</sup> Liberal notions of democracy are especially common in Malawi and Zambia (and above average in South Africa, Namibia and Ghana), perhaps reflecting the extent to which the old regimes in these countries had stifled dissent and denied real choices at the polls.

Support for democracy in the abstract is also accompanied by satisfaction with democracy in practice, though at reduced levels (Table 1, Row 3). Asked "how satisfied are you with the way democracy works in (your country)?" a slight majority gives a positive response ("somewhat/fairly satisfied" or "very satisfied"), averaging 58 percent across 12 countries. Satisfaction is again high in Nigeria and Tanzania, in part for the idiosyncratic reasons already discussed. The encouraging results from Botswana (75 percent satisfied) probably represent a mature public contentment with the capable developmental performance of elected governments over almost 40 years. Zimbabwe lies at the other end of the scale: a bare 18 percent of respondents say they are satisfied with democracy, clearly revealing the extent to which the performance of elected government in that country is now deemed to have fallen short of expectations.

The Zimbabwe case casts light on the quality and depth of democratic commitments in African countries. There is striking dissonance in Zimbabwe between support for democracy (71 percent) and satisfaction with democracy (18 percent). This gap suggests that citizens can demand democracy even when they are not being supplied with it. Although democracy does not presently work well as an instrument for fulfilling current needs, people can remain intrinsically attached to it as a preferred form of government. More than half of all Zimbabweans feel this way (59 percent). Yet the proportion of "dissatisfied democrats" (whom Norris calls "critical citizens"<sup>12</sup>) across all 12 African countries in our sample is far lower, at just 19 percent (see Table 2). Because other elected regimes in Africa have not sunk as far as Zimbabwe into political and economic crisis, the extent of intrinsic citizen attachment to democracy has not been fully tested and revealed in these other places. Overall, one in five Africans interviewed is willing to extend support to democracy, even while being dissatisfied with its results. This suggests that there is a reservoir of popular goodwill towards democratically organized regimes that has yet to be fully tapped.

**Table 2: Cross-Tabulation of Support for, and Satisfaction with, Democracy**  
(percentage of respondents in 12 African countries, n = 18,526\*)

		Satisfied With Democracy	
		Yes	No
<b>Support Democracy</b>	Yes	57% satisfied democrats	19% dissatisfied democrats
	No	12% satisfied non-democrats	12% dissatisfied non-democrats

\*n excludes “don’t knows”

We turn now to the bad news. Any generalizations about widespread, liberal and intrinsic forms of support for democracy must be qualified in several important respects. When taken together, the following reservations point to the incompleteness of expressed popular commitments to democracy in Africa.

### **Popular Conceptions of Democracy Are Tractable**

Liberal democrats may welcome the discovery that many Africans seem to define democracy in terms of universal human rights. But since the unfamiliar notion of a popular African liberalism runs against the grain of the literature on political culture on the continent,<sup>13</sup> it requires further interrogation. Attitudes about democracy that individuals venture in a public opinion survey may be half-formed, self-censored, or readily subject to change. The Afrobarometer data already contains several items of counter-evidence that demonstrate the popularity of contending versions of democracy and the fragility of any apparent liberalism.

First, while civil and political liberties may be the most common popular way of thinking about democracy overall, the survey sample contains considerable cross-country variation. In the 12 countries surveyed, this liberal definition ranked first in only nine. In Nigeria and Lesotho, people were more likely to define democracy as “government by, for and of the people,” and in Botswana, people were equally likely to opt for this latter definition as for one based on individual rights. When transferred to African contexts, the meaning of Lincoln’s Gettysburg definition is open to interpretation. Since it correlates with respondents’ level of education, it may be a learned response absorbed through formal schooling.<sup>14</sup> Alternatively, “government by, for and of the people” may reflect more collectivist interpretations of democracy that run counter to standard liberal versions. Such meanings are certainly more consistent with Jerry Rawlings’ populist cry of “power to the people” or Julius Nyerere’s communitarian recollections of “talking until we agree.”<sup>15</sup>

Second, citizens attach distinctive, homegrown meanings to democracy in certain countries. Although indigenous conceptions are invoked less frequently than universal rights, they nevertheless impart local flavor to popular definitions. In Uganda, democracy is seen as a regime of “peace and unity” (14 percent, third ranked meaning) in a context where genocidal conflicts were the order of an earlier day. In South Africa, where democracy is associated with “equality

and justice” (13 percent, second ranked meaning), people look to the new regime as an antidote to apartheid and a device to rid the country of humiliating discriminations. And in Mali, respondents draw on traditional values when reading democracy as “mutual respect” (4.2 percent, fifth ranked meaning), a norm that smoothes the way to discussion, decision making, and peace building at the community level.

Thus the meaning of democracy is tractable. It can be bent to mean what people want it to mean. And, because the term has positive moral connotations, it can be stretched to cover a wide range of preferred political systems.<sup>16</sup> Thus, some Afrobarometer survey respondents regard democracy vaguely as the obverse image of the prior political order, while others use the term to portray the imagined advantages of a pre-colonial past. We also suspect that alongside those “democrats” who are attached to the new regime because of a normative acceptance of principles, others simply recognize pragmatically that, in a post-cold war world, there is no feasible alternative.<sup>17</sup> To the extent that democracy can mean all things to all people, however, it risks losing a core identity of its own. Nor is it clear whether ideals like peace, unity and equality can be easily reconciled with expressed desires for individual liberties. If the former values ever take precedence, the type of democracy preferred in Africa could well become a non-liberal one.

Finally, mass political attitudes are not fixed and can be easily molded. The Afrobarometer instrument contains a small test of the effects of question wording on the meanings attached to democracy. We first ask, in completely open-ended fashion, “what, if anything, do you understand by the word ‘democracy’?” Respondents are free to say anything that comes to mind, their answers are recorded verbatim, and coding of responses takes place after the fact. This inductive approach gives rise to the distribution of responses discussed above and reported in Table 1 (Row 2), in which civil and political liberties rank first overall. We follow up with a closed-ended question that asks respondents to rate the “importance” of certain given attributes “in order for a society to be called democratic,” ranging from political procedures like “the majority rules” to substantive outcomes like “everyone enjoys basic necessities like shelter, food and water.” When the question is posed this way, people continue to associate democracy with civil and political liberties: for example, strong majorities think that “freedom to criticize the government” (75 percent) and “regular elections” (74 percent) are important in a democratic society. But even larger majorities associate a democratic society with “jobs for everyone” (86 percent) and “equal access to education” (88 percent).

In principle, one sets greater store by the results of open-ended questions than of structured questions that can lead respondents toward predetermined answers. Nevertheless, when primed to think in terms of the delivery of socio-economic goods (jobs, education, etc.), interviewees clearly broaden their initial conception of democracy to include positive (social and economic) as well as negative (civil and political) rights. This pattern of responses is consistent across all 12 countries. Thus, while many Africans seem prone to think of democracy first as a set of freedoms (like the protection of rights and voting in elections), they may also be easily persuaded that socioeconomic development is actually more important than political liberty.

### **Enclaves of Non-Democratic Sentiment Remain**

Pro-democratic sentiments have not won the day in all the countries in the Afrobarometer sample. For example, the survey conducted in Lesotho in August 2000 revealed that only a minority of the electorate (39 percent) prefers democracy (see Table 1, Row 1). Instead, Basotho profess considerable cynicism and confusion about the sustainability of various political arrangements for their country, with one-quarter saying that the form of government “doesn’t matter” and a further one-quarter (24 percent, higher than in any other country) saying they “don’t know” their own

regime preferences. Such detachment is directly traceable to the country's disputed general election of May 1998 in which opposition forces rejected the ruling party's victory and a government was installed by armed South African intervention.<sup>18</sup> These chaotic events created an atmosphere of instability and uncertainty that is reflected in a profile of public opinion that is clearly skeptical of democracy.

In other places, respondents actively express support for authoritarian alternatives. For example, more than one out of five Malawians (22 percent), consider that "in certain situations, a non-democratic government can be preferable." This appears to be a considered opinion since it coexists with one of the highest levels of democratic literacy in the sample (92 percent of Malawians can offer a meaning for democracy, second only to Nigerians). These sentiments are most prevalent in Malawi's Central Region, the homeland and political base of Dr. Hastings Kamuzu Banda, the country's former strongman. In South Africa, willingness to entertain authoritarian alternatives is also above average; in this case, it is significantly concentrated among whites.<sup>19</sup> In both of these countries, support for non-democratic alternatives appears to be an expression of regret for an old regime among persons who previously possessed – but who have now lost – access to the levers and spoils of power.

*Both* political disengagement *and* authoritarian nostalgia coexist in yet other countries. In Mali, almost one-quarter of the largely rural and poorly educated population withdraw from tendering an opinion when asked to compare political regimes. And a further 16 percent flirts with the idea of a non-democratic alternative, perhaps remembering the way that a transitional military government under Amadou Toumani Touré served as midwife to the birth of a democratic regime in 1991-2. In Namibia, equal proportions are disengaged from evaluating regime options and tempted by non-democratic alternatives (12 percent each), and many others "don't know" (19 percent), leading to a well-below-average level of popular support for democracy. In all these places, though each for different reasons, new democratic regimes remain at risk for want of more whole-hearted popular commitments.

### **Rejection of Authoritarian Alternatives Does Not Amount to Support for Democracy**

One of the shortcomings of transitions to democracy in Africa during the 1990s was that political protesters knew what they were against, but did not have a clear vision of what they were for. They were against dictatorship, with all its attendant repression, mismanagement and corruption. They said they were for democracy, but more as a slogan than as a fully comprehended institutional system for dividing and balancing power and for demanding accountability. In fact, people seemed ready to accept political "change," however defined, provided it led them away from the political status quo, which had long been deemed unacceptable. As such, mass movements for political transition were generally "anti-authoritarian" rather than specifically "pro-democratic."

The Afrobarometer provides evidence that this tendency persists (see Table 1, Row 4). Respondents were asked whether they approved of various ways in which their country could be "governed differently." These alternatives included military rule, one-man rule, one-party rule and traditional rule "by kings, chiefs...(or) a council of traditional elders."

Importantly, more people reject authoritarian alternatives than express support for democracy. Military rule is highly unpopular (repudiated by 81 percent of all Africans interviewed), closely followed by one-man rule (disavowed by 79 percent).<sup>20</sup> Several decades after political independence, citizens in many African countries appear to have arrived at the conclusion that government by military or civilian strongmen is no longer tolerable. Popular rejection of soldiers

as governors is most pervasive in Tanzania, a country that has never suffered an attempted military coup. But it is also widespread in Nigeria and Ghana, where the army has repeatedly wrested control of government from civilians. In all these countries, anti-military sentiment is more widespread than support for democracy.

Authoritarian temptations vary by country. One-man rule remains a viable popular option in only one place in our sample, Namibia, where Sam Nujoma has stamped his personal authority on the political regime by pushing through a constitutional amendment to allow himself a third presidential term. Whereas only a bare majority opposes one-man rule in Namibia (56 percent), an overwhelming majority does so in Zambia (89 percent), where Frederick Chiluba decided to forego his own bid for a third term in the face of resistance in Parliament, in his own party, and from civil society. If nothing else, these contrasting examples suggest that incumbents take public opinion into account when judging the prospects for clinging to power.

An institutionalized one-party regime retains greater appeal in Africa than a personal, one-man show. In three countries, citizens barely reject single-party government: Lesotho (51 percent), Uganda (53 percent) and South Africa (56 percent). This alternative regime remains attractive in Lesotho and Uganda because multiparty competition in these places is presumed to have given rise to political violence, against which single party rule seems to promise greater stability. Perhaps South Africans do not rule out one-party government because this system comes close to what they already have: the African National Congress (ANC), the main vehicle of the country's democratic transition, retains overwhelming popular support within a dominant party system.<sup>21</sup>

Lastly, some Africans remain enamored of traditional forms of government. In Mali, respondents were equally split on whether government by a council of elders would be an acceptable form of contemporary governance. This result raises the question of whether the exercise of hereditary authority by older male community leaders is seen as compatible with democracy. If accompanied by "mutual respect," some Malians apparently think that democracy and patrimonialism can be reconciled. Tanzanians seem to disagree; 88 percent reject rule by chiefs or headmen, no doubt because a one-party government has systematically undermined the powers and challenged the legitimacy of traditional leaders. The contrasting cases of Mali and Tanzania help to highlight the fact that, in the popular imagination, traditional rule and one-party rule remain the most tenable alternatives to multiparty electoral democracy in Africa.

To reveal the depth of democratic commitments, let us examine the proportion of citizens who reject *all* authoritarian alternatives.<sup>22</sup> The Afrobarometer shows that barely half the respondents across 12 countries reject all four alternatives presented above (i.e., military, one-man, one-party and traditional rule). Some 66 percent reject the first two alternatives, while 62 percent reject the first three, but only 51 percent consistently reject all four. In other words, about half of all Africans interviewed, including many of those who say democracy is "always preferable," retain residual attachments to at least one non-democratic system.

The summary indicator of "rejection of authoritarian rule" divides African countries into three groups (see Table 1, Row 4). In the first group, in which democratic attachments are deepest, more than six out ten citizens completely reject all authoritarian alternatives: countries in this group include Zambia (72 percent), Botswana (65 percent), and Nigeria (61 percent). In a regime popularity contest, citizens in these countries seem to be fairly well wedded to democracy. The second group contains countries in which only slim majorities eschew all authoritarian temptations: included here are Ghana (56 percent) and Malawi, Tanzania and Zimbabwe (all 52 percent). The populations of these countries could go either way if faced with a tough choice between democracy and some form of authoritarian rule. The third and largest group contains

five countries that lack a majority of convinced anti-authoritarians: Uganda (43 percent), South Africa (40 percent), Namibia (39 percent), Lesotho (37 percent) and Mali (35 percent). Other things being equal, these latter countries would appear to be the places where the greatest challenges persist in building popular commitment to democracy.

If (negative) rejection of authoritarian rule were evolving into (positive) support for democracy, we would expect these popular sentiments to be strongly correlated. Although the relationships run in the predicted direction and are statistically significant, the correlations are not particularly strong.<sup>23</sup> These results suggest that African opposition to dictatorship has yet to fully deepen into an unshakeable commitment to democracy. Indeed, only a minority of the people we interviewed (43 percent) can be described as “committed democrats” (see Table 3) in that they consistently say that they *both* support democracy *and* reject all four authoritarian alternatives. Others express discordant views, simultaneously saying that they support democracy and harboring nostalgic feelings for more forceful forms of rule. This group, comprised of those who at best are “proto-democrats,” constitutes almost one-third (32 percent) of all survey respondents.

**Table 3: Cross-tabulation of Support for Democracy and Rejection of Authoritarianism**  
(percentage of respondents in 12 African countries, n = 18,554\*)

		Reject Authoritarianism	
		Yes	No
Support Democracy	Yes	43% committed democrats	32% proto-democrats
	No	9% proto-non-democrats	15% committed non-democrats

\*n excludes “don’t knows”

Because popular rejection of authoritarian rule is incomplete, sober assessments are warranted about the depth of democratic attachments in sub-Saharan Africa. Not only is support for democracy apparently shallow, but even the degree of anti-authoritarianism can be easily overstated.

### **Democratization is Far from Complete**

Africans may still be engaged in political learning, but they already recognize that the versions of democracy offered by their own leaders are incomplete. To tap the extent of democracy, the surveys asked whether each respondents’ country is “a full democracy,” “a democracy, but with minor problems,” “a democracy, but with major problems,” or “not a democracy” at all. The distribution of responses by country is shown in Table 1 (Row 5).

By this measure, the survey respondents have rather realistic impressions of recent political progress. Overall, less than one-quarter (23 percent) are willing to venture that the regime in their country has consolidated itself into a fully fledged democracy. Whereas almost half of all Batswana (46 percent) consider democratization to be complete, very few Zimbabweans do (9

percent). Indeed, more than one out of three (38 percent) think that their current regime is not a democracy at all.

In between these extremes, the largest group of respondents (48 percent) recognizes that African neo-democracies are partial and incipient. The electoral regimes that have emerged from founding and second elections in Africa are beset by the challenges of constructing the multiple political institutions required in a functioning democracy. Taking a hard-headed look at the national political context, some 21 percent of all respondents think that they live in a democracy facing “*major*” problems of regime consolidation. In Nigeria, where 46 percent take this position, citizens recognize more frequently than other Africans the enormous challenges of governing multicultural societies with untested democratic institutions. But reflecting a political optimism detected elsewhere in the surveys, even more citizens – some 27 percent overall – think that the problems faced by their democracy are “*minor*” and therefore, presumably, resolvable. By this criterion, Namibians are the most optimistic of all.

### **Support for Democracy is Dispersed**

Of all the popular political attitudes considered here, support for democracy is the most difficult to explain. Statistically speaking, one cannot account for much of its variance using demographic indicators or other attitudinal predictors. Democratic commitments are elusive precisely because they are not concentrated among a few distinctive social segments or opinion leaders. Instead they are widespread, being broadly distributed across a variety of demographic and opinion groups.

One may be tempted to conclude that support for democracy is therefore “diffuse,” but this runs the risk of implying, as David Easton once did, that support for democracy is deeply rooted, having been absorbed, like mother’s milk, as part of a population’s shared socialization experience during childhood.<sup>24</sup> But, in new democracies, citizens are unlikely to possess a reservoir of favorable affective dispositions arising from a lifetime of exposure to democratic norms. Since democratization is a novel experience in these countries, how could such formative indoctrination have taken place? Thus, to repeat the theme of this chapter, the widespread popular support for democracy that we have discovered in Africa is also recent, tentative, and shallow.

Instead of bestowing “diffuse support” on reformed political regimes, African citizens are highly pragmatic: they fall back on performance-based judgments of what democracy actually does for them. Thus, there is a counterpart to the expectation that attitudes of support for democracy will be so dispersed as to be difficult to model statistically: attitudes towards the performance of new regimes – such as satisfaction with the way that democracy actually works – will be much easier to predict. Both these expectations are now tested using ordinary least squares regression models. The presentation is summarized in Table 4 and intentionally kept brief for the general reader. Specialists who wish to examine the models more closely or explore other lines of analysis may refer to the appendix, which describes how all dependent and explanatory variables are measured.

As Table 4 confirms, *support for democracy* is hard to explain. An array of 19 explanatory variables accounts for only 7 percent of the variance (adjusted R square = .073) in support for democracy across 12 African countries. The model does help, however, to discern the origins of popular democratic support by distinguishing explanatory factors that are statistically

**Table 4: Multiple Regression Estimates of Popular Attitudes to Democracy, Selected African Countries, 1999-2001**

	Support for Democracy		Rejection of Auth. Rule		Extent of Democracy		Satisfaction w/ Democracy 1		Satisfaction w/ Democracy 2	
	Beta	Sig.	Beta	Sig.	Beta	Sig.	Beta	Sig.	Beta	Sig.
Constant		.000		.000		.000		.000		.033
<b>DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS</b>										
Gender	-.018	.128	-.010	.533	.026	.020	-.008	.425	-.017	.076
Age	.016	.187	.036	.028	.027	.019	-.001	.959	-.002	.868
Education	.010	.437	.022	.204	.025	.040	-.033	.003	<b>-.037</b>	<b>.000</b>
Residential location (urban/rural)	-.019	.133	-.002	.917	.008	.494	-.004	.728	-.003	.736
<b>ECONOMIC FACTORS</b>										
Overall government performance	<b>.054</b>	<b>.000</b>	<b>-.047</b>	<b>.020</b>	<b>.145</b>	<b>.000</b>	<b>.157</b>	<b>.000</b>	<b>.121</b>	<b>.000</b>
Satisfied with national economy	.024	.100	-.049	.028	.066	.000	.074	.000	.056	.000
Past economic satisfaction	.027	.111	-.018	.439	.004	.776	.058	.000	.060	.000
Future economic expectations	.044	.011	-.020	.367	.029	.063	.180	.000	.165	.000
Relative deprivation	.001	.953	-.018	.343	.002	.860	.088	.000	.086	.000
Support structural adjustment	<b>.041</b>	<b>.001</b>	<b>.111</b>	<b>.000</b>	.023	.043	.004	.687	.009	.373
Perceive economic inequality	.037	.002	.129	.000	.100	.000	-.047	.000	-.017	.085
Delivery of economic goods	.009	.566	-.066	.001	.029	.036	.065	.000	.058	.000
<b>POLITICAL FACTORS</b>										
Interested in politics	<b>.070</b>	<b>.000</b>	<b>.084</b>	<b>.000</b>	.011	.313	.015	.124	.009	.367
Political efficacy	<b>.083</b>	<b>.000</b>	<b>.108</b>	<b>.000</b>	.038	.001	.066	.000	.056	.000
Political winner	<b>.066</b>	<b>.000</b>	<b>.166</b>	<b>.000</b>	.019	.080	.053	.000	.051	.000
Government responsiveness	<b>.088</b>	<b>.000</b>	<b>.059</b>	<b>.005</b>	.082	.000	.087	.000	.066	.000
Trust government institutions	.017	.193	.008	.653	.159	.000	.068	.000	.025	.017
Perceive corruption	-.006	.655	-.010	.585	.132	.000	.077	.000	.040	.000
Delivery of political goods	<b>.059</b>	<b>.000</b>	<b>.258</b>	<b>.000</b>	.099	.000	.107	.000	.066	.000
Extent of democracy	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	<b>.283</b>	<b>.000</b>
R	.275		.400		.464		.612		.651	
R square	.076		.160		.216		.375		.424	
<b>Adjusted R square</b>	<b>.073</b>		<b>.155</b>		<b>.213</b>		<b>.373</b>		<b>.422</b>	
Standard Error of the Estimate	.660		.646		.808		1.123		1.059	

See Appendix for a description of how all dependent and explanatory variables are measured.

significant (highlighted in Table 4).<sup>25</sup> At the risk of simplification, just three findings are noted. First, support for democracy is not explained by demographic factors because it is spread across all social groups regardless of gender, age, education and residential location (urban or rural). In other words, Afrobarometer surveys unearth *no evidence* of any sociological segment that consistently *opposes* democracy.

Second, economic factors are somewhat more important in explaining support for democracy. The higher an individual's assessment of "overall government performance" (measured on an index that includes its performance in managing jobs, prices, crime, health and education, as described in the Appendix), the more likely he or she is to also support democracy. And the more that people support economic structural adjustment (measured on an index that includes support for policies of market pricing, user fees, civil service reform and privatization), the more likely they are to also support democracy.<sup>26</sup> Third, political factors nevertheless carry most of the burden in explaining support for democracy. Some of these factors refer to the political

psychology of citizens, such as their sense of personal political efficacy, whether they are interested in politics, and whether they feel like winners (i.e., if their party won the last election). Other political factors refer to the political performance of the new regime, especially whether it is seen as being responsive to all citizens and whether it has delivered political goods like free speech, freedom of association, and a choice of candidates at the polls. Although much remains unexplained, political considerations apparently matter most for support for democracy.<sup>27</sup>

Greater explanatory leverage can be obtained over other mass political attitudes. The results of the second model in Table 4 confirm that mass anti-authoritarianism in Africa is more fully formed than popular support for democracy. Regressing the same set of predictor variables on *rejection of authoritarian rule* (measured as an index of rejection of one-man, one-party, military and traditional rule) it is possible to double the amount of variance explained (from 7 to 15 percent). Moreover, when the *extent of democracy* is entered as a dependent variable (measured as a single item that records whether the respondent thinks her country is a non-, partial or full democracy), further explanatory gains are achieved (up to 21 percent). To be sure, these public attitudes are also dispersed across society in the sense that they are not concentrated in any particular demographic group. But they derive more consistently from persons who are psychologically prepared to engage in politics and who base their support for political regimes on performance considerations. It is worth noting that, while anti-authoritarianism is driven largely by judgments of political performance, assessments of the extent of democracy are shaped by considerations of performance generally, both political and economic.

Finally, two models of *satisfaction with democracy* are presented. This concrete attitude – which, to repeat, measures how satisfied people are with “the way democracy works in (your country)” – is much more cohesive and less scattered than support for democracy. When a standard set of 19 demographic, economic and political predictors are regressed on satisfaction with democracy, it proves possible to explain over one-third (37 percent) of its variance. And when respondent perceptions of the extent of democracy are added to the list of predictors, variance explained rises to 42 percent. In other words, the Africans interviewed are more likely to be satisfied with democracy if they think that their country is a full democracy or something approaching that consolidated status. Satisfaction with democracy is driven primarily by economic considerations, although political factors continue to remain important. An individual’s expectations about the economic future stand out in both models; the higher one’s hopes that democracy will begin to deliver prosperity in the year ahead, the more likely one is to be satisfied with the performance of democracy today. Interestingly, education is the first demographic factor to attain statistical significance; the fact that its sign is negative in both models, however, indicates that education makes people harder to satisfy. Educated people remain skeptical that democracy will meet popular economic expectations.

### **Liberalization Does Not Amount to Democratization**

This chapter concludes by considering how Afrobarometer indicators compare with other standard measures of democracy and what such comparisons portend for the quality of emergent political regimes in Africa. As is well known, Freedom House provides annual estimates of the extent of civil liberties and political rights and the status of freedom for over 190 countries in the world, including our 12 African cases.<sup>28</sup> The methodologies for constructing Freedom House (FH) and Afrobarometer (AB) indicators differ markedly. Whereas the FH estimates are expert judgments by a small number of qualified country specialists, the AB data are based on the lay opinions of a large number of citizens of each country. The opportunity thus arises to test whether measures of the extent of democracy derived by different methods validate one another.

The extent of democracy as measured by the Afrobarometer turns out to be strongly and significantly correlated with the status of freedom as estimated by Freedom House.<sup>29</sup> It is even more strongly associated with the FH civil liberties and political rights scores.<sup>30</sup> Consider a couple of examples: Botswana ranks first on ranked country lists for both the Afrobarometer indicator of the extent of democracy and the Freedom House measure of civil liberties (see Table 5). And Zimbabwe in 2000 consistently ranks dead last.<sup>31</sup> These findings suggest that Western academic experts and lay African citizens arrive at roughly similar judgments about the level of democracy that pertains in any given country.

**Table 5: Democracy, Political Liberalization and Democratization:  
Comparative Rankings of Afrobarometer and Freedom House,  
Selected African Countries, Circa 2000**

Extent of Democracy			Political Liberalization		Democratization	
AB Rank	FH CL Rank	FH PR Rank	AB CL Change Rank	FH CL Change Rank	AB PR Change Rank	FH PR Change Rank
Botswana	Botswana	South Africa	Malawi	South Africa	Malawi	South Africa
Malawi	South Africa	Botswana	Nigeria	Malawi	Mali	Malawi
Namibia	Malawi	Malawi	Mali	Mali	Nigeria	Mali
South Africa	Namibia	Lesotho	Ghana	Nigeria	Ghana	Ghana
Zambia	Mali	Namibia	Namibia	Ghana	Namibia	Namibia
Mali	Zambia	Mali	Tanzania	Namibia	South Africa	Tanzania
Lesotho	Lesotho	Tanzania	South Africa	Tanzania	Zambia	Lesotho
Uganda	Tanzania	Nigeria	Zambia	Zambia	Tanzania	Nigeria
Tanzania	Nigeria	Zambia	Botswana	Botswana	Lesotho	Zambia
Nigeria	Uganda	Uganda	Lesotho	Lesotho	Zimbabwe	Zimbabwe
Zimbabwe	Zimbabwe	Zimbabwe	Zimbabwe	Zimbabwe	Botswana	Botswana

AB = Afrobarometer  
 FH = Freedom House  
 CL = Civil Liberties  
 PR = Political Rights

We can push this inquiry further by examining *processes* of political change like political liberalization and democratization (as opposed to political outcomes like the extent of liberty or democracy).<sup>32</sup> Do AB indicators match FH scores when the object of inquiry is political change over time? Again, the answer is affirmative. The AB indicators of political liberalization and democratization are strongly and significantly correlated with the respective FH indicators.<sup>33</sup> And, as Table 5 shows, the rank order distribution of countries is very similar: five countries share rankings on liberalization and four share rankings on democratization (Table 5, see highlights).<sup>34</sup> Most remaining countries differ across measurement methods by only a rank or two.

Indeed, the same two cases are mainly responsible for observed deviations in country rankings on both liberalization and democratization: Nigeria and South Africa. Interestingly, the divergence between popular and expert opinion runs in opposite directions in these two African giants. In AB surveys, Nigerians perceive more political liberalization than do experts on FH panels. This finding tends to confirm that the mass public in Nigeria, perhaps caught up in transition euphoria, sees more political change than do foreign-based Afro-pessimists, who tend to project onto Nigeria their worst fears for the African continent. By contrast, South Africans who participate in AB surveys think that less political liberalization has occurred in their country than do FH

experts. In South Africa, racial minorities pull down the country's scores on the perceived degree of liberalization and democratization. In this instance, outsiders (particularly Americans) are prone to celebrate the political progress made by South Africa in the 1990s and to project onto that country their highest hopes for the continent as a whole. For Nigeria and South Africa, therefore, I put more faith in the Afrobarometer data than in the Freedom House estimates.

Finally, a comment is required about the strong observed relationship between the AB indicator of the extent of democracy and the FH civil liberties indicator. This seems to confirm that the Africans interviewed understand and appraise democracy at least partly in liberal terms. But it also raises the troubling prospect that African conceptions of democratization *stop short* at liberalization. We have already seen that, when defining democracy, the Africans interviewed put more emphasis on expressive liberties than on electoral rights. And yet, if democratization is a long-term institution-building project, then attention also must be devoted to ensuring not only that the quality of elections is maintained, but that other essential institutions such as civilian control of the military, the dispersal of executive powers, and the sovereignty of the law are guaranteed for the long run. It is far from clear, however, that, beyond demanding liberty from an overweening state, African citizens are ready to dedicate themselves to these projects.

This point has theoretical implications. So far, the literature on the deepening of democracy in Africa has been concerned about the *fallacy of electoralism*, namely the danger that a formal façade of multiparty contests will mask a persistent atmosphere of civil rights violations.<sup>35</sup> I propose that there might be an equally important, but unacknowledged, *fallacy of liberalization*. This fallacy derives from a public attitude that free speech is all that is necessary for democracy. It assumes that movements for political reform need go no further than wringing political openings from authoritarian regimes. It overlooks the fact that contestation over the rules of the political game does not end with electoral transitions. It misses the point that democratization is an ongoing, long-term, inter-generational process that requires continued political struggle in multiple, partial arenas, including the arena of public opinion. Unless wide popular commitments are substantially deepened, democratization in Africa could easily stall at the stage of the liberalization of authoritarian regimes.

## APPENDIX: Notes to Table 4

### Coding of Dependent Variables

***Support for Democracy.*** This standard variable asks respondents to choose between three statements and is coded as follows: 3 = “Democracy is preferable to any other form of government”; 2 = “In certain situations a non-democratic government can be preferable”; 1 = “To people like me it doesn’t matter what form of government we have.”

***Rejection of Authoritarian Rule.*** This variable is an index constructed of four items concerning acceptance or rejection of presidential rule, one-party rule, military rule, and traditional rule. Having learned that “some people say that we would be better off if the country was governed differently,” respondents were asked: “what do you think about the following options?”: a) “We should get rid of elections so that a strong leader can decide everything”; b) “We should have only one political party”; c) “The army should come in to govern the country”; and d) “All decisions should be made by a council of traditional elders.” For each option, responses were coded as follows: 1 = “strongly agree”; 2 = “agree”; 3 = “disagree”; 4 = “strongly disagree.” To construct an index of rejection of authoritarian rule, scores for all questions were added together and divided by four.

***Extent of Democracy.*** This variable is measured by a single item that asked: “In your opinion, how much of a democracy is (your country) today?” The interviewer inserted the name of the country. Responses were coded as: 0 = “not a democracy”; 1 = “a democracy, but with major problems”; 2 = “a democracy, but with minor problems”; 3 = “a full democracy.” In Ghana, the item asked only whether “Ghana today is a democracy?”; “yes” was recoded as 2 in order to include Ghana in this part of the analysis.

***Satisfaction with Democracy.*** A standard item was also used here, namely, “Generally, how satisfied are you with the way democracy works in (your country)?” Again, the name of the country was inserted. Response categories included: 1 = “very dissatisfied”; 2 = “somewhat dissatisfied”; 3 = “neither satisfied nor dissatisfied”; 4 = “somewhat satisfied”; 5 = “very satisfied.” The middle category was used in Southern Africa but not in East or West Africa. Because some respondents insisted, we added a category during fieldwork of 0 = “this country is not a democracy” for those who wished to use it.

### Coding of Explanatory Variables

#### DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS

***Gender.*** 1 = male, 2 = female.

***Age.*** Raw age in years at the time of the survey. Range = 18 – 100.

***Education.*** A four point ordinal scale with the following ranks: 0 = no formal education; 1 = primary schooling (any or all); 2 = secondary schooling (any or all); 3 = any post-secondary education.

***Residential location.*** 1= urban, 2 = rural.

## ECONOMIC FACTORS

**Overall government performance.** This summary measure captures public assessments of government performance across five policy areas. The question asked “How well would you say the current government is handling the following problems?”: a) “creating jobs”; b) “keeping prices stable”; c) “reducing crime”; d) “addressing educational needs”; and e) “improving basic health services.” For each of the five sub-items, respondents chose among: 1 = “very badly”; 2 = “fairly badly”; 3 = “fairly well”; and 4 = “very well.” An index of overall government performance was then constructed for every respondent by adding together responses to each item and dividing by five.

**Satisfied with national economy.** A standard item was asked: “How satisfied are you with the condition of (your country’s) economy today?” The name of the respondent’s country was inserted. Responses could be arrayed among: 1 = “not at all satisfied”; 2 = “not very satisfied”; 3 = “somewhat satisfied”; and 4 = “very satisfied.”

**Past economic satisfaction.** In Southern: “How do economic conditions in your country compare with one year ago?” While the question was asked from a socio-tropic perspective in the seven Southern African countries, it was posed from an egocentric viewpoint in East and West Africa: “When you look at your economic conditions today, how satisfied do you feel compared with one year ago?” To create a single variable, answers were merged onto a shared 5-point scale from “much worse/much less satisfied” to “much better/much more satisfied.”

**Future economic expectations.** “What about in twelve months time? Do you expect economic conditions in (your country) to be worse, the same, or better than they are now?” Once again, the question was asked from a socio-tropic perspective in the seven Southern African countries, but posed from an egocentric viewpoint in East and West Africa: “When you look forward at your life’s prospects, how satisfied do you expect to be in one year’s time?” To create a single variable, answers were merged onto a shared 5-point scale from “much worse/much less satisfied” to “much better/much more satisfied.”

**Relative deprivation.** “Now let’s speak about your personal economic conditions. Would you say they are worse, the same, or better than other (citizens of your country)?” This item is measured on a 5-point scale from 1 = “much worse” to 5 = “much better.”

**Support structural adjustment.** This summary measure is an index of the number of adjustment policies supported by respondents. Four such policies were considered: market pricing of consumer goods; user fees for health or educational services; job reductions in the civil service; and privatization of public corporations. Support was scored if respondents “strongly” or “somewhat” agreed with a pro-reform position. Support for an adjustment policy was scored as a 1 and opposition as a 0. The index is additive over four policies and ranges from 0 to 4.

**Perceive economic inequality.** A single item asked respondents to choose whether “the government’s economic policies” have “A...helped most people” or “B...hurt most people.”

Respondents were asked to indicate the strength of their position on a standard five point scale from 1 = “strongly agree with Statement A” to 5 = “strongly agree with Statement B.”

***Delivery of economic goods.*** “We are going to compare the present system of government with the former system of rule. Please tell me if the following things are better or worse now than they used to be: people have an adequate standard of living?” This was scored on a standard 5-point scale from 1 = “much worse” to 5 = “much better.”

## POLITICAL FACTORS

***Political efficacy.*** A single item asked respondents to choose between two statements: A) “No matter how you vote, it won’t make things better in the future”; or B) “The way you vote could make things better in the future.” Once strength of opinion is factored in, the item was scored on a standard 5-point response scale.

***Government responsiveness.*** “We are going to compare the present system of government with the former system of rule. Please tell me if the following things are better or worse now than they used to be: Everybody is treated equally and fairly by the government?” Scored on a standard 5-point scale from 1 = “much worse” to 5 = “much better.”

***Political winner.*** This is a proxy measure based on the vote in last election. It is derived from party identification, i.e., respondents were asked: “Do you feel close to any political party?” If yes, “which one?” Respondents were coded into 1 = winner, 0 = loser, 0.5 = neutral according to whether his or her preferred party won the last presidential, legislative or general election before the date of the survey.

***Interested in politics.*** “How interested are you in politics and government?” 1 = “not interested”; 2 = “somewhat interested”; and 3 = “very interested.”

***Trust government institutions.*** An index derived by the same method as those above from trust in four institutions: police, courts of law, army and electoral commission. Respondents were asked how much they trust the institutions or, in some countries, how often they trust them to do what is right. The response scale for each item, as well as the index, runs from 1 = “I do not trust them at all/Never” to 4 = “I trust them a lot/just about always.”

***Perceive corruption.*** Two different items were combined into a single indicator. In Southern Africa respondents were asked “How many officials are involved in corruption?” while in East and West Africa the question was: “Do you agree or disagree: bribery is not common among public officials in (your country).” Each was measured on a 4-point scale from 1 = “None/agree strongly” to 4 = “All/disagree strongly.”

***Delivery of political goods.*** “We are going to compare the present system of government with the former system of rule. Please tell me if the following things are better or worse now than they used to be: a) people are free to say what they think; b) people can join any organization they want; and c) each person can freely choose who to vote for without feeling pressured.” Responses were scored on a standard 5-point scale from 1 = “much worse” to 5 = “much better,” then combined into an index (i.e., all sub-items were added then divided by three).

## Endnotes

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- <sup>1</sup> Robert A. Dahl, *On Democracy* (New Haven: Yale Nota Bene Books, 2000), 180.
- <sup>2</sup> In “What Makes Democracies Endure,” *Journal of Democracy* 7 (1996): 39-55, Adam Przeworski, Adam Alvarez, José Antonio Cheibub and Fernando Limongi argue that the term consolidation has no meaning apart from regime duration.
- <sup>3</sup> “Deepening makes the formal structures of democracy more liberal, accountable, representative, and accessible – in essence, more democratic.” See Larry Diamond, *Developing Democracy: Toward Consolidation* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), 74.
- <sup>4</sup> Pippa Norris, ed., *Critical Citizens: Global Support for Democratic Governance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 1.
- <sup>5</sup> The Afrobarometer is a collaborative, cross-national research program that investigates public attitudes and behaviors towards democracy, economic reform and civil society. Round 1 of the Afrobarometer was conducted between July 1999 and May 2001 and includes interviews with over 21,500 respondents across 12 countries: three in West Africa (Ghana, Mali and Nigeria), two in east Africa (Tanzania and Uganda), and seven in Southern Africa (Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe). To varying degrees, all these countries have undergone transitions to multiparty electoral democracy, a precondition both for conducting meaningful surveys and for measuring popular support for democracy. They are therefore fairly typical of Africa’s struggling new multiparty systems. In no sense, however, do they represent the parts of Africa that remain gripped by autocrats or mired in civil war.
- <sup>6</sup> See Russell J. Dalton, “Political Support in Advanced Industrial Democracies,” in *Critical Citizens: Global Support for Democratic Governance*, ed. Pippa Norris (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 9; Marta Lagos, “Between Stability and Crisis in Latin America,” *Journal of Democracy* 12, no. 1 (January 2001): 138; and Hans-Dieter Klingemann, “Mapping Political Support in 1990s: A Global Analysis,” in Norris, *Critical Citizens*, 46.
- <sup>7</sup> Dalton, “Political Support,” 70; Lagos, “Between Stability and Crisis,” 139. The Western Europe scores are derived from the Eurobarometer and the World Values Survey for 1993-1997.
- <sup>8</sup> Note that the range of country scores on support for democracy is almost identical in sub-Saharan Africa (from 39 percent in Lesotho to 83 percent in Botswana) and Latin America (from 39 percent in Brazil to 84 percent in Uruguay). In Latin America, however, all countries surveyed are neo-democracies and thus represent their continent, whereas the 12 Afrobarometer countries are an unrepresentative sample that excludes most non-democracies on the continent.
- <sup>9</sup> Also, the popular conception of democracy in Tanzania may be distorted by the country’s long experience under a dominant party.
- <sup>10</sup> When averaging country scores, the data are weighted to standardize the sample size for each country at  $n = 1200$ . The mean figures for the 12-country “Afro” sample reflect this weighting. Thus, even though the Nigeria survey employed a large sample ( $n = 3600$ ), its high score on support for democracy contributes no more than the score of any other country to the “Afro” mean (see Table 1, last column).
- <sup>11</sup> These figures include persons who “don’t know” any meaning of democracy. If “don’t knows” are excluded and we consider only persons who profess to understand democracy, then 40 percent cite civil liberties and 10 percent cite political rights. Whichever way one counts popular notions of democracy, civil liberties lead the way.
- <sup>12</sup> Norris, *Critical Citizens*, 3.

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<sup>13</sup> For example, Frederic Schaffer, *Democracy in Translation: Understanding Politics in an Unfamiliar Culture* (Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1998); and Daniel Osabu-Kle, *Compatible Cultural Democracy: The Key to Development in Africa* (Ontario: Broadview Press, 2000).

<sup>14</sup> Contingency coefficient = .412,  $p < .000$ .

<sup>15</sup> *A Revolutionary Journey: Selected Speeches of Flt.-Lt. Jerry John Rawlings* (Accra: Information Services Department, 1983), 4; Julius K. Nyerere, *Ujamaa: Essays on Socialism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977).

<sup>16</sup> See David Collier and Steven Levitsky, "Democracy with Adjectives: Conceptual Innovation in Comparative Research," *World Politics* 49 (April, 1997): 430-451.

<sup>17</sup> Guillermo O'Donnell, "Illusions About Consolidation," *Journal of Democracy* 7, no. 2 (1996): 34-51.

<sup>18</sup> For a definitive account of these events see Roger Southall and Roddy Fox, "Lesotho's General Election of 1998: Rigged or de Riguer?" *Journal of Modern African Studies* 37, no. 4 (1999): 669-696.

<sup>19</sup> Twenty-one percent of whites are nostalgic for authoritarianism, versus 12 percent of blacks. Contingency coefficient = .226,  $p < .000$ .

<sup>20</sup> Since the proportions of respondents who reject one-party rule and traditional rule (69 percent) are roughly the same as the proportion who support democracy (68 percent), we cannot say that these forms of anti-authoritarian sentiments are more widespread than pro-democratic ones.

<sup>21</sup> To view South Africa in comparative perspective, see Hermann Giliomee and Charles Simkins, eds., *The Awkward Embrace: One-Party Dominance and Democracy* (Cape Town: Tafelberg Publishers, 1999).

<sup>22</sup> Thanks to Larry Diamond for suggesting this procedure.

<sup>23</sup> Pearson's rho = .194 (for military rule), .165 (for one-man rule), .102 (for one-party rule), and .094 (for traditional rule). A similar pattern applies when support for democracy is correlated with rejection of multiple alternatives: .156 (for 2 alternatives), .187 (for 3 alternatives), and .189 (for 4 alternatives). All  $p$ 's  $< .000$ .

<sup>24</sup> David Easton, *A Systems Analysis of Political Life* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965), 273. Also, "A Reassessment of the Concept of Political Support," *Journal of Political Science* 5 (1975): 435-437.

<sup>25</sup> Because of the large sample size ( $n = 21,398$ ) and the multiplicity of predictor variables, a demanding standard of  $p < .001$  was applied in order to isolate the most powerful explanatory factors. If the model contained no significant predictors, one would have to conclude that support for democracy is a "non-attitude," that is, respondents have never thought about the issue and offer entirely random responses. The existence of numerous effective predictors, however, indicates that opinion is structured in observable ways.

<sup>26</sup> But the inverse is not true. Because support for democracy is much more widespread than support for adjustment, political liberalism does not automatically lead to economic liberalism.

<sup>27</sup> In an article based on preliminary data from three African countries, Robert Mattes and I found that satisfaction with democracy was easier to explain than support for democracy. Michael Bratton and Robert Mattes, "Support for Democracy in Africa: Intrinsic or Instrumental?" *British Journal of Political Science* 31(July 2001): 447-474. The present analysis, using data from all 12 countries in Round 1 of the Afrobarometer, confirms this and other findings from the earlier study.

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<sup>28</sup> See Aili Piano, *Freedom in the World, 2000-2001* (New York: Freedom House, 2001).

<sup>29</sup> Pearson's  $r = .605$ ,  $p = .049$ .  $N = 11$  because the Afrobarometer question was not asked in Ghana.

<sup>30</sup> Pearson's  $r = .779$ ,  $p = .005$  (for civil liberties) and Pearson's  $r = .631$ ,  $p = .038$  (for political rights).

<sup>31</sup> Spearman's rank-order correlations are also all strong and significant. I chose not to rank the Freedom House status of freedom scores because of the limited variance on this variable among Afrobarometer countries.

<sup>32</sup> Political liberalization is measured as follows: by an Afrobarometer question on whether "things are better" since the political transition in terms of whether "people are free to say what they think," and by the change in the Freedom House score on the civil liberties (CL) indicator from 1988 to 2000. Democratization is measured as follows: by an Afrobarometer question on whether "things are better" since the political transition in terms of whether "people are free to choose who to vote for without feeling pressured," and by the change in the Freedom House score on the political rights (PR) indicator from 1988 to 2000.

<sup>33</sup> Pearson's  $r = .862$ ,  $p = .001$  (for political liberalization) and Pearson's  $r = .602$ ,  $p = .050$  (for democratization).  $N = 11$  because the Afrobarometer question was not asked in Uganda.

<sup>34</sup> Spearman's rank-order correlations are also strong and significant.

<sup>35</sup> See, for example, Marina Ottaway, "Should Elections be the Criterion of Democratization in Africa?" *CSIS Africa Notes* No. 145 (Washington, D.C.: Center for Strategic and international Studies, 1993).