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The meaning of conflict in the Korean National Assembly

Working paper

The Meaning of Conflict in the Korean National Assembly[1]

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Abstract

This paper investigates the nature of policy conflict in the Korean National Assembly via a spatial analysis of its members' voting. We discover the main dimensions of conflict and look at the impact of institutions and members' preferences on their reveal spatial locations. We find that Korean politics is both similar and unique compared to most developed democracies. Like other democracies, voting in the KNA is policy based, yet constrained by strong parties and the strategic context of a presidential system. Unlike most other democracies, however, voting in the KNA is dominated by a geo-political security dimension rather than the classic socio-economic (left-right) dimension.

In democracies, the political battles inside parliaments should reflect the major conflicts in society. From a normative perspective, in the Schumpeterian version of democracy, conflict between elites is essential for providing voters with a choice in elections. Alternatively, in the proportional vision of democracy, the parliament is a microcosm of society, where the interests of all the main social groups are articulated inside the parliament. While in a majoritarian vision, the battle between the winning majority and the losing minority reflects the two sides of the main societal cleavage.[2]

Policy conflict in parliaments also has positive value. Battles over the policy agenda provide voters with information about policy options. Conflicts signal the policies that opposition elites are likely to pursue if they are given the chance to govern, and provide information about whether party leaders are likely to deliver on their manifesto promises. Policy conflicts also promote policy innovation, as they force party leaders to develop new ideas to gain advantage over their political rivals. As a result of all these factors, conflicts between elites enable citizens to form their opinions on often highly-complex policy issues and which parties are closest to their policy preferences. Hence, representative government in a country is not working as well as it could or should if *either* there is absolute consensus inside the parliament on all key issues, *or* if the conflicts inside the chamber are not driven by policy concerns but by institutional interests or personality politics.

Despite the universal significance of parliamentary voting, research on roll-call voting in legislatures other than the U.S. Congress was rare until quite recently. There has been an explosion of research on voting in parliaments in other parts of the world in the last decade as a result of the availability of roll-call data, the development of computer power, and the invention of new geometric scaling techniques. Nevertheless, this new research has largely focused on voting in established democratic parliaments, in North America and Western Europe, as well as some of the legislatures in developing democracies in Latin America.[3]

Thus far, there has not been much research on voting in parliaments in emerging democracies in other parts of the world, such as Asia. As a result, what we do in this paper is undertaking a spatial analysis of voting in the Korean National Assembly (KNA). Electronic votes were first introduced in the KNA in March 1999, and this paper is the first to look at all recorded votes since this period.[4] As far as we are aware, this is also the first spatial analysis of roll-call voting in an Asian parliament. Furthermore, the institutional context of the KNA is an interesting laboratory for investigating some generalizable theoretical issues related to voting in parliaments.

The main focus of this paper is the nature of conflict in votes in the KNA. Are the main dimensions of voting in the KNA based on policy preferences or institutional interests? What are the locations of the parties and individual KNA members on these dimensions? And, how do these dimensions and locations change between the 16th and 17th KNA? We also investigate the impact of three types of institutions on voting in the KNA: parties, the electoral system, and the separation of agenda-setting powers between the president and the assembly.

Our findings reveal both the similarities and uniqueness of Korean politics compared to most developed democracies. Voting in the KNA is policy based, but constrained by strong parties and the strategic context of a presidential system. Also, the main conflict in the KNA is a geo-political security (hawk-dove) dimension, rather than the classic socio-economic (left-right) dimension of most Western democracies. Nonetheless, this dimension reflects the main policy conflict between the parties in the electoral arena, and so is an accurate articulation of broad political preferences in South Korean society.

The rest of the paper is organized as follows. In the next section we discuss some general theoretical issues related to the dimensions of conflict in legislatures. We then provide some background on elections and parties in South Korea. In the following section

we present the results from applying a standard geometric scaling technique (NOMINATE) to the KNA. We then use a regression analysis to look at the exogenous ideological and institutional determinants of voting in the KNA.

Dimensions of Conflict in Legislatures

By scaling roll-call votes political scientists can measure the dimensions of conflict in a chamber, the locations of the parties and parliamentarians on these dimensions, and how the dimensions and locations change over time. However, two main factors influence how the exogenous preferences of parties and individual parliamentarians are 'revealed' in observed conflicts: strategic behavior and institutions.

First, rather than expressing their sincere preferences, parliamentarians often vote strategically. For example, in many parliamentary systems, extremist members of the governing party often vote with opposition against the government. As a result, the first dimension in many parliamentary systems represents a government-opposition split rather than a continuous left-right ideological dimension.[5]

Second, a wide range of institutions 'constrain' the ability of parliamentarians to vote sincerely. Such institutions include, *inter alia* whether the legislative agenda is set by the parliament or the government, whether the parliament operates an open or closed amendment rule, whether the electoral system is party-centered or candidate-centered, whether candidates are selected centrally or locally, and whether political parties can enforce party discipline.

Where parties are concerned, their ability to enforce 'cohesion' is in part endogenous to the institutions of government. In parliamentary systems, parties in government can use vote-of-confidence motions to force their supports to 'back them or sack them'.[6] In contrast,

in presidential systems, even if the party controlling the executive has a majority in the legislature, the survival of the executive is not threatened by a lack of party discipline in the legislature.[7] Nevertheless, even in presidential systems, such as South Korea, there are internal incentives for parliamentary parties to form and discipline their members.[8] Parliamentarians could cooperate spontaneously, but this would mean that coalitions would have to be negotiated vote by vote. As a result, politicians who expect to have similar preferences on a range of policy issues can reduce the transactions costs of coalition-building by agreeing a division-of-labor, where 'leaders' decide the main policy positions and issue voting instructions, while 'backbenchers' provide labor, such as working out the position of the party on specific issues.

Consequently, one of the main tasks of research on voting in parliaments is to try to estimate the significance and magnitude of these two intervening forces. In the case of the U.S. Congress, where parties are relatively weak and where position-taking incentives are perhaps evenly distributed across members of Congress, the revealed locations of members of Congress may be very similar to their ideal points.[9] In many parliamentary systems, in contrast, where parties are highly cohesive and where government-opposition incentives often force opposition parties to take positions in votes that are in conflict with their policy preferences, the revealed locations of members of parliament are likely to be quite different from their ideal preferences.

In this respect, the Korean National Assembly is an interesting chamber for looking at the effects of institutions on parliamentary voting. First, as in most other democratic parliaments, parties in the KNA try to discipline their members. Second, the KNA has a mixed-member electoral system, where some members are elected in single-member districts and others are elected by party-list proportional representation in one single national constituency. These rules provide different incentives for candidates in the electoral and

parliamentary arenas, in that the candidates who are elected in the single-member districts have a greater incentive to appeal directly to voters than the candidates who are elected on the 'closed' party lists.[10] Third, both the president and the legislature can initiate legislation, and the budget is proposed by the president. Whereas during the 16th KNA, the president and the KNA were controlled by opposing parties, in the 17th KNA, the president's party had a majority in the KNA. As a result, agenda-setting and veto-powers were split between two opposing parties in the 16th KNA, but these powers were united in a single party in the 17th KNA.

Elections and Parties in the Korean National Assembly

Although presidential and KNA elections have been held since 1948, South Korea is not generally considered to have been fully democratic until 1987.[11] South Korea is a presidential system, in that the president and the unicameral KNA (*Gukhoe*) are elected separately, in non-concurrent elections. The president has a five-year term and the KNA has a fixed four-year term.

A variety of different electoral systems have been in KNA elections.[12] In the 16th KNA elections in 2000, 227 seats (83 percent) were elected in single-member districts and 46 seats (17 percent) were elected by proportional representation in one single national constituency. Voters exercised one vote, for a candidate in their single-member district, and parties gained proportional seats if they either won five single-member seats or five percent of the total votes in the single-member districts. In the 17th KNA elections in 2004, the electoral system was changed. This time, 243 seats (81 percent) were elected in single-member districts and 56 seats (19 percent) were elected by proportional representation. Also, voters

had two votes: one in their single-member district and the other for allocating the proportional seats.

Regarding the party system, South Korean politics is dominated by a regional divide in the electorate.[13] Nevertheless, most commentators also identify a 'conservative-progressive' ideological dimension in Korean politics and three distinct ideological traditions.[14] First, the dominant 'conservative' party is the GNP, although there are several other conservative parties that win seats, such as the United Liberal Democrats (LDU). Second, the 'progressive' tradition is mainly associated with President Kim Dae-Jung and his Millennium Democratic Party (MNDP). However, the largest party in this tradition is now the Uri Party (UP), which was formed as a breakaway from the MNDP. The UP is generally regarded as to the left and more populist than the MNDP. Third, a 'socialist' tradition is further to the left of the progressive parties, and has been mainly represented in the 17th KNA by the Democratic Labor Party (DLP).

The substantive content of this progressive-conservative dimension is unclear, as it captures several underlying issue dimensions, such as security questions surrounding policies towards North Korea and the United States (a 'dove-hawk' dimension), economic spending and market regulation policies (an economic left-right dimension), and attitudes towards social questions like the rights of women and foreigners in Korean society (a social left-right dimension). The 'progressive' end of the spectrum is usually associated with a more dovish ('sunshine') policy towards North Korea, more public expenditure, and liberal social policies. On the other side, the 'conservative' end of the spectrum is usually associated with more hawkish policies towards North Korea, free market economic policies, and traditional social policies. However, not all parties and KNA members advocate such clearly correlated positions.

[Table 1 About Here]

Table 1 shows the party-political make-up of the 16th and 17th KNAs. The 16th KNA was dominated by the conservatives, with the GNP the largest party and the conservative parties controlling a majority of seats. However, the conservatives could not dominate the KNA in this period because the progressives controlled the presidency. Until 2003, the presidency was held by Kim Dae-Jung from the MNDP. Then, in the December 2002 presidential election, the MNDP candidate, Roh Moo-Hyun, narrowly defeated the GNP candidate, Lee Hoi-Chang. There were also some dramatic party splits and re-alignments in the 16th KNA. Most notably, frustrated with the MNDP and eager to create a legacy independently of Kim Dae-Jung, President Roh established the Uri Party, with initially 47 of the then 115 MNDP members. A few of the remaining MNDP members joined the GNP and almost half of the members of the other main conservative party, the LDU, joined the GNP. The GNP then held 53 percent of the seats in the KNA, with most of the remaining members divided between the two progressive parties, the old MNDP and the new UP.

The 16th KNA was also marred by bitter battles between the GNP in the KNA and President Roh. The GNP was vehemently opposed to Roh's policies towards North Korea and his ambitious public spending plans. They also accused his administration of incompetence and illegally interfering in the election campaign for the April 2004 KNA elections (the Korean constitution forbids the president from campaigning in KNA elections). On 12 March 2004, the KNA voted by 193 to 2 to impeach President Roh, and he stepped aside. Roh's UP members had blocked the speaker's podium for several days to prevent a vote. However, the UP members eventually decided to abstain in the vote, as they realized that the impeachment crisis was beginning to play into their hands, as public support for Roh rose sharply during the showdown. The UP then swept the 17th KNA elections in April 2004, winning 152 (51 percent) of the 299 seats, and the Korean Constitutional Court overturned the

impeachment decision in May 2004. Roh returned power, and this time he controlled a majority in the 17th KNA.

The way the KNA is elected and the story of the 16th and 17th KNAs consequently suggests some interesting things to consider when looking at roll-call voting in the KNA. Specifically, do KNA members elected in single-member districts behave differently from KNA members elected on PR lists? Were the party splits in the 16th KNA driven by ideological interests or strategic or institutional considerations? And, how did the shift from divided to unified government between the 16th and 17th KNAs alter voting in the chamber?

Application of NOMINATE to the KNA

We collected all the roll-call votes in the KNA since the introduction of recorded votes in March 1999 during the 15th KNA. The votes were entered by hand from the printed voting records. As there were only a few votes in the 15th KNA, we analyze the votes in the entire period of the 16th KNA and the first year of the 17th KNA: between June 2000 and July 2005. The number of roll-call votes increased dramatically between the 16th to the 17th KNA. Whereas there were approximately 130 roll-call votes per year in the 16th KNA, there were over 550 roll-call votes in the first year of the 17th KNA. However, as Table 2 shows, in both sessions of the KNA, the overwhelming majority of roll-call votes were highly lop-sided. In the 16th KNA, 87 percent of votes had majorities of 95 percent or greater. In the 17th KNA, the proportion of votes with this size majority or greater declined slightly, to 77 percent, but still remained high compared to most other democratic parliaments.

[Table 2 About Here]

We apply a standard geometric scaling technique, known as NOMINATE.[15] NOMINATE utilizes a parametric and stochastic model, and recovers information about individual legislator and roll-call vote characteristics by exploiting the assumption of the probabilistic spatial model that some errors are more likely than others.[16] The method also assumes that classification errors are distributed according to a logistic function, and that errors are independent and identically distributed across both legislators and votes.

It is standard practice when applying NOMINATE to exclude roll-call votes where the majority size is greater than 97 percent. However, as this would have excluded a large number of votes in the KNA, we set the cut-off point at 99.5 percent. This does not have a significant effect on the ideal point estimates of the KNA members. However, increasing the cut-off point allows a greater number of roll-call votes and KNA members to be scaled.

[Table 3 About Here]

Table 3 compares dimensionality in the KNA, as measured by NOMINATE, to dimensionality in several other chambers where this method has been applied. There are two things worth noting here. First, as with most other chambers, voting in the KNA is predominantly one-dimensional, with the second dimension recovered by NOMINATE only explaining a small additional percentage of vote decisions or reducing classification errors by a small amount. Nevertheless, as measured by the Aggregate Proportional Reduction of Error (APRE), the second dimension explains slightly more variance in the KNA than in most other chambers. Second, a two-dimensional model provides a clearer picture of the 17th KNA than of the 16th KNA, in that the total amount of variance explained by two dimensions is higher for the 17th KNA than for the 16th KNA.

[Figures 1a and 1b About Here]

Figure 1 compares the locations of those KNA members who were present in both sessions of the KNA. The high correlation of members' locations on the first dimension

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suggests that the substantive meaning of the first dimension was the same in both sessions of the KNA. However, there is almost zero correlation between the KNA members' locations on the second dimension, which suggests that the substantive meaning of this dimension changed between the 16th and 17th sessions.

Figure 2 presents the two-dimensional 'maps' of the location of the KNA members in the 16th and 17th KNA. Each KNA member is indicated by a single point, and colored according to his or her party affiliation. The figures also show the KNA members who switched parties during the 16th or 17th sessions.

[Figures 2a and 2b About Here]

The maps suggest several things. The first dimension in the 16th session appears to capture the government-opposition as well as the progressive-conservative dimension, with the UP furthest to the 'left', the MNDP in the 'centre', and the GNP furthest to the 'right'. The first dimension in the 17th session also appears to be the government-opposition dimension, with the most progressive DLP in the middle of the UP and the GNP. However, in this session, the second dimension might also be an ideological dimension, as the most left-wing party, the DLP, is at the top of the figure.

Second, the maps reveal a significant shift in the structure of inter-party voting between the 16th KNA and the 17th KNA, where voting was considerably more fragmented in the 16th session but then become more clearly bi-polar in the 17th KNA. One change between the two sessions was in the structure of the party system, as a result of the UP breaking away from the MNDP. However, after the formation of UP, the three main parties (UP, GNP and MNDP) were the same in the 16th and 17th KNA. Also, the electoral system and the substantive issues on the agenda were broadly the same for both sessions.

Nonetheless, the main exogenous institutional change between these two periods was the shift from divided government in the 16th KNA to unified government in the 17th KNA.

This shift had a significant effect on legislative agenda. In the 16th KNA, both the majority party in the legislature (GNP) and the party controlling the presidency (MNDP then UP) had the power to veto legislation. In the 17th KNA, in contrast, veto power was monopolized by UP. Hence, whereas in the 16th KNA there was legislative gridlock, in the 17th KNA the UP dominated the legislative process. The result, as the maps suggest, was a fragmented legislative coalition in the 16th KNA and a clearer government-opposition split in the 17th KNA.

Third, the parties are not as cohesive as one might expect, as there is considerable dispersion in the location of the members of each of the main parties. However, it is worth reiterating that there was a high level of overall consensus in both KNA, as revealed by the distribution of vote-splits, which by-definition means that on most votes the parties were highly cohesive.

Determinants of Voting in the KNA

These maps hence suggest some ways of interpreting the substantive meaning of the dimensions. However, 'eyeballing' these maps does not tell us anything about individual-level variations in KNA members' locations, the effects of electoral institutions on KNA voting, or what explains variation in voting behavior within the political parties. To investigate these issues we undertake a regression analysis, using exogenous preference-based and institutional variables to predict individual KNA members' locations.

Model and Variables

Our basic model of KNA members' voting behavior is as follows:

$$LOCATION_m = \beta_0 + \beta_1 PREFERENCES_m +$$

$$\beta_2 PARTY_m +$$

$$\beta_3 ELECTORAL\ INSTITUTIONS_m +$$

$$\beta_4 SENIORITY_m + \varepsilon_m$$

where the dependent variable, *LOCATION*, is a vector of two related dependent variables. The first variable is the simple Cartesian location of a KNA member, *m*, on either the first or second dimension recovered by NOMINATE. From these scores we calculate a second dependent variable: the 'revealed distance' of each KNA member from the median Cartesian location of his or her political group on the first and second dimensions.

Regarding the independent variables, the term *PREFERENCE* is a vector of several exogenous measures of individual members' preferences, and hence captures the direct relationship between individual members' underlying ideological preferences and their voting behavior. The data for this variable come from a survey of the members of the 16th and 17th KNAs, where each member was asked about his or her attitudes on a variety of policy questions.[17] The survey of the 16th KNA contained questions on external security, internal security, aid for North Korea, reforming the conglomerates, rights of small shareholders, welfare spending, protection of the environment, private high-school education, gender equality, and capital punishment. The survey of the 17th KNA included these categories and added questions on sending Korean troops to Iraq, participation of labor unions in management, dual citizenship, foreign direct investment, rights of foreign workers, and introducing markets in education provision. On each question, the KNA members were asked to locate themselves on a four-point scale: either strongly in favor of the provision, conditionally in favor, conditionally opposed, or strongly opposed.

From these survey data we created two sets of measures of KNA members' preferences. First, we undertook a principal-components factor analysis of the responses to

all the questions, and calculated the preferences of the KNA members in each session on the first two unrotated factors produced by the analysis. In the 16th KNA, the first factor explains 35 percent of the variance and the second factor explains an additional 11 percent. In the 17th KNA, the first factor explains 30 percent of the variance and the second factor explains an additional 8 percent. Because the questions relating to security issues and economic issues both load highly on the first factor, we call this dimension of preferences *Factor1(progressive-conservative)*. Because the questions relating to social policy issues, such as gender equality and law and order, load highly on the second factor, we call this dimension of preferences *Factor2(liberty-authority)*.

Second, we used the survey responses to calculate three simple additive scales – where we coded each question directionally, and then added the responses on each question. From the responses to the security policy issues (external security, internal security, aid for North Korea, and sending troops to Iraq) we calculated a security score (*Dove-Hawk*). From the responses to the economic policy issues (reforming the conglomerates, rights of small shareholders, welfare spending, and participation of labor unions in management) we calculated an economic left-right score (*Econ left-right*). And, from the responses to the social policy issues (protection of the environment, private high-school education, gender equality, capital punishment, dual citizenship, foreign direct investment, rights of foreign workers, and introducing markets in education provision) we calculated a social left-right score (*Social left-right*).

We recoded the factor-based and additive dimensions so that 0 is at the progressive/left end and 1 is at the conservative/right end. We then re-scaled all the dimensions between 0 and 1, to make it simpler to compare the magnitudes of the relationships between these measures of KNA members' ideological preferences and their revealed spatial locations. There is of course a high correlation between the two factor-score

based dimensions and the three simple additive dimensions. We consequently enter the factor-based dimensions and the additive dimensions in separate models.

In the models that relate to the second independent variable, on the revealed distance of each KNA member from his or her party, we recode these ideological variables as measures of each KNA member's ideological distance form the median member of his or her party. To do this, we use the individual KNA members' locations to calculate the median ideological location of each party in the 16th and 17th KNA, and then calculated the ideological distance of each KNA member from his or her party in each KNA session. The idea, here, is that instead of a KNA member's absolute exogenous ideological preferences predicting his or her absolute revealed location, we assume that a KNA member's personal ideological heterogeneity from his or her party predicts the member's voting variance from his or her party.

The *PARTY* term in the model is a vector of dummy variables for each of the parties in the 16th and 17th KNA. We estimate separate models with these variables excluded and with them included. When the party dummies are included, the coefficients on the other independent variables relate to average variance within each party's group of KNA members.

The *ELECTORAL INSTITUTIONS* term represents the effect of electoral institutions on voting behavior and on each KNA member's voting variance from the median member of his or her party. Here we use a single dummy variable, *Party list*, which takes the value 1 if the KNA member was elected on a proportional representation party-list and 0 if the KNA member was elected in a single-member district.

Finally, the *SENIORITY* term is a vector of two control variables that capture potential individual-level seniority effects. The first variable, *Times elected*, is the number of times a member had been elected to the KNA. The second variable, *Age*, is the age of each KNA member in the 16th and 17th sessions. Presumably, longer-serving and older KNA members

are more 'senior' in their parties and in the KNA leadership structures, and so are more able to influence the policy positions of their parties and the agenda of the KNA compared to more junior members.

We estimate the models using OLS regression. Descriptive statistics for all the variables are contained in the Appendix.

Results

Table 4 shows the results for the 16th KNA and Table 5 shows the results for the 17th KNA. The main findings are as follows. First, regarding the substantive content of the main dimension of voting, KNA members' preferences on the general progressive-conservative dimension of Korean politics are highly significant in both sessions of the parliament. The magnitude of the relationship between exogenous progressive-conservative preferences and revealed voting is also large. For example, in both sessions, a 10 percent movement along the progressive-conservative scale corresponds to about a 7.5 percent movement along the first dimension recovered by NOMINATE (from models 1 and 9). KNA members' progressive-conservative preferences in the 16th KNA also explain voting variations within parties on the first dimension, as revealed in the models with party dummies.

[Tables 4 and 5 About Here]

Furthermore, looking at the three additive scales from the surveys of KNA members' preferences reveals that security issues are the dominant aspect of progressive-conservative politics in the KNA. KNA members' economic preferences are significant in the 16th KNA but not in the 17th KNA. Also, in the 16th KNA, the magnitude of the relationship between preferences on economic issues and voting in this parliament is less than one-quarter the magnitude of the relationship between 'dove-hawk' preferences and voting.

Second, the substantive meaning of the second dimension is less clear. In the 16th KNA, this dimension appears to relate mostly to liberty-authority factors. In the 17th KNA, in contrast, the second dimension is more associated with economic left-right preferences. Combined progressive-conservative preferences are significant here. However, looking at the three additive scales reveals that although security and economic preferences are both significant, preferences on the economic left-right dimension are approximately twice as substantively important as preferences on the dove-hawk dimension. This is the case between parties as well as within parties, as the models with the party dummies reveal.

Third, turning to institutional effects, adding parties raises the explanatory power of the models enormously. For example, in the models of the 16th KNA, the R-squared on the first dimension doubles when party dummies are included in the results. And, in the models of the 17th KNA, the R-squared on the first dimension almost trebles when party dummies are included. This consequently reveals that parties were stronger determinants of voting in the 17th KNA than in the 16th KNA.

Fourth, the effect of electoral institutions is unclear. In the 17th KNA, for example, members who were elected on party lists were less progressive than members who were elected in single-member districts. We speculate that this is caused by the characteristics of the members elected on the proportional party lists. Those elected on the proportional party lists tended to be either older party leaders or newcomers in politics. The latter tended to be recruited because their contribution to party finances or party profile as well-known public figures. As members of the social and economic establishment, these politicians tend to be conservative, especially on security issues. However, this does not reveal anything about the effect of electoral institutions on the relationship between parliamentarians and their party leaders.

Fifth, the impact of seniority is clearer in the 17th KNA than in the 16th KNA. Longer serving and older KNA members tend to be more progressive than newer and younger KNA members. However, again, this may have more to do with the proportions of younger and older members in each party's cohort of parliamentarians than internal party relationships.

To look at the effects of preferences and institutions on variations within parties, Table 6 shows the results of the models where the dependent variable is the revealed voting variance of a KNA member from the median member of his or her party. First, KNA members' economic left-right preferences are clear determinants of members' variance from their parties on the second dimension in both sessions of the KNA. Interestingly, however, none of the ideological variables are significant on the first dimension in either session of the KNA in these models. This suggests that on the main dimension of conflict in the KNA, parties are able to force their members to 'toe-the-line' even when their members have heterogeneous policy preferences.

[Table 6 About Here]

Second, electoral institutions were only significant in the 16th KNA. Interestingly, though, members elected on proportional party lists were *more* likely to vote against their parties than members elected in single-member districts. At face value, this seems to be against the expectation that politicians elected in single-member districts are likely to be more independent from their party leaders than politicians elected on closed party lists. However, this may be because many of those elected by on the proportional lists were well-known figures with their own independent support bases. Also, the lower degree of independence of those elected in the single-member districts reflects the influence of the party leaderships in nominating candidates in safe districts, for example where there is strong regional support for the parties.

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Third, older politicians were less likely to vote against their parties in both sessions of the KNA. However, the number of times a member was elected had no significant effect.

[Figure 4 About Here]

Finally, the kernel density plots in Figure 4 illustrate the effect of parties on the translation of exogenous preferences into revealed voting behavior in the KNA. When asked to locate themselves on a series of policy issues, there is considerable overlap in the preferences of the members of the two main parties (UP and GNP). However, in their revealed voting behavior, the effect of party discipline means that these two groups of parliamentarians are clearly distinct.

Conclusion

Our study of voting in the KNA shows that parties in South Korea are able to articulate the main dimensions of political conflict in South Korean society inside the Assembly. To begin with, we find that parties in the KNA are relatively highly disciplined, despite the fact that South Korea is a presidential system, where party leaders have few powers to enforce party discipline. This is also despite a high level of heterogeneity in the preferences of the members of the main political parties. Competition between the main political parties is a stronger determinant of voting behavior than either the personal preferences of the individual KNA members or whether KNA members are elected in single-member districts or on party lists. The shift from divided government in the 16th KNA to unified government in the 17th KNA sharpened the partisan structure of voting in the KNA.

Despite strong party cohesion leading to a high level of consensus in voting in the KNA, we also find that when contested votes are held, the conflicts between parties are

predominantly explained by the underlying 'progressive-conservative' ideological conflict in Korean electoral politics. The security policy aspect of this conflict, relating mainly to policies towards North Korea and the United States, is more salient than the economic policy aspect of this conflict, which is present but plays a less significant role. These 'dove-hawk' preferences structured voting in the 16th session, in a period of divided government and before the formation of the Uri Party, as well as in the 17th session, after President Roh's UP had won a majority in the assembly.

Nevertheless, there is a second dimension of voting in the KNA. This is clearly present in both sessions of the KNA, although it is far less significant than the first dimension. The substantive policy meaning of this dimension changes between the 16th and 17th KNAs. While in the 16th session the second dimension related mainly to social policy preferences, such as the rights of women and foreigners in Korean society, in the 17th session this dimension related more to economic policy issues such as welfare spending and reform of the Korean conglomerates.

Not surprisingly, given the salience of security issues on the Korean peninsula and the stakes involved, the security dimension swamps socio-economic and socio-political concerns in South Korean legislative politics. However, this raises an important issue about the nature and sustainability of South Korean democracy. In virtually all other democratic polities, the main dimension of conflict in democratic politics relates to the battle for resources between the main groups in capitalist society. On this dimension, the basic redistributive contracts are struck via the electoral and parliamentary process, which allows capitalism to function with only limited socio-economic heterogeneity.[18] If politics in South Korea are not about the basic socio-economic conflicts in capitalist society, there is a danger that these conflicts will remain unresolved, and that the gains of rapid South Korea growth will lead to high levels of economic disparity in this country.

Table 1. Elections and Make-Up of the 16th and 17th Korean National Assemblies

Political party (English name)	Abbr.	Ideology	16th KNA			17th KNA		
			Votes-% (Apr. 2000)	Seats (start)	Seats (end)	Votes-% (Apr. 2004)	Seats (start)	Seats (July 05)
Hannara Dang (Grand National Party)	GNP	conservative	39.0	133	145	35.8	121	151
Sae Cheonnyeon Minju Dang (Millennium Democratic Party)	MNDP	liberal	35.9	115	62	7.1	9	10
Yeollin Uri Dang (Uri Party)	UP	left-liberal			47	38.3	152	152
Jayu Minju Yonhap (United Liberal Democrats)	LDU	conservative	9.8	17	10	2.8	4	3
Minju Nodong Dang (Democratic Labor Party)	DLP	socialist				13.0	10	10
Minkook Dang (Democratic People's Party)	DPP	liberal	3.7	2	2			
Huimangui Sinhanguk Dang (New Korea Party of Hope)	NKPH	conservative	0.4	1	1			
Other Parties and Independents			11.2	5	6	3.0	3	3
Total			100.0	273	273	100.0	299	299

Source: National Assembly of the Republic of Korea (http://korea.assembly.go.kr), Korean National Electoral Commission (http://www.nec.go.kr).

Table 2. Distribution of Vote-Splits in the 16th and 17th Korean National Assemblies

Majority size	16th KNA (June 2000-April 2004)			17th KNA (June 2004-July 2005)		
	No. of votes	% of votes	% of scaleable votes	No. of RCVs	% of votes	% of scaleable votes
50-55	7	1.34	3.66	4	.70	1.53
56-60	7	1.34	3.66	3	.52	1.15
61-65	4	.77	2.09	7	1.22	2.67
66-70	6	1.15	3.14	11	1.92	4.20
71-75	4	.77	2.09	13	2.26	4.96
76-80	8	1.54	4.19	6	1.05	2.29
81-85	10	1.92	5.24	19	3.31	7.25
86-90	6	1.15	3.14	15	2.61	5.73
91-95	18	3.45	9.42	53	9.23	20.23
96-99.50	121	23.22	63.35	131	22.82	50.00
99.51-100	330	63.34		312	54.36	
Total scaleable votes	191	36.66	100.00	262	45.64	100.00
Total votes	521	100.00		574	100.00	

Table 3. Dimensionality in the KNA Compared to other Parliaments, using NOMINATE

	Number of scaleable roll-call votes	Number of scaleable legislators	Percent of roll-call vote decisions predicted correctly			Aggregate Proportional Reduction of Error (APRE)		
			dim. 1	dim. 2	dim. 2- dim. 1	dim. 1	dim. 2	dim. 2- dim. 1
16th Korean National Assembly (2000-04)	191	286	93.4	94.2	.8	32.1	40.0	7.9
17th Korean National Assembly (2004-05)	262	305	93.5	94.9	1.4	35.3	49.2	13.9
US House of Representatives (1997-98)	946	443	88.2	89.2	1.0	64.4	67.4	3.0
US Senate (1997-98)	486	101	88.0	88.5	.5	64.2	66.0	1.8
French National Assembly (1951-56)	341	645	93.3	96.0	2.7	81.8	89.2	7.4
European Parliament (1999-2005)	5190	687	87.8	90.0	2.2	55.7	63.2	8.5
UN General Assembly (1991-96)	344	186	91.8	93.0	1.2	62.1	67.7	5.6

Note: US House and Senate data from Poole and Rosenthal (1997), UN General Assembly data from Voeten (2000), French National Assembly data from Rosenthal and Voeten (2004), and European Parliament data are from Hix, Noury and Roland (2007).[19]

Figure 1a. Comparison of Members' Coordinates in the 16th and 17th KNAs: Dimension 1
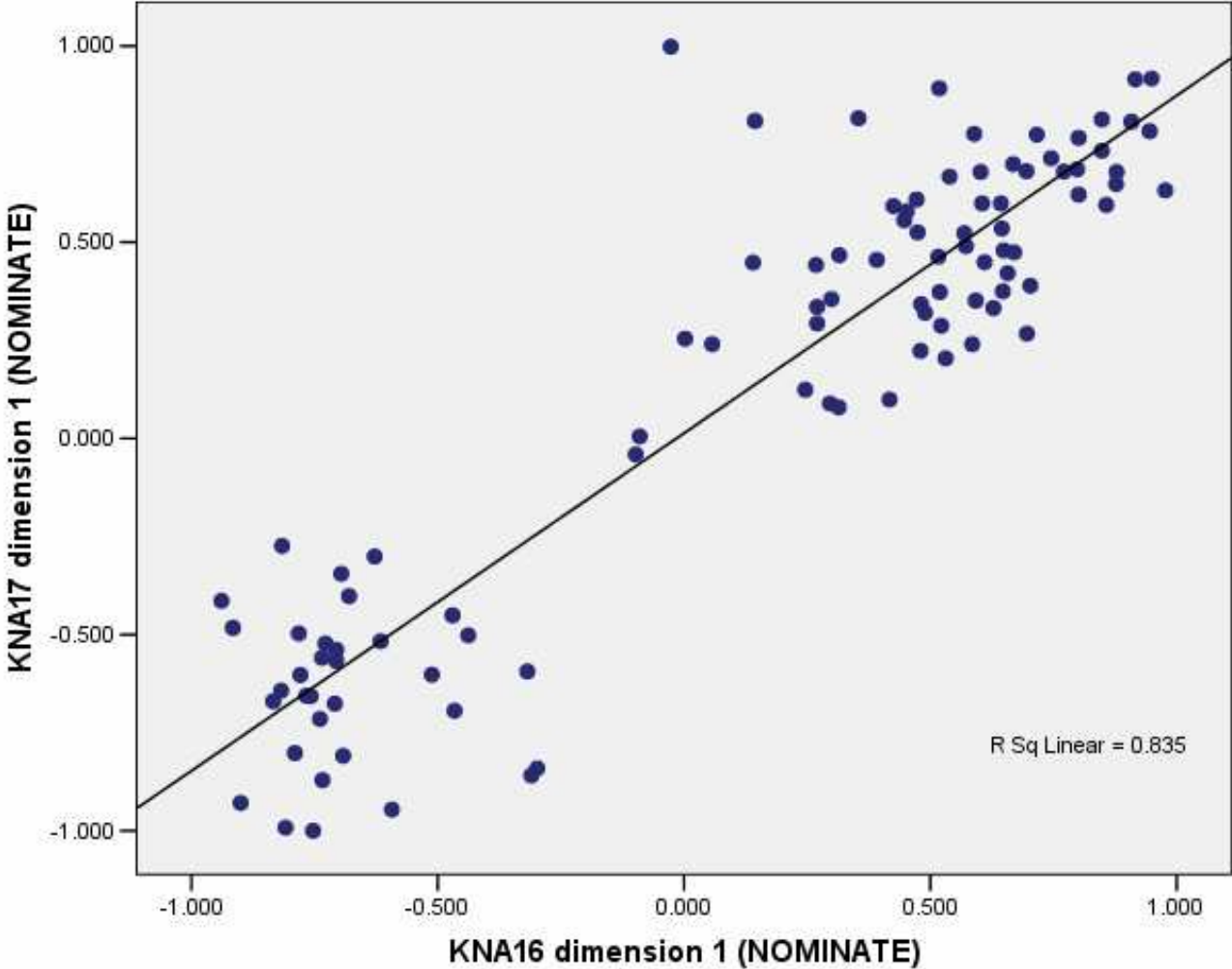
Figure 1b. Comparison of Members' Coordinates in the 16th and 17th KNAs: Dimension 2
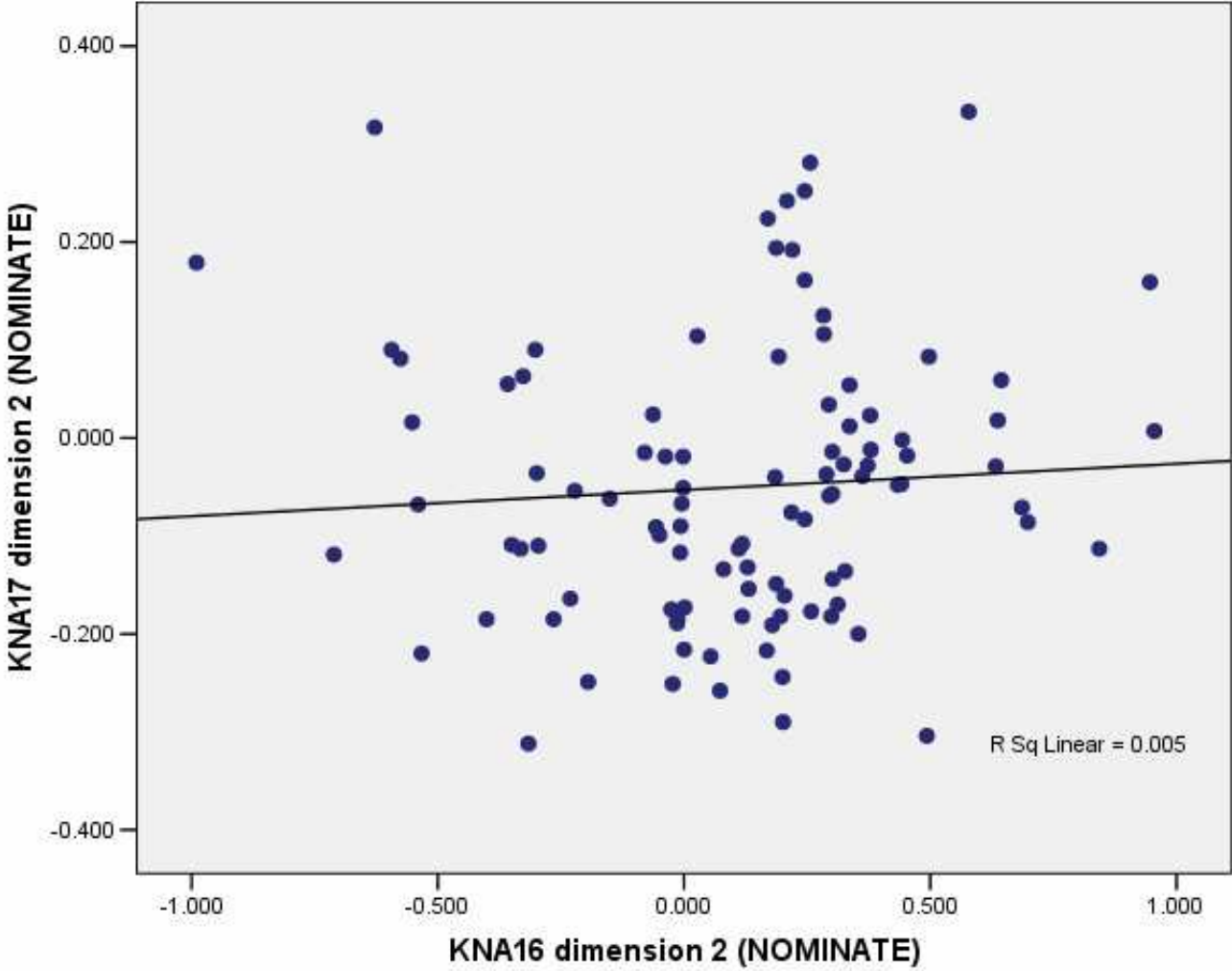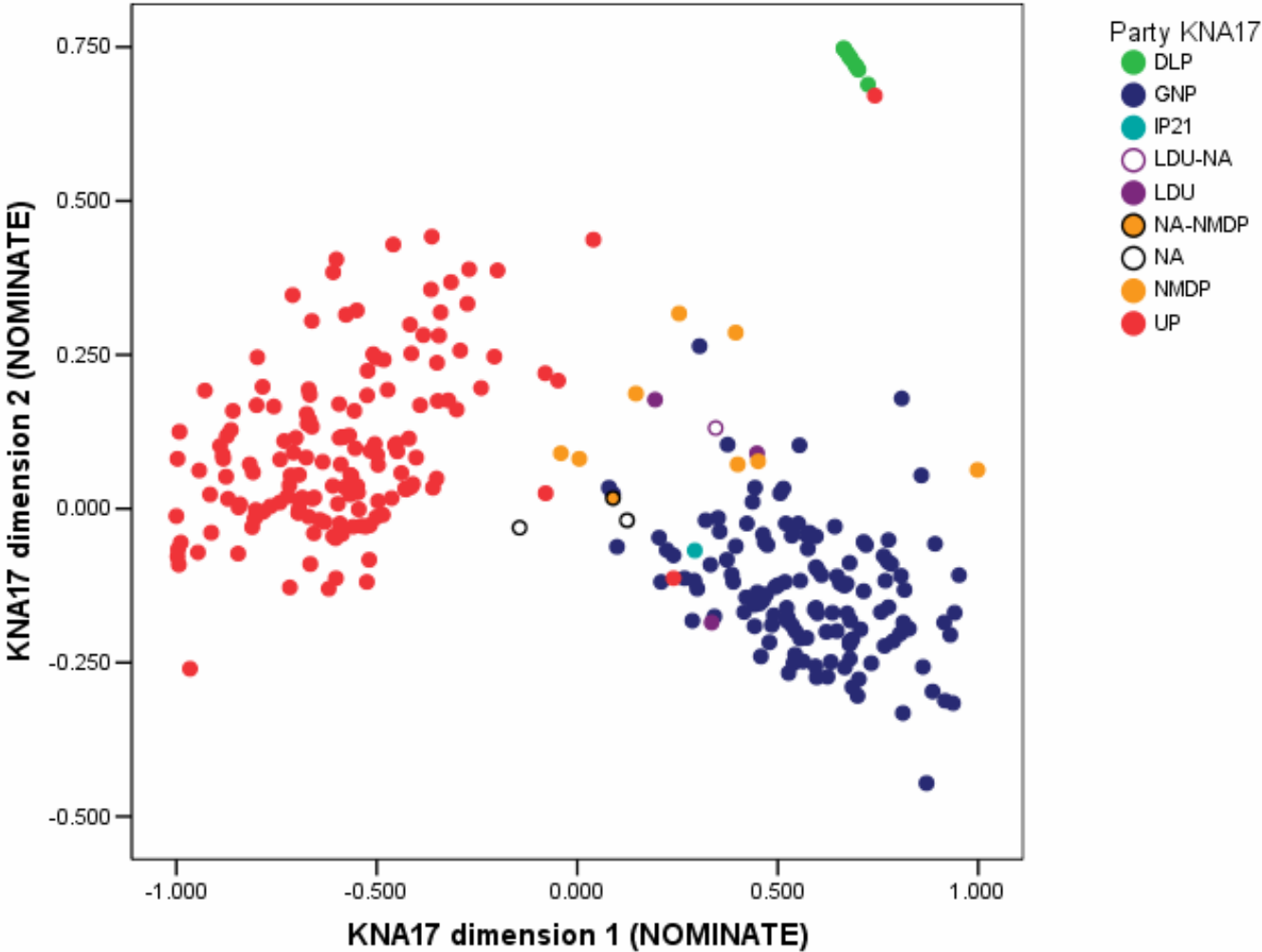

R Sq Linear = 0.005

Figure 2a. Two-Dimensional Maps: 16th KNA

Figure 2b. Two-Dimensional Maps: 17th KNA

Table 4. Determinants of Members' Revealed Locations in KNA16

	Dimension 1				Dimension 2			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Constant	-.754 (.003)	-.460 (.031)	-.288 (.064)	-.077 (.747)	.489 (.053)	.138 (.529)	-.166 (.455)	-.520 (.128)
Factor1(progressive-conservative)	1.525 (.000)		.461 (.000)		.309 (.030)		.245 (.064)	
Factor2(liberty-authority)	.156 (.481)		.146 (.202)		-.522 (.019)		.003 (.984)	
Dove-Hawk		1.395 (.000)		.200 (.082)		.341 (.071)		.067 (.682)
Econ left-right		.350 (.034)		.107 (.210)		.149 (.379)		.270 (.027)
Social left-right		.083 (.682)		.271 (.011)		-.192 (.360)		-.016 (.914)
Party list	.009 (.910)	.013 (.870)	-.059 (.159)	-.072 (.082)	-.100 (.210)	-.088 (.263)	.061 (.309)	.082 (.163)
Times elected	.012 (.646)	.016 (.514)	.013 (.289)	.014 (.250)	.023 (.362)	.017 (.494)	.011 (.547)	.012 (.515)
Age	.000 (.909)	-.003 (.397)	.000 (.946)	.000 (.927)	-.008 (.063)	-.005 (.202)	-.001 (.802)	.001 (.801)
Party dummies	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
Observations	210	221	210	221	210	221	210	221
Adj. R-squared	.382	.408	.844	.845	.047	.016	.507	.502

Note: The method is OLS regression. P-values are in parentheses.

Table 5. Determinants of Members' Revealed Locations in KNA17

	Dimension 1				Dimension 2			
	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)
Constant	-.544	-.093	.543	.333	.318	.407	.737	.406
	(.040)	(.720)	(.000)	(.038)	(.000)	(.000)	(.000)	(.000)
Factor1(progressive-conservative)	1.498		-.121		-.801		-.389	
	(.000)		(.307)		(.000)		(.000)	
Factor2(liberty-authority)	1.074		.176		.258		.133	
	(.000)		(.094)		(.000)		(.012)	
Dove-Hawk		1.380		-.039		-.339		-.145
		(.000)		(.727)		(.000)		(.010)
Econ left-right		-.400		-.170		-.577		-.306
		(.175)		(.172)		(.000)		(.000)
Social left-right		.488		.039		.081		.002
		(.038)		(.647)		(.148)		(.961)
Party list	.380	.329	.064	.047	.032	.058	.005	.006
	(.000)	(.002)	(.124)	(.257)	(.195)	(.021)	(.811)	(.778)
Times elected	.059	.051	-.023	-.031	-.013	-.010	-.004	-.001
	(.210)	(.262)	(.197)	(.079)	(.247)	(.333)	(.650)	(.833)
Age	-.016	-.015	.000	.002	.001	.001	-.002	-.002
	(.010)	(.012)	(.934)	(.453)	(.520)	(.442)	(.104)	(.143)
Party dummies	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
Observations	182	204	182	204	182	204	182	204
Adj. R-squared	.278	.270	.899	.898	.652	.634	.780	.774

Note: The method is OLS regression. P-values are in parentheses.

**Table 6. Determinants of Voting Variations Within Parties**

	16th KNA		17th KNA	
	Dimension 1	Dimension 2	Dimension 1	Dimension 2
	(17)	(18)	(19)	(20)
Constant	.001	.182	.243	.174
	(.997)	(.447)	(.002)	(.000)
Dove-Hawk distance (*KNA member's absolute distance from party median*)	.073	.073	.078	.172
	(.501)	(.619)	(.372)	(.001)
Econ left-right distance (*KNA member's absolute distance from party median*)	.048	.226	.071	.221
	(.602)	(.070)	(.486)	(.000)
Social left-right distance (*KNA member's absolute distance from party median*)	.129	.100	.095	.005
	(.233)	(.498)	(.196)	(.902)
Party list	.070	.097	.007	-.003
	(.022)	(.020)	(.771)	(.828)
Times elected	.009	.001	.013	.000
	(.402)	(.954)	(.201)	(.944)
Age	-.001	-.005	-.003	-.002
	(.368)	(.019)	(.025)	(.004)
Party dummies	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	221	221	202	202
Adj. R-squared	.023	.055	.054	.179

Note: The method is OLS regression. The dependent variable is the revealed absolute distance of a KNA member from the median member of his/her party on the relevant dimension (e.g. NOMINATE dimension 1, Optimal Classification dimension 1, etc.). P-values are in parentheses.
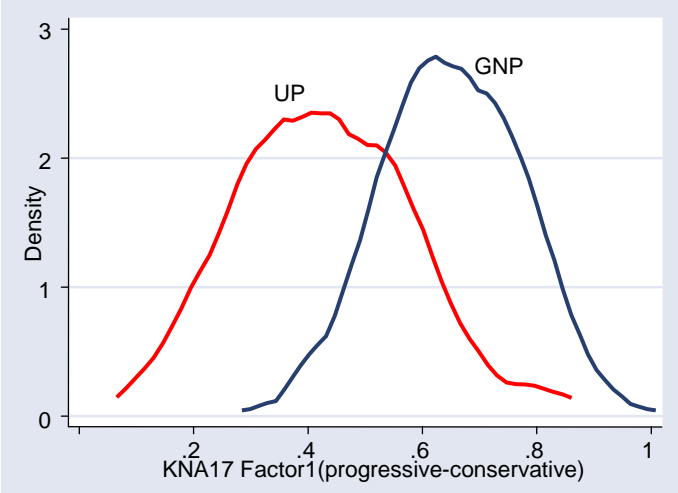
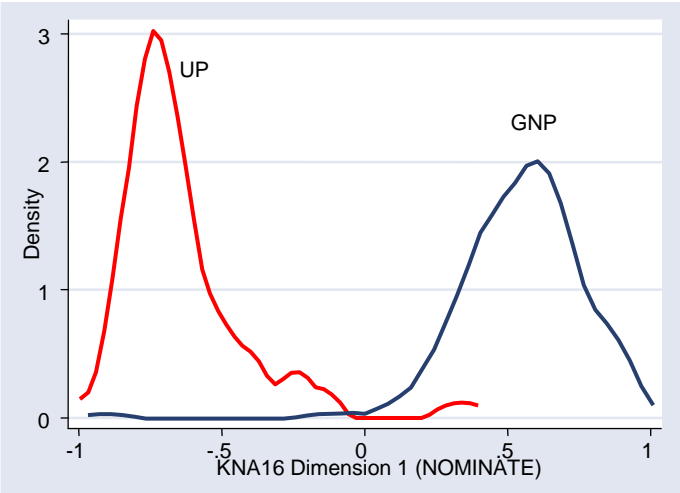**Figure 4. The Party Effect: KNA Members' Preferences and Revealed Locations**
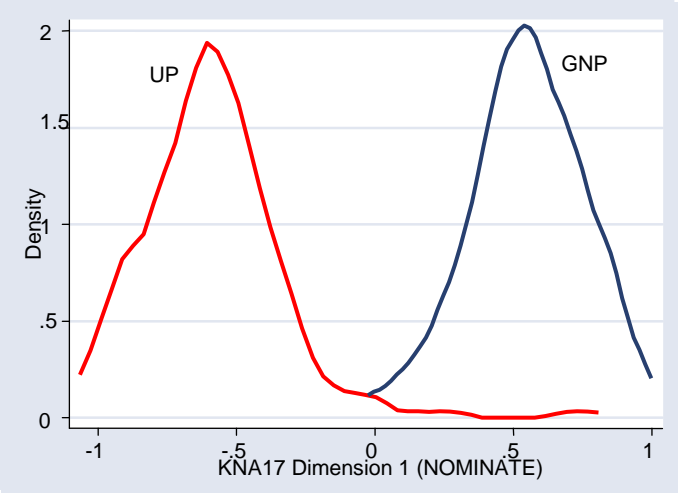
a. Exogenous Preferences KNA16
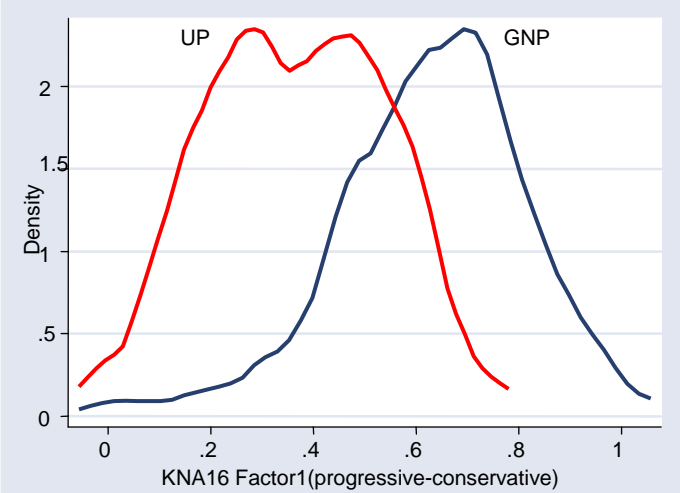
c. Exogenous Preferences KNA17

b. Revealed Behavior KNA16

d. Revealed Behavior KNA17

Appendix

Table A1. Descriptive Statistics

Variable	No. of obs.	Mean	Standard deviation	Minimum	Maximum
NOMINATE dimension 1 KNA16	286	.173	.519	-.939	.977
NOMINATE dimension 2 KNA16	286	-.035	.434	-1.000	.999
OC dimension 1 KNA16	286	-.003	.084	-.310	.322
OC dimension 2 KNA16	286	-.009	.098	-.266	.522
NOMINATE dimension 1 KNA17	305	-.021	.617	-1.000	.998
NOMINATE dimension 2 KNA17	305	.019	.208	-.446	.748
OC dimension 1 KNA17	305	-.001	.063	-.082	.165
OC dimension 2 KNA17	305	-.009	.060	-.162	.377
Factor1(progressive-conservative) KNA16	225	.529	.212	0	1
Factor2(liberty-authority) KNA16	225	.459	.136	0	1
Dove-Hawk KNA16	237	.418	.210	0	1
Economic left-right KNA16	237	.486	.207	0	1
Social left-right KNA16	237	.397	.172	0	1
Factor1(progressive-conservative) KNA17	182	.528	.204	0	1
Factor2(liberty-authority) KNA17	182	.358	.164	0	1
Dove-Hawk KNA17	206	.509	.236	0	1
Economic left-right KNA17	206	.516	.186	0	1
Social left-right KNA17	206	.408	.214	0	1
Party list KNA16	672	.097	.296	0	1
Party list KNA17	672	.086	.281	0	1
Times elected KNA16	237	2.101	1.311	1	9
Times elected KNA17	309	1.65	1.010	1	6
Age KNA16	237	56.620	8.117	36	76
Age KNA17	308	51.078	8.002	33	76

Table A2. Determinants of Members' Revealed Locations in KNA16: Optimal Classification

	Dimension 1				Dimension 2			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Constant	-.180 (.000)	-.132 (.000)	-.092 (.019)	-.091 (.137)	.027 (.618)	-.039 (.419)	-.020 (.724)	-.101 (.255)
Factor1(progressive-conservative)	.229 (.000)		.071 (.002)		.020 (.525)		.009 (.785)	
Factor2(liberty-authority)	.028 (.450)		.041 (.160)		-.111 (.022)		-.029 (.491)	
Dove-Hawk		.193 (.000)		.015 (.606)		.026 (.540)		-.020 (.633)
Econ left-right		.054 (.054)		.022 (.312)		.033 (.377)		.054 (.089)
Social left-right		.038 (.280)		.060 (.027)		-.047 (.312)		-.031 (.431)
Party list	-.005 (.715)	-.006 (.659)	-.014 (.180)	-.017 (.099)	-.016 (.341)	-.010 (.578)	.002 (.907)	.011 (.472)
Times elected	-.000 (.936)	.000 (.988)	-.001 (.802)	-.001 (.804)	-.002 (.766)	-.003 (.629)	-.004 (.391)	-.004 (.357)
Age	.001 (.246)	.000 (.830)	.001 (.056)	.001 (.114)	.000 (.795)	.001 (.502)	.002 (.054)	.002 (.025)
Party dummies	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
Observations	210	221	210	221	210	221	210	220
Adj. R-squared	.346	.352	.625	.616	.009	-.015	.294	.286

Note: The method is OLS regression. P-values are in parentheses.

Table A3. Determinants of Members' Revealed Locations in KNA17: Optimal Classification

	Dimension 1				Dimension 2			
	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)
Constant	-.050 (.055)	-.023 (.356)	.028 (.176)	.014 (.520)	.016 (.495)	.061 (.008)	.122 (.000)	.105 (.002)
Factor1(progressive-conservative)	.195 (.000)		.035 (.042)		-.161 (.000)		-.101 (.000)	
Factor2(liberty-authority)	.069 (.005)		-.008 (.609)		.076 (.001)		.036 (.113)	
Dove-Hawk		.148 (.000)		.014 (.391)		-.047 (.042)		-.018 (.456)
Econ left-right		.015 (.592)		.027 (.124)		-.160 (.000)		-.103 (.000)
Social left-right		.030 (.182)		-.008 (.562)		.033 (.108)		.009 (.643)
Party list	.030 (.004)	.025 (.014)	.005 (.395)	.004 (.449)	.010 (.285)	.014 (.142)	-.001 (.898)	-.002 (.842)
Times elected	.004 (.381)	.002 (.567)	-.003 (.201)	-.005 (.055)	-.004 (.284)	-.004 (.352)	-.004 (.328)	-.003 (.431)
Age	-.002 (.004)	-.002 (.005)	-.000 (.630)	.000 (.929)	.001 (.170)	.001 (.312)	.000 (.591)	.000 (.993)
Party dummies	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
Observations	182	204	182	204	182	204	182	204
Adj. R-squared	.349	.361	.804	.806	.356	.356	.462	.472

Note: The method is OLS regression. P-values are in parentheses.

Table A4. Determinants of Voting Variations Within Parties: Optimal Classification

	16th KNA		17th KNA	
	Dimension 1	Dimension 2	Dimension 1	Dimension 2
	(17)	(18)	(19)	(20)
Constant	-.013 (.787)	-.013 (.787)	.038 (.001)	.079 (.000)
Dove-Hawk distance (*KNA member's absolute distance from party median*)	-.002 (.954)	-.002 (.954)	.006 (.643)	.012 (.537)
Econ left-right distance (*KNA member's absolute distance from party median*)	-.008 (.748)	-.008 (.748)	-.012 (.416)	.080 (.001)
Social left-right distance (*KNA member's absolute distance from party median*)	.020 (.501)	.020 (.501)	.005 (.663)	.019 (.258)
Party list	.138 (.101)	.014 (.101)	.003 (.391)	-.005 (.354)
Times elected	-.001 (.698)	-.001 (.698)	.001 (.454)	.000 (.865)
Age	.000 (.987)	.000 (.987)	-.002 (.105)	-.001 (.004)
Party dummies	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	221	221	202	202
Adj. R-squared	.036	.091	.303	.219

Note: The method is OLS regression. The dependent variable is the revealed absolute distance of a KNA member from the median member of his/her party on the relevant dimension (e.g. NOMINATE dimension 1, Optimal Classification dimension 1, etc.). P-values are in parentheses.

Notes

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[1] An earlier version of this paper was presented at the conference on the Comparative Analysis of Legislative Behavior, Del Mar, April 14-15, 2006, and at the Annual Conference of the American Political Science Association, Philadelphia, August 31-September 3, 2006.

[2] Arend Lijphart, *Democracies* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984); and G. Bingham Powell, *Elections as Instruments of Democracy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000).

[3] For example, Prisca Lanfranchi and Ruth Lüthi, 'Cohesion of Party Groups and Interparty Conflict in the Swiss Parliament', in Shaun Bowler, David M. Farrell and Richard S. Katz, eds, *Party Discipline and Parliamentary Government* (Columbus: Ohio State Press, 1999); Argelina Figueiredo and Fernando Limongi, 'Presidential Power, Legislative Organization, and Party Behavior in Brazil', *Comparative Politics*, 32 (2000), 151-70; John B. Londregan, *Legislative Institutions and Ideology in Chile* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Scott Morgenstern, *Patterns of Legislative Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004); Howard Rosenthal and Erik Voeten, 'Analyzing Roll Calls with Perfect Spatial Voting: France 1946-1958', *American Journal of Political Science*, 48 (2004), 620-32; and Simon Hix, Abdul Noury and Gérard Roland *Democratic Politics in the European Parliament* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

[4] To our knowledge, there are only two other works on roll-call voting in the KNA. These two papers are published in Korean and only look at a small number of votes in the 16th KNA with limited statistical analysis. See Jin-young Jeon, 'A Study of Members' Conflictual Voting Behavior in the 16th Korean National Assembly', *Korean Political Science Review*, 40 (2006); and Hyeon Woo Lee, 'Analysis of Members' Voting Behavior in the 16th Korean Assembly', *Korean and International Politics*, 12 (2005), 187-218.

[5] For example, Abdul Noury and Elena Mielcova, 'Electoral Performance and Voting Behavior in the Czech Republic', Institute of Governmental Studies, University of California,

Berkeley, Paper WP2005-14; and Iain McLean and Arthur Spirling, 'UK OC OK? A Note on Interpreting Optimal Classification Scoring for the United Kingdom', *Nuffield College Working Papers in Politics* 2003-W9, 3 June 2003.

[6] John Huber, 'The Vote of Confidence in Parliamentary Democracies', *American Political Science Review*, 90 (1996), 269-82; and Daniel Diermeier and Timothy J. Feddersen, 'Cohesion in Legislatures and the Vote of Confidence Procedure', *American Political Science Review*, 92 (1998), 611-21.

[7] Matthew S. Shugart and John M. Carey, *Presidents and Assemblies: Constitutional Design and Electoral Systems* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992); and George Tsebelis, *Veto Players: How Political Institutions Work* (Princeton: Princeton University Press/Russell Sage Foundation, 2002).

[8] David W. Rohde, *Parties and Leaders in the Postreform House* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991); and Gary W. Cox and Mathew D. McCubbins, *Legislative Leviathan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993).

[9] For example, Keith T. Poole and Howard Rosenthal, *Congress: A Political-Economic History of Roll Call Voting* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).

[10] See John Carey and Matthew S. Shugart, 'Incentives to Cultivate a Personal Vote: A Rank Ordering of Electoral Formulas', *Electoral Studies*, 14 (1995), 417-39; Paul Mitchell, 'Voters and Their Representatives: Electoral Institutions and Delegation in Parliamentary Democracies', *European Journal of Political Research*, 37 (2000), 335-51; and Matthew S.Shugart, Melody E. Valdini and Kati Suominen, 'Looking for Locals: Voter Information Demands and Personal Vote-Earning Attributes of Legislators under Proportional Representation', *American Journal of Political Science*, 29 (2005), 437–49.

[11] See, for example, Larry Diamond and Doh Chull Shin, 'Introduction: Institutional Reform and Democratic Consolidation in Korea', in Larry Diamond and Doh Chull Shin, eds,

Institutional Reform and Democratic Consolidation in Korea (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 2000).

[12] Aurel Croissant, 'Electoral Politics in South Korea', in Aurel Croissant, ed., *Electoral Politics in Southeast and East Asia* (Singapore: Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, 2002).

[13] Woojin Moon, 'Decomposition of Regional Voting in South Korea: Ideological Conflicts and Regional Benefits', *Party Politics*, 11 (2005), 579-99.

[14] For example, Chaibong Hahm, 'The Two South Koreas: A House Divided', *The Washington Quarterly* 28 (2005), 57–72; and Hyunchool Lee, 'South Koreans' Ideological Disposition: Its Feature and Change', *Korean Political Science Review*, 39 (2005), 321-43.

[15] As a robustness check of the NOMINATE results we also applied Optimal Classification (see Appendix).

[16] Poole and Rosenthal; and Keith T. Poole, *Spatial Models of Parliamentary Voting* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

[17] See Joong Ang Daily and the Korean Party Studies Association, *Survey of the Members of the 16th Korean National Assembly*, Korean Party Studies Association (2002); and Joong Ang Daily and the Korean Party Studies Association, *Survey of the Members of the 17th Korean National Assembly*, Korean Party Studies Association (2005).

[18] See Carles Boix, *Democracy and Redistribution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Adam Przeworski, 'Democracy as an Equilibrium', *Public Choice*, 123 (2005), 253-73; and Daron Acemoglu and James A. Robinson, *Economic Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

[19] See Poole and Rosenthal; Hix et al.; and Erik Voeten, 'Clashes of the Assembly', *International Organization*, 54 (2000), 185-214.