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A Comparative Study of Democratic
Experiences of Burma and Indonesia in
1950's-1960's

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Introduction

Burma and Indonesia bear striking similarities in their political histories. Currently, Indonesia is in the process of re-establishing a democratic system after three decades of authoritarian rule while Burma is still struggling to free herself from the grip of miliary-imposed authoritarianism. Just as there are differences between the two nations in terms of culture, religion, and geography, there are also parallels in their political experiences.

Indeed, historical similarities exist between the Burmese and Indonesian Political systems. Both countries were colonized by Western powers and were occupied the Japanese during WWII. In both, the struggle for independence and subsequent military campaigns against various insurgencies earned their armies the status of "saviors" of both countries, and the armed forces in both countries felt they are entitled to play a role in their nation's governmental affairs.

In Burma, General Ne Win formed caretaker government in 1958, which ruled Burma into 1960, when the civilian government was in disarray and the Indonesian army joined with President Sukarno to

form an autocratic "guided democracy" government when the civilian parliament faltered. Eventually, the military leaders of both countries seized power to usher in military regimes. In 1966-67 General Suharto replaced President Sukarno and General Ne Win took down U Nu's civilian government in 1962.

Another similarity between the two nations is the ethnic diversity. About 70 % of Burma's approximately 45 million population are the dominant Burman and approximately 45 % of Indonesian's 234 million people are Javanese. Burma has over 100 ethnic groups and Indonesia is comprised of more than 200 ethnic groups living throughout the archipelago. During the colonial time, both the Dutch and the British recruited ethnic minorities in both countries to help carry out colonial services and the anti-colonial fervor during the independence movements in the two countries alienated these ethnic servants of the colonial governments. This is one factor which helps explain the ethnic insurgencies which broke out in the newly independent countries.

Both had experienced western colonial rule and, to a lesser or greater extent, had fought against it. The struggle for independence in both countries were led by young nationalists who were, ironically, educated by the colonial institutions. When both nations gained independence in the years following the conclusion of the Second World War, parliamentary democracy was adopted by these young leaders as the system of choice to begin a new era as

independent nations, with prosperity and unified nation as goals. Unfortunately democracy lasted only a decade or so in both countries as their parliamentary systems dramatically collapsed in the late 1950's in Indonesia and early 1960's in Burma, followed by some three-decades of authoritarian rule.

Democracy in Post-Colonial Period and its Collapse

During the Second World War, the Japanese-supported nationalist leaders of Burma and Indonesia were able to at least nominally fill the shoes of the British and Dutch colonial rulers. On their return, the colonial powers were not disposed to grant independence immediately. In Burma, the British colonial government returned with a policy to continue with British rule up to six years.[1] The Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League (AFPFL) led by Aung San, which was the umbrella organization of pro-independence Burmese forces, had to politically manoeuver for nearly three years from 1945, when the Allied forces re-occupied Burma, to 1947 when Aung San led a delegation to London for negotiations for formal independence. Following the independence on January 4, 1948, Burma began operating a parliamentary system with U Nu as the prime

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[1] In November, 1944, government of British Burma in exile in India formulated what was called "Blue-Print for Burma, which was endorsed by London. It stated that a personal rule by the British governor following the British return to Burma was necessary up to six years. This document incensed leaders of the Burmese independence movement as well as the Burmese populace. See A History of Modern Burma by John F. Cady(Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1958), P.495.

minister.[2]

In Indonesia, the struggle for independence proved to be even harder. Two days after the ending of the Second World War, on August 17, 1945, Sukarno and Hata declared the creation of the Republic of Indonesia with a temporary constitution. Fighting broke out between the Indonesian nationalist forces and the Dutch as soon as the latter returned to the islands. After about three years of fighting and with the international mediation from the United Nations Security Council, Indonesia's independence war ended and the country was granted independence in 1949.

For approximately one decade or a bit more or less following their independence, the two countries came under parliamentary democratic regimes. In Burma, the young nationalist leadership adopted a parliamentary, democratic constitution modeled on that of Britain with some federalist features similar to Yugoslavia.[3] It was the system which the emerging political elites, that is, those young nationalist leaders of the independence movement, knew best. Given that the emerging elites in the British and Dutch colonies had been nurtured in the democratic system of government and had

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[2]Joseph Silverstein, <u>Burma: Military Rule and the Politics of Stagnation</u> (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1977), P.18.

[3] The bicameral Burmese parliament was based on the British system, which was supplemented with some trappings of federalism to accommodate the interests of various ethnic minorities who inhibit the hilly frontier regions.

come to believe in democracy as an ideal to be cherished and achieved, these elites strived for an independent state with such a system because this was the model best known to them.[4] This is especially the case for those elites who were Western-educated and aspired for positions in the governments of the independent state.[5] Ideologically, the goal of the new Burmese leadership was to create a government, blending the liberal democratic values inherited from the British with socialist goals.[6]

The more important and practical factor which contributed to the choosing of the parliamentary system in Burma in those days was the need to accommodate concerns and interests of non-Burman peoples who populate the frontier areas. A union which would encompass all these areas, with constitutional guarantees to

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[4] Leslie Palmier, "Indonesia's Rejection of Tradition", <u>Asian Affairs</u> 20(2)(1989): 195-204.

[5] Syed Farid Alatas, <u>Democracy and Authoritarianism in Indonesia and Malaysia</u> (London and New York: MacMillan Press and St. Martin Press, 1997), P.111.

[6] Josef Silverstein, <u>Burma: Military Rule and the Politics of Stagnation</u> (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1977), P.54. Some Burma analysts presented a narrow view of Aung San, who was the father of Burmese independence, as being ambivalent about multi-party democracy and having a preference for one-party, albeit a coalition(AFPFL). This view is based largely based on Aung San's document titled "Blue-Print for Burma" which was written in Tokyo in 1941 and presented to the Japanese military authorities while he was in search of foreign help to get rid of British rule. Had these analysts read Joseph Silverstein's thorough analysis of Aung San's political convictions, they would understand that the document was possibly written under duress while in Tokyo.

benefit from unity while maintaining some degree of autonomy for them, was envisioned. A bicameral parliamentary system was adopted, with the Chamber of Deputies, which elected the prime minister and to which he was responsible to, and the Chamber of Nationalities for which seats were allotted to ethnic and social groups to reflect the states' social and ethnic composition.[7] Together, the two chambers approved appointments of judges to the High and Supreme Courts, elect the ceremonial President, approved constitutional amendments, and passed legislation.

As regards Indonesia, the factors which contributed to the emergence of a parliamentary regime in the country was more complex. Parallel to Burma, the Dutch colonial authority did indeed introduce some representational institutions in the Netherlands Indies to clam Indonesian nationalist aspirations. However, in comparison to Burma, where Burmese political parties, starting in 1937, ran in elections to form cabinet governments which were responsible to the British Governor,[8] the Dutch introduction of

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[7] The 1948 Constitution divided Burma into 6 geographical entities: Burma proper, the largest which comprises the lowland Burmese heartland where the majority Burmans live and five states of outer regions where various ethnic groups live. For detailed treatise of the 1948 constitution, see Maung Maung, Burma's Constitution (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1959).

[8] The Burmese prime ministers and their cabinets were granted powers over the ministries responsible for internal matters only. Ministries of critical importance, such as finance, defense, and foreign affairs, along with the frontier areas, were directly controlled by the British Governor's office.

representative forms of governance in Indonesia were extremely limited and nominal. The Dutch colonial government restricted and repressed nationalist politics and inhibited the gradual development of representative government in the colony.

Starting in the early 1900's, the Dutch began to grant some degree of legal, political rights to the peoples of the Dutch East Indies. In 1918, the colonial government agreed to the establishment of the Volksraad or People's council. The council was an advisory body whose membership was partly elected and partly appointed. Feith analyzed that beyond this point there was no progress and thus little experience with representative government was obtained by the Indonesians.[9]

No matter how limited, these representative institutions and the experience in their execution provided many of the new leaders of Burma and Indonesia some degree of confidence that such systems were viable in their newly independent nations. As Feith pointed out, national self-respect caused these nationalist leaders to strive for democracy as this was the way they could show the colonial powers that they were capable of self-government along democratic lines.[10] Debunking the arguments that the concepts of

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[9] Herbert Feith, The Decline of Constitutional Democracy in Indonesia (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1962) P.7-8.

[10] Herbert Feith, The Decline of Constitutional Democracy in Indonesia (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1962) P.44.

democracy and responsible governments are Western notions inappropriate for Indonesia, Adnan B. Nasution emphatically supposed that the striving for a constitutional government (i.e. parliamentary government) at the time was one side of the will to achieve liberty of the Indonesian people since the colonial times while the other side of the will was the aspiration to be independent from foreign domination.[11]

Indonesia's parliamentary democracy system of 1950-1957 in fact evolved following the creation of the 1945 Republic, while the Burmese parliamentary system was adopted from the time of its independence. Indonesia's 1945 Constitution, which was prepared for the declaration of independence in August 1945 following the Japanese surrender, was modeled on the presidential system and the Five Principles or Pancasila.[12] It granted considerable power to the president and was vague in many ways, making it susceptible to different interpretations. This constitution lasted through the Indonesian independence war until the Dutch and Indonesian forces reached a settlement[13] in 1949 which created what was called the

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[11] Adnan Buying Nastion _The Aspiration for Constitutional Government in Indonesia_ (Jakarta, Indonesia: Pustaka Sinar Harapan, 1992) P.2-4.

[12] The Five Principles are (1) belief in God, (2)national unity,(3) humanitarianism, (4) people's sovereignty, and (5) social justice and prosperity.

[13] Indonesian independence was achieved as a result of both fighting and negotiation. Herbert Feith, _The Decline of Constitutional Democracy in Indonesia_ (Ithaca, New York: Cornell

Republic of United States of Indonesia (RUSI) in which the Indonesian Republic, which was formed under the 1945 constitution, was a constituent member along with the outer states.

During the time of the Republic of Indonesia(of the 1945 constitution), some political developments had taken place which would effect a move away from the concentration of powers in the presidency. A more open political system, in which political parties were allowed to compete for power, which in effect was a parliamentary system, was called for by various political organizations. In October 1945, Vice-President Hatta issued an order to transfer the president's provisional powers to a working committee. A month later, the government acknowledged the right of all Indonesians to form their political parties.[14]

The parliamentary democracy governments that came into existence in Burma and Indonesia following their independence lasted only about one decade. In Burma, the parliamentary government was abolished by the military coup d'etat led by General Ne Win in 1962. In Indonesia, the parliament was abrogated when President Sukarno introduced what was termed "guided democracy" in March 1957.[15] The collapse of democratic systems in Burma and

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University Press, 1962) P.15.

[14] Ibid. P.48.

[15] Though Ne Win and Sukarno took down parliamentary democracies the same decade, there was no historical evidence that indicates any contact between them. Only U Nu (Burmese prime

Indonesia during that period falls in Samuel Huntington's category of "the second reverse wave (of democratization)." In the developing world, political development and regime transitions were taking on a heavily authoritarian cast during that period.[16]

Motivation for the research

Motivation for this comparative study is simple. Both Burma and Indonesia need to learn from their past experiences as democratic advocates in both are striving to reestablish democratic rule at present. Burma is still in the process of a fierce struggle to rid itself of military authoritarian rule and to establish a democratic system of governance while Indonesia's democracy is still nascent and in a state of flux. It is a burning question to democrats in these country as regards to the questions of what went wrong with democracy in their countries' past, what lessons could be learned from its failure, and how to avoid any possible, vicious cycle of democratic breakdown in the future.

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minster of the time) and Sukarno had intimate relationship as the leaders of the non-alignment movement. When Ne Win came to power in the 1962 coup, relations between Burma and Indonesia were minimal because of Ne Win's self-imposed isolationism and Suharto's pro-West and anti-Communist stance. Chi-Shad Liang, Burma's Foreign Relations: Neutralism in Theory and Practice (New York, Westport, Connecticut, London, Praeger, 1990) P.107.

[16] Samuel P. Huntington, The Third Wave: Democratization in Late Twentieth Century(Norman and London: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991), P.16-20.

After all, today's global trends show that democracy has emerged, along with free market, as the best political choice for countries striving for stability and prosperity.[17] However, we cannot assume that establishing and consolidating democratic institutions and practices will be smooth and seamless. History has shown that such a process could be one of a dramatic failure as happened in Burma and Indonesia in 1950's-1960's.

In addition, while literature on Indonesia for the selected period is fairly large, there is a relative dearth of literature on the fall of the Burmese parliamentary, democratic regime. This study therefore intends to contribute to the literature on the fall of Burmese parliamentary regime, learning from some of the scholarly works on the same subject on Indonesia such as that of Feith. Most writings on Burma in this regard largely consider the increasingly politicized Burmese army as the major factor and ignored the systemic failures of the parliamentary regime at the time, which in retrospect made the military take-over in 1963 possible.

For today's Burmese pro-democracy scholars, to criticize a democratic regime is a almost a taboo.[18] This study intends to

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[17]   Georg Sorensen, <u>Democracy and Democratization</u> (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1993), P.1.

[18] Burmese scholars today are sharply dichotomized into pro-democracy and pro-military camps. To criticize the shortcomings of the parliamentary, democratic regime of 1950's-60's would be tantamount to being anti-democratic to many ordinary pro-

analyze and point out both institutional and personal shortcomings of Burmese parliamentary, democratic regime in 1950's-60's while comparing it to the Indonesian experience. A good portion of the literature on Indonesia for this purpose would be taken as examples in developing a well-balanced but objectively critical view of the Burmese failure in democratic experiment in those days.

Research Question

As a comparative political analysis of this period, this study questions in general "why democratic governments in both countries failed in 1950's-60's." A viable answer to this research question, which will be the conclusion of this study, is significant to today's proponents of democracy in both countries. However, in an intellectually diversified filed such as political science, there is no single answer to such a question. Just as there are different theories of democratization, there are equally disparate theories on democratic breakdowns. While there are legitimate studies which are preoccupied with the emergence of nondemocratic political forces or the underlying structural strains which lead to the breakdown of democratic institutions, there are important studies which focus attention on the actors and actions of democratic regimes themselves. A good example is "The Breakdown of Democratic Regimes," edited Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stephan and published in

democracy Burmese.

the 1970's.[19]

Given such an intellectual diversity on the subject, research question of this study is narrowed down on to focus the nature and workings of the democratic process and its actors themselves as follows: *"In Burma and Indonesia in 1950's-60's, what went wrong with the democratic processes and their actors finally leading to the point of democratic breakdowns?"*

Apart from this major research question, there are a couple of secondary issues to be addressed which would complement this major question. First, after the major research question is resolved with a viable answer, it is relevant to ask whether political cultures of Burma and Indonesia not receptive to democratic systems? As early modernization theorists asserted, were traditional societies in both countries not conducive to the coming of democracy?

And, most intriguingly, because both countries had become colonies of western powers until the Second World War, both were forced to engage in state-building at the same time when the parliamentary systems were being established. Therefore, another secondary question is as follows: "Is the simultaneous process of state-building and establishing democracy problematic?" It is

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[19] Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stephan, "Editor's Preface and Acknowledgments " in <u>The Breakdown of Democratic Regimes</u> ed. Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stephan (Baltimore, Maryland: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978) P.vii.

imperative to investigate whether state-building and its consolidation should have come in advance of the introduction of democratic institutions and practices. To achieve viable answers to those primary and secondary questions, this study will look deeper into history to analyze why democracy failed in the first place following their independence.[20]

Theoretical Framework

This dissertation is a historical, comparative study. As such, there is a great deal of description and the study employs existing theories to explain the causes, patterns and consequences of the historical cases. Therefore, it will necessarily be a theory-testing study in which an attempt will be made to test an existing theoretical explanation on the failure of democracy and determine how does the theory fit in Burmese and Indonesian experiences in the historical context. The following section details the theoretical framework for this study.

The process of decolonization after the Second World War brought about a number of new states in Asia and Africa such as Burma and Indonesia. The ideal of democracy was transplanted from

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[20] Even though the questions on political culture and the process of state-building are secondary in this study because the main focus of this study is on the democratic process and its actors, these subjects themselves are major topics in political science in their own rights. A whole dissertation could be written on each if each question is investigated deeper.

their colonial masters in most cases. In the case of Burma and Indonesia, the two counties had to struggle with the processes of the developing of political institutions and state-building simultaneously following their independence.

Thus, right from the outset, Burma and Indonesia were faced with the daunting tasks of developing democratic institutions and state-building while their socioeconomic conditions were below the levels which scholars of modernization literature consider as being conducive to democracy.[21] After all, the two countries had their economies based on agriculture and their experience with democracy as practiced under the colonial rule was only at the elite level in urban areas.

This study takes the theoretical foundations of modernization school of thought as a starting point. Led by Seymour Martin Lipset, scholars of this school believe that, though progresses in socioeconomic conditions do not necessarily guarantee the immediate development of a democratic system, these conditions help sustain democracy where democracy already exists and help bring about democracy "eventually" where democracy did not exist in advance. Progresses in socioeconomic conditions promote more tolerant political culture, induce the rise of middle class, bring about the kind of relationship between state and society which reduce

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[21] Larry Diamond, "Economic Development and Democracy Reconsidered," <u>American Behavioral Scientist</u> 35(4-5) (1992): 475-485.

nepotism and bureaucratic corruption, and help grow a civil society.[22]

Without these favorable conditions, establishing democracy in countries where democracy never put down roots in the past could become a problematic process. Huntington in The Third Wave analyzed three problems in developing and consolidating new democratic political systems.[23] There are three issues for the new democracies to deal with: transition problems, contextual problems and, and systemic problems.

Because Burma and Indonesia in 1950-60's were not making a democratic transition, only two latter problems are relevant to their cases. The first of those two kinds of problems, which Huntington classified as contextual problems, are those which were specific to individual countries, which any government in power would have to tackle. Communal and/or religious conflicts, insurgencies, regional antagonism and the like are such problems. Both countries were faced with insurgencies based on regional, ethnic and/or ideological differences as young democracies in the late 1940's.

The second problem, which Huntington calls "systemic problems," is particularly relevant to new and emerging

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[22] Ibid.

[23] Samuel P. Huntington, The Third Wave: Democratization in Late Twentieth Century(Norman and London: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991), P.209.

democracies. It refers to the set of problems stemming from the workings of the democratic system itself.[24] Just as authoritarian systems suffer from the problems that arise from concentration of decision-making and lack of feed-back, democracies suffer from the problems of political stalemates, unstable governments and domination of special interests. This notion of systemic problems in democracies correspond to what Larry Diamond calls "three paradoxes" of democracies.[25]

Diamond correctly points out that democracy is the most admired political system but also the most difficult to maintain. The cases of parliamentary democracies in Burma and Indonesia which failed after about a decade were just two instances of the numerous democratic failures in modern history. In explaining democratic breakdowns, Diamond presents three analytical constructs termed as "three paradoxes of democracy."[26] Such paradoxes are intrinsic to

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[24] Ibid. P.210.

[25] Larry Diamond, "Three Paradoxes of Democracy", in <u>The Global Resurgence of Democracy</u> ed. Larry Diamond and Marc F. Plattner. (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996) P.111.

[26] There is another treatise on the democratic breakdowns, which is seminal and voluminous: <u>The Breakdown Democratic Regimes</u> edited by Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stephen(Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978). However, the authors clearly reminds the reader that "We doubt that our analysis would be applicable to the breakdown of post-independence democratic institutions in Africa and Asia, as in Nigeria or Pakistan, for it is limited in almost every case to states whose existence was consolidated before they became democracies." P.7.

all democracies and particularly troubling for new ones.[27] They refer to a number of factors in democratic political process which pull in contradictory directions. Without proper balancing, these contradictions ultimately lead to democratic breakdowns.

While this study relies on democratic theory of modernization school as its theoretical foundation, it makes use of Diamond's democratic paradoxes as the actual analytical framework.[28] In Diamond's analysis, the first paradox concerns the contradiction between conflict and consensus. By its very nature, democracy is institutionalized competition and conflict.[29] Competition and conflict are quintessential parts of a democratic system. However, if competition and conflict are too intense, then it runs the risk of disorder and political instability, which might ultimately lead

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[27] Larry Diamond and Marc F. Plattner, "Introduction", in The Global Resurgence of Democracy ed. Larry Diamond and Marc F. Plattner. (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996) P.xv.

[28] Diamond's analysis of the three paradoxes of democracy is based on the evidence from a comparative study of experience with democracy in 26 developing countries, which was conducted with Juan J. Linz and Seymour Martin Lipset in a four-volume series titled Democracy in Developing Countries. Larry Diamond, Juan J. Linz, and Seymour Martin Lipset, eds., Democracy in Developing Countries: Vol.2 Africa; Vol.3 Asian; and Vol.4 Latin America (Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1988 and 1989).

[29] There are several different conceptualizations of democracy. In addition to the competitive model of democracy, there are participatory, communitarian, and unitary models of democracy. Joseph Schumpeter, Robert Dahl and Seymour Martin Lipset are proponents of the competitive model. Kaare Strom, "Democracy as Political Competition," American Behavioral Scientist 35(4)(1992):375-396.

to the system breakdown.

The second paradox is the contradiction between representativeness and governability. Representativeness refers to the distribution of political power among elected leaders. Governability refers to the need that, while political power is dispersed, there must be sufficient concentration of power and autonomy of power to choose and implement public policies. This requires a party system that can produce a government stable and cohesive enough to represent and respond to competing groups and interest in society without being paralyzed or captured by them.[30]

The third paradox of democracy concerns the contradiction between consent and effectiveness, which in many ways are connected to the second paradox. Democracy requires public consent. Public consent requires legitimacy which in turn requires effective performance of government. However effectiveness may be sacrificed to public consent because those elected are most likely to be reluctant to pursue unpopular polices, no matter how wise or necessary such policies may be.[31]

If these three contradictions are not mitigated by way of proper institutional designs, civic culture, and other arrangements

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[30] Larry Diamond, "Three Paradoxes of Democracy", in The Global Resurgence of Democracy ed. Larry Diamond and Marc F. Plattner. (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996) P.112.

[31] Ibid. P.113.

such as federalism, new and developing democracies are likely to break down as happened in Burma and Indonesia in the late 1950's and early 1960's. On the other hand, a plausible, alternative analysis might be suggested by employing the strengths and weaknesses of parliamentary vs. presidential systems. It would be plausible to point out the weaknesses of parliamentary systems and expound that such weaknesses might have led both systems to their demise. However, such an analysis could not be water-tight because whether parliamentary or presidential systems was chosen, the two countries would have to face the three paradoxes of democracy as democracies.[32]

This study therefore finds Diamond's three analytical constructs, or three paradoxes of democracy, as the most fitting analytical framework to answer the question of why democracy, parliamentary democracy in particular, failed in Burma and Indonesia.

<u>Working Hypotheses</u>

Employing Diamond's three analytical constructs, or three paradoxes of democracy, this study tries to answer the question of why democracy - parliamentary democracy in particular - failed in Burma and Indonesia. To be more specific, this study attempts to

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[32] For a detailed treatment of parliamentary vs. presidential system debate, please see Matthew Shugart and John Carey <u>Presidents and Assemblies</u> (New York and Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

reach a viable answer to the of what went wrong with the political processes and actors the Burmese and Indonesian parliamentary government, finally leading to democratic breakdowns.

In light of modernization and Diamond's analytical framework, the following hypotheses are proposed as the causes of the democratic failure in the two countries.

(1) *During the period in question, both Burmese and Indonesian governments were not able to achieve a balance between "conflict" and "consent" which developed in the society.*

(2) *Both democratic regimes lacked the type of party system which could bring about a government which is stable and cohesive enough to represent and respond to competing groups.*

(3) *Both democratic regimes lacked "effectiveness" to govern because of the consideration for popular consent, the elite rivalry for power ,and the burden of state-building at the time.*

These working hypotheses are largely based on Diamond's analysis of democratic failures. However, the third hypothesis also considers the factors which helped intensify the three paradoxical problems, that is, the problems of institutional consolidation and state-building which those nascent democracies were faced with soon after the colonial powers departed.

Diamonds' analysis grew out of the study on the characteristic problems of democratic performance which democratic leaders need to gird of the system against. The study is part of the debate over

what factors facilitate and obstruct stable democracy.[33] Though the whole debate had its roots stemmed from the original debate initiated by Lipset's theory of development and democracy, the hypotheses based on Diamond's analysis and proposed above are largely institionalistic in nature. The theoretical puzzle for this dissertation is that both the burden of state-building/institutional consolidation and elite rivalry could be equally responsible for exacerbating the three paradoxical problems in the hypotheses. A part of this dissertation will analyze whether political elites could have taken different decisions to sustain democracy. Such a probe is justified because, despite the low level of economic development and widespread poverty, India's political elites were wise enough to strike compromises and were able to sustain democracy up to date.

Put in a nutshell, this study looks at democratic performance of parliamentary, democratic regimes in Burma and Indonesia to expound its working hypotheses. However, there are indeed well-respected theories on democratization and democratic stability and/or consolidation. Those rival explanations range from political culture arguments to those which cite external factors/international context as important causes of democratization and democratic stability and/or consolidation.

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[33] "Introduction", in The Global Resurgence of Democracy ed. Larry Diamond and Marc F. Plattner. (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996). P.xv

Firstly, there are theorists who argue that political culture is an important factor in bringing and/or consolidating democracy. Political culture concerns the system of values and beliefs that defines the context and meaning of political action. Such literature asserts that, among other variables, Protestantism supports democracy whereas Catholicism hinders it. It was pointed out that some cultures which emphasize hierarchy, authority, and intolerance, such as Confucianism and Islam, work against democracy. However, the concept of political culture is fluid and in a state of influx. Cultures change over time. Taiwan's Confucian society has made a successful transition to democracy just as South Korea has. Therefore, though discussions on the political cultures of Burma and Indonesia will be made at length, the theory of political culture as a whole will not be applied as the theoretical basis in this study.

Secondly, there are scholars who emphasize the social structure of society, that is, the specific classes and social groups which favor or disfavor democracy. They follow Barrington Moore's classic statement which claims that "No Bourgeoisie, No Democracy."[34] This category of theorists assert that bourgeoisie, who are urban dwellers, has been an indispensable element in the growth of democracy. However, contrary to leftist beliefs, class

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[34] Barrington Moore, <u>Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy: Lord and Peasant in the Making of Modern World</u> (Boston: Beacon Press, 1966), P.418.

warfare did not take place in Burma and Indonesia. Again, the example of India is called upon to argue that the lack of sizable middle class could be mitigated by other factors such as established institutions and politically-visionary elites. Thus, this study will not emphasize the size and role of the middle class alone.

Literature Review

While the literature on Indonesia in general is sufficient for this study, there is a dearth of literature on Burma due to the closed-door policy of the successive military-dominated, authoritarian regimes that have been in power since 1962. However, because the time-frame of this study is limited from the beginning of parliamentary democratic regimes in the two countries to their demise a decade or so later, that is, from the late 1940's to the late 1950's and early 1960's, there was some cumulation of literature over time on the parliamentary democracy period in Burma which this study relies on.

The best staring point for the review of the literature for this study would be Herbert Feith's seminal work, The Decline of Constitutional Democracy in Indonesia.[35] As Feith reviewed his own work in the 1990's, much of the earlier Feith work(1962) is about

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[35] Herbert Feith, The Decline of Constitutional Democracy in Indonesia (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1962).

the way Indonesian leaders at the time who were committed to make constitutional democracy work were repeatedly frustrated and defeated.[36]Feith formulated a dichotomy of "administrators" and "solidarity-makers" out of the Indonesian national leaders of those days. Administrators were leaders with administrative, legal, technical, and foreign skills, required for running a modern state. Solidarity-makers were leaders with skills in integrative work, cultural mediation, symbolic manipulation, and mass organization.[37]

Feith's point is that the administrators, who largely belonged to Hatta's group, succeeded only to some degree in trying to tackle administrative, military, and economic problems, but not enough to create a new rule-based politics. Ultimately, the administrators failed because the property basis of their power was weak, their influence over the army was insufficient, and most importantly they antagonized powerful groups of former revolutionaries who stood to lose by their efforts to make the whole process of government rule-based. As Feith reviewed his work in the 1990's, Feith(1962) reads as if the cards were stacked against constitutional democracy right from the beginning.

Harry Benda (1964) reviewed Feith's book and made counter

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[36] Herbert Feith, "Constitutional Democracy: how well it function?", in David Bourchier and John Legge ed., <u>Democracy In Indonesia: 1950's and 1990's</u> (Clayton, Australia: Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Monash University, 1994). P.17.

[37] Herbert Feith, <u>The Decline of Constitutional Democracy in Indonesia</u> (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1962). P.24.

arguments on Feith's explanation of the fall of constitutional democracy in Indonesia.[38] Benda dismissed Feith's dichotomy of "administrators" and "solidarity-makers" as being too bound to the assumption that Indonesia should adopt Western-style modernization.[39] He argued that if Indonesia were to modernize, it should do so in its own way rather than following the developmental steps of Western countries. Put in a nutshell, Benda(1964)'s counter-points to Feith's thesis could be summarized as that constitutional democracy in Indonesia in the 1950's was doomed to failure from the start because only a handful of Western-influenced leaders were committed to it while Indonesia's indigenous culture and past experiences were not conducive to it.

Apart from elitist and cultural views, another perspective on the failure of parliamentary system in Indonesia suggests various contingent reasons that stemmed from events of the late 1950's. Mackie(1994) is one of those who held this view.[40] The article presents four reasons for such failure. First, the immediate cause of the regime crisis which led to the fall of the parliamentary

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[38] Harry Bendar "Democracy in Indonesia: The Decline of Constitutional Democracy in Indonesia, by Herbert Feith," The Journal of Asian Stidies 23, May 1964, P.449.

[39] Ibid. P.454.

[40] Jamie Mackie, "Inevitable or Avoidable? : Interpretations of the Collapse of Parliamentary Democracy," in in David Bourchier and John Legge ed., Democracy In Indonesia: 1950's and 1990's (Clayton, Australia: Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Monash University, 1994). P.35.

system was the threat to national security by the regional rebellions. Second, the regime crisis was accentuated by the loss of confidence in the system by the regional leaders because of the belief that party-based government was intrinsically weak, divisive, unstable and incapable of solving the nation's economic problems. Third, confidence in the parliament was also damaged by the calls by the coalition of Sukarno and the Army led by Nasution, demanding political reforms for a return to the 1945 Constitution. Fourth and last, the lack of consensus within the cabinet and the society at large in the late 1950's also contributed the fall of the parliamentary regime in Indonesia.

In the same vein, Liddle(1992) argued that the spiraling political tensions in the late 1950's was compounded by economic decline. The Korean War stimulated the Indonesian economy into a brief boom in the early 1950's, but with the end of the war the economy stagnated for a decade, finally leading to a collapse. The source of the trouble in the parliamentary period was policy inconsistency caused by a weak executive and sharp differences between the major political parties in the parliament. Such an ineffectiveness on the part of the government and the parliament gave Sukarno and the army coalition more leverage, finally leading to the former's decree to return to the constitution of 1945.[41]

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[41] R. William Liddle, "Indonesia's Democratic Past and Future," Comparative Politics 24(4)(1992):443-462.

Another string of arguments on this subject cites the role of the Indonesian army in those days as the major cause. Lev (1994) and Rahman Tolleng (1992) blamed the Army for killing the parliamentary regime.[42] Lev (1994) boldly claims that the army did it because it could and also because it had compelling interests in a quite different political system. He points out that it was clear from the start the army under Nasution's leadership was politically active. The army was ambitious, assertive, and engaged right from the beginning. The army leaders conceived their organization wrongly disenfranchised politically but entitled to a share of political authority. The army wanted to eliminate the competitive interests of the political parties and their claims to priority and favored a centralized bureaucracy and a command economy into which officers could play an important role at will and by right.

Rahman(1992)'s argument is based more on political actors and events than institutions because he asserts that the coalition of Sukarno and the Army led by Nasution were advantaged by the events that took place 1957-58: the vote at the United Nations against Indonesia's claim to West Irian, an abortive attempt to assassinate

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[42] Daniel S. Lev, "On the Fall of the Parliamentary System," in David Bourchier and John Legge ed., Democracy In Indonesia: 1950's and 1990's (Clayton, Australia: Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Monash University, 1994). P-39. Rahman Tolleng's argument was cited by Herbert Feith in Herbert Feith, "Constitutional Democracy: how well it function?", in David Bourchier and John Legge ed., Democracy In Indonesia: 1950's and 1990's (Clayton, Australia: Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Monash University, 1994). P.22.

Sukarno, the seizure of the remaining Dutch businesses by the PNI, communist unions and the army, the departure of Dutch nationals, and the flight of inter-island fleet. It was expected that the coalition of Hatta and regional councils would be able to force Sukarno to accept a compromise. However, the snowballing of these events put Sukarno and the army in a better position to wrangle for political power.

From an economist point of view, Schmitt (1963) argued that, based on economic interests, the political arena was polarized. Inflation and the undervalued exchange rates of the 1950's hurt exporters of the outer islands and benefitted imports of the inner islands. The Masyumi represented the former politically while the PNI-NU-PKI group the latter. Traders tended to support the Masyumi and government bureaucrats the latter. Such a political polarization existed from the early 1950's onward, leading both sides towards the clash that reached its climax in 1957-58.[43]

Finally, there is an argument by Sundhaussen(1989), made common as it was frequently iterated by the New Order government, that the civilian leaders who were leading the political parties and in charge of government had failed to deal with the threats to national unity and that democracy had proved an unsuitable form of

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[43] Hans O. Schmitt, "Post-Colonial Politics: A Suggested Interpretation of the Indonesian Experience, 1950-1958," The Australian Journal Of Politics and History 9(2)(1963): 176-183.

government for Indonesia.[44]

With the benefit of hindsight, the literature on the fall of the parliamentary regime in Indonesia in the late 1950's could be grouped into two major categories: the literature that argues that constitutional democracy was doomed to failure from the outset because it was not culturally fit and historically irrelevant to Indonesia and the literature which asserts that constitutional democracy was culturally possible in the 1950's just as it is today.[45] The second category of the literature diversifies into structuralist explanation(Feith (1962)), multifactoral explanation(Mackie(1994)), and institutionalist explanations(Lev(1994) and Tolleng(1992)) while the first category was supplemented by economic arguments by such writer as Schmitt(1963).

In comparison to the literature on Indonesia regarding the subject of this study, the literature on Burma is sparse. However, there are decent works on this topic which this study finds invaluable. Silverstein(1977) believes that, though there are many reasons for the failure of parliamentary democracy in the late 1950's and early 1960's, the root cause was the inability of the

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[44] Ulf Sundhaussen, "Indonesia" in Larry Diamond, Juan Linz and Seymour Martin Lipset ed. <u>Democracy in Developing Countries, Vol 3: Asia</u> (London, Adamantine Press, 1989).

[45] Herbert Feith (1994), P.23.

party system to become a deep and meaningful part of the society.[46] He correctly points out that residents of rural Burma had little understanding of and practically no commitment to party ideals and institutions. Such an assessment is important because of the fact that, being a traditional agrarian society, about 85% of the population lived in the rural areas. In addition, a power struggle among the leading political elite gave the people no reason for confidence in their leadership. To compound this problem, the government was not able to put down insurgencies and curb the predatory activities of the rebels and bandits which had been terrorizing the populace. He points out that more than a decade of democracy had provided no evidence that it was a system that could provide good government.

Silverstein(1977)'s second major point was the inability of the national leaders to solve the minority problem.[47] The people of the plains and those of the hills, that is, Burmans and non-Burmans, did not trust each other. Fears of Burmanization among the non-Burmans and fears among the military that secession of the non-Burman areas would leave the country indefensible constantly pressured the political leadership. None of the propositions to alleviate these fears appealed to the majority of the country. The

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[46] Josef Silverstein, <u>Burma: Military Rule and the Politics of Stagnation</u> (Ithaca and London, Cornell University Press, 1977) P.30.

[47] Ibid. P-31.

issue of possible secession by the non-Burmans was one of the major causes of the collapse of the parliamentary democracy in the early 1960's.

Richard Butwell, U Nu's friend and the author of "U Nu of Burma," presents the best "account of a man (U Nu) in political life" in the book.[48] U Nu was the Prime Minister of Burma most of the time from independence until the military take-over of 1962. His work emphasizes three basic problems which U Nu's government of late 1950s was not able to resolve. First, there was a seriously pressing problem of economy which Nu's democratic government failed to tackle. Second, the economic problem was not given priority because Nu's government was obsessed with the issue of state religion. In 1961, introducing the third amendment to the 1947 constitution, Nu made Buddhism the state religion, which instantly incensed the three million non-Buddhists who in part inhabited in the mountainous frontiers. Thus, ethnic unity was still the same unattainable goal at the time. Third, U Nu seemed to be obsessed with the unity and cohesion of his political party, which was now named the National Unity Party (NUP). It was because he had a bitter experience with the great split of the AFPFL in the past. However, party cohesion again proved to be an illusion as the NUP split into two factions, the one led by war veterans and another

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[48] Butwell, Richard   "U Nu of Burma", Sanford University Press (Stanford, California: 1963) P.225-249

led by political veterans. As political, economic, and social issues approached the boiling point, General Ne Win and the Army staged a "lightning-like" coup, as the Army proclaimed at the time, to right the wrongs and fix the constitutional defects.[49]

Donald Seekins also sees the same issues which made U Nu's government weak and inefficient, paving the way for an military take-over. Correctly, he points out the flash point of such a coup d' eta being the Federal Movement in the early 1960's. The army's counter-insurgency campaigns to put down ethic insurgencies in Shan state gave rise to this movement led by the Shan. A full-blown federal union with a considerable degree of autonomy was demanded by the Movement. Though the Movement was moderate in nature and U Nu was sympathetic to their concerns, the Army's high command saw it a grave challenge to Burma's national unity and ultimately a threat to the geographical integrity of the nation. In addition, the Army also became increasingly concerned about its excesses in the frontiers and the possibility of curbing its power by the prime minister. Given these circumstances, the army quickly launched an coup while the Federal Movement was hosting the Nationalities' Seminar in March 1962.[50]

From statist perspective, Taylor(1987) saw the collapse of the

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[49] Ibid.

[50] Seekins, Donald, <u>The Disorder in Burma</u>, White Lotus Press (Bangkok, Thailand), 2002. P.30-37.

parliamentary democracy and the coming of military dictatorship only as the "reassertion of state".[51] To him, the Burmese state had been displaced during the previous twenty years from the dominant position to that where it was only the most important competitor for power ,public support ,and obedience.[52] It was because, according to Taylor, the state became enfeebled and incompetent, and, for twenty years, capture of state's carapace became the purpose of almost all political action by various groups.[53] Such groups included the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League (AFPFL), the Burma Army, the Burma Communist Party (BCP), the Karen National Union (KNU) and other less known groups. Taylor thus saw the collapse of the parliamentary regime both as the ending of a weak and displaced state and the reassertion of the state.

From the perspective of political culture, Gyi(1983) points out that there are loveable characteristics in Burmese personality and society, but the seamy side of that personality is invariably associated with the streak of authoritarianism often displayed when in power.[54] The study was done on the Burmese thought patterns and

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[51] Robert Taylor, <u>The State in Burma</u> (Honolulu, The University of Hawaii Press, 1987)P.292.

[52] Ibid. P.11.

[53] Ibid. P.217.

[54] Maung Maung Gyi, <u>Burmese Political Values: The Socio-Politico Roots of Authoritarianism</u> (New York, Praeger Publishers, 1983) P.vi.

political culture, based on the premise that authoritarianism could only thrive on authoritarian soil.[55] From 1044 to 1885, Burma lived under absolute monarchy for 800 years. This type of absolute authority was never challenged by any liberal forces until it was swept away by the British colonialism in 1885. Such a long experience under absolute rule resulted in the traditional Burmese thought pattern which was made up of attitudes that encouraged authoritarian rule. Out of 11 attitudes, which Gyi(1983) identified as being receptive to authoritarianism, the most important ones are (1) the government(the executive and bureaucracy) is evil, (2) that oppression and misrule was natural, (3)that it was futile to stand up against the government, and (4)the government is not the concern of the people.[56]

Those attitudes developed under the absolute monarchy, had parallels in social life, and even displayed during the parliamentary democracy period in the House debates and in the Executive-Judiciary relationship. The study quoted a former Supreme Court Judge that the Judiciary had in many cases failed to do its duty for fear of the Executive. In brief, there did exist authoritarian tendencies even among the leaders of the parliamentary democracy regime. Thus, the study concluded that authoritarianism thrived in Burma because the Burmese soil was

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[55] Ibid. P.3.

[56] Ibid. P.37.

indeed fertile for authoritarianism. This conclusion was supported by Silverstein(1977) who wrote that many of the traditional Burmese values and attitudes which characterized precolonial Burma persisted through the colonial period into the period of independence. The Burmese continued to accept the authority from above and have never widely absorbed the idea that authority stems from the people.[57]

Callahan(1998)argues that those who oppose the SLORC/SPDC rule and long for the days of elections and civilian rule of the 1950's and those who are sympathetic to the SLORC/SPCD and evoke the images of political instability and turmoil and weak governments of those days are both incorrect.[58] She points out that the period of parliamentary democracy was hardly civilian rule because, except for Rangoon proper, political bosses and their pocket-armies ruled the rest of the country and elections were rigged in most cases through thuggery and violence. She argues that the collapse of the parliamentary system in Burma was not inescapable though such a system should have looked quite different after a decade or so. She assessed the 1950s' as a period where it was not the parliamentary

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[57] Silverstein (1977) P.35.

[58] Mary P. Callahan, "On Time Warps and Warped Time: Lessons from Burma's 'Democratic Era'", in Robert I. Rotberg eds. Burma: Prospect for a Democratic Future (Cambridge, Massachusetts, and Washington D.C., The World Peace Foundation and Harvard University International Development and Brookings Institute Press, 1998)P.59.

politics that crashed the system but it was the problem of governability.

Her article asserts that the problem of governability was found not only in border areas but also in the regions where railroads and telegraphs could transport government policies. The rushed production of the 1947 constitution was not able to solve the problems regarding the minority-dominated areas. The little institutional capacity which the AFPFL government inherited from the British disintegrated in the chaotic early years of independence. Beset by a multitude of problems, the parliamentary governments were in no position to start a state-building process. Therefore, Callahan believes that problem of governability was the main cause of the parliamentary system in Burma - not the system itself.

From a very different perspective from other scholars on Burma, Aung-Thwin(1989)believes that, apart from other historical reasons for the coup of 1962, which toppled the parliamentary regime, there was a more fundamental cause, which had to do with the collective psychology of the majority Burmese.[59] According to Aung-Thwin, British colonial rule produced inferiority and insecurity in the Burmese and such a psychological impact did not

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[59] Michael Aung-Thwin, "1948 and Burma's Myth of independence" in Joseph Silverstein eds. <u>Independent Burma at Forty Years: Six Assessments</u> (Ithaca, New York :Cornell Southeast Asia Program, 1989) P.24.

go away with the formal independence in 1948. The coup of 1962 was a manifestation of the collective psychological desire to establish "real"independence, which necessarily included purging one's colonial past. And, he asserts that the majority of the Burmese accepted the coup as a good thing because they felt the coup set right was had been wrong.

Methods of Inquiry

This study applies a methodology known as comparative historical method with a small-N. Liphart(1971) defines the comparative method as consisting of a small number of cases, entailing at least two observations, but less than about twenty.[60] According to Steven Van Evera's classification, this method is a theory-testing method which is built on observation using case-study analysis.[61]

This study is historical because it covers a period in both Burma and Indonesia from the time of independence to the fall of the parliamentary regimes which were established following

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[60] Arend Liphart, "Comparative Politics and Comparative Method," <u>American Political Science Review</u> 65(3)(1971):683-691.

[61] Stephen Van Vera discussed that there are two basic ways to test theories: experimentation and observation. There are two kinds of observational tests: large-n and case-study. Steven Van Evera, <u>Guide To Methods for Students of Political Science</u>, (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1997) P.50.

independence. It is a small-N study because the focus of this study is only on two countries in comparison. Given the scarcity of time and financial resources, the small-N analysis is more promising for this study than the superficial statistical analysis of many cases.[62]

Choice of the Cases

The breakdown of democracy in Burma and Indonesia in 1950-60's is chosen to be studied. Being a small-N analysis, there is an inherent problem of weak capacity to sort out rival explanations, known as the "problem of many variables, few cases." One of the well known solutions is the focus on comparable cases.[63]

Similarities between the two countries were so impressive to leaders of the Burmese military regime (the SLORC) in early the 1990's that the regime started simulating Indonesia's New Order in Burma. Until the fall of Suharto regime, the SLORC leaders made frequent state visits to Indonesia to learn Indonesian experience under indirect, military, authoritarian rule.

This study chose the period from the time of the establishment of parliamentary democracies in the two countries to their demise

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[62] Liphart(1971), P.685.

[63] David Collier, "The Comparative Method: Two Decades of Change", in Dunkwart A. Rustow and Kenneth P. Erickson eds., Comparative Political Dynamics: Global Research Perspectives (New York, Harper and Collins Publishers, 1991) P.16.

in 1950's-60's. It is simply because the burning question of this dissertation is "What went wrong with democracy in our past?". As several Burmese educated elites are striving hard to reconstitute a democratic system, it is vital to learn from the past in order not to repeat the same mistakes again. As for the current period (early 2000's), it would be hard to analyze, explain and predict political trends in the two countries in light of their volatile climates of politics and economy. In the opinion of the author of this study, there is no such thing as predictive power in political science.[64] A real science should be able to describe, explain, and predict.[65]

Major Concepts of the Research

The above three intrinsic contractions or paradoxes of democracy are treated as dependent variables while the lack of preconditions which are conducive to democracy are treated as independent variables in this study. The dependent variables, that

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[64] In contrast to the natural sciences, social sciences such as political science could offer predictions only in probablistic terms. Social sciences do not possess predictive power such as that we know natural sciences could offer. Lawrence C. Mayer, <u>Redefining Comparative Politics: Promise Versus Performance</u>, (Newbury Park, California: Sage Publications, 1989) P.38.

[65] Royce A. Singleton, Bruce C. Straits, and Margaret Miller Straits <u>Approaches to Social Research</u> (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993) P.18-25.

is, the intrinsic contradictions in democracy, are each composed of two opposing concepts: conflict and consensus, representativeness and governability, and consent and effectiveness.[66] These concepts are proposed and defined as follows.

In this study, the term "conflict" refers to the conflict of interests in society which is the basis of political competition in a democratic system. It is the basic driving force for political competition and it is the most generic agent of political activity. However, conflict in a democratic system should be resolved on the basis of consent and cohesion. The term "consensus" here refers to the public consent to obey law and accept government authority. Once the conflict of interests are ironed out and become laws or governmental policies, citizens are expected to obey such laws or policies so that the whole political process runs smoothly. As Diamond noted, it exactly why Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba called democratic political culture "mixed" because it balances the citizens' role as participant, in other words, as agents of competition and conflict, with their role as subject, that is, obeyer of state authority.[67]

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[66] Though polities of Burma and Indonesia in 1950-60's were the domain of a tiny elite, this study make use of those concepts, which more appropriate mature democracies, for the sake of analysis.

[67] Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba, The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1963) P.339-360.

The concept of "representativeness" refers to the dispersing of political power and holding it accountable. Political power is distributed among elected leaders rather than being concentrated in the hands of a few. Representativeness permeates all kinds of groups, regional, ethnic and religious. The concept of "governability" refers to the ability of the government to act decisively and effectively though political power is dispersed. As Diamond points out, government must not only be able to respond to interest-group demands but also it must be able to restrain them and mediate among them as necessary.[68]

The concept of "consent" refers to public approval of governmental actions and its performance. Popular assessment of government, or public consent, is important in democratic systems because government leaders and their political parties will be judged in the next elections by the people. This is the basic democratic principle of "rule by the people." Such is not the case for authoritarian governments which disregard popular consent. Lastly, the concept of "effectiveness" means the ability of the government to pursue policies which are wise and necessary, even if such outcomes of policies are tangible only in the long run. Democratic governments are always under pressure to win both public

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[68] Larry Diamond, "Three Paradoxes of Democracy", in The Global Resurgence of Democracy ed. Larry Diamond and Marc F. Plattner. (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996) P.112.

consent and the next elections, which could lead them in many instances to adopt short-sighted policies to appease the immediate demands of the public. Effective government should not only be able to care for immediate demands but also convey long-term benefits for the people and the country.

As regard the independent variables, that is, socioeconomic preconditions which are conducive to democracy, are quite well-known and are simply defined as follows: the expansion of autonomous entrepreneurial middle classes; the industrialization and the movement of labor into manufacturing furthering the differentiation and organization of the urban sector; improvements in literacy, education and communication; mass media expansion and the emergence of an autonomous "civil society."[69] These socioeconomic conditions promote more tolerant political culture, bring about the kind of relationship between state and society which reduce nepotism and bureaucratic corruption.

In this study, the terms such as "regime", "government", and "state" are used in the same token as commonly accepted in the

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Larry Diamond, Juan Linz and S. Martin Lipset, "Introduction: Comparing Experiences with Democracy," in Politics in Developing Countries Comparing Experiences with Democracy ed. Larry Diamond, Juan Linz and Seymour Martin Lipset. (Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1990), 11-13. Hunting also enumerated these conditions in his discussions about socioeconomic changes and democratic transition. See Samuel Huntington, Will More Countries Become Democratic? in Political Science Quarterly 99(2) (1984): 201.

field of political science. Regime consists of three basic elements. They are institutions, operational rules and the game, and idelogies.[70]

Government means a set of institutions and people who pass laws and regulation, do administrative work of the country, take care of judicial process and so on. Power and structure of governments are written in a constitution. State refers to a broader notion that includes all people and institutions that exercise power.

Collection of Data and Significance of the Research

This study largely relies on secondary sources such as published government documents, statistics from international organizations, scholarly journals and periodicals, and scholarly books on the subject. Thus, research for this study is mainly done in libraries. The scarcity of literature on Burma is an important issue to this study. However, the extensive collection of literature on Burma both in English and Burmese at the NIU library offers a invaluable source of information. The other source of information on Burma is the Library of Congress collection on Burma which this study also relies on. A much larger number of pertinent

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[70] David Easton, John G. Gunnell, and Michael B. Stein, "Introduction: Democracy as a Regime Type and the Development of Political Science", in David Easton, John G. Gunnell, and Michael B. Stein, eds Regime and Discipline: Democracy and the Development of Political Science (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1995) P.9-10.

published materials on Indonesia are also available in the Southeast Asia Collection section of NIU library and the Library of Congress.

This study will contribute to the literature on democracy. It will do so by providing insight into what are possible pitfalls, which could arise from the system itself, for the democratic systems which are being consolidated. It will presumably affirm Diamond's thesis of three paradoxes of democratic systems by looking at the evidence provided by the two cases of democratic failures. Then, it will attempt to identify what other major factors also contributed to these failures and whether such failures could have been avoided or not. In doing so, it is ultimately intended to provide an insight, as well as lessons, for today's democrats in Burma and Indonesia so that history will not repeat itself.