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Preface

This volume, together with the one that preceded it and one that will follow shortly, is the result of a project that began in 1982. At that time Seizaburo Sato, Robert Scalapino, and Jusuf Wanandi met to plan a series of workshops involving scholars from the five countries then comprising ASEAN (Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand), Hong Kong, Korea, Japan, and the United States. We determined to focus on three issues central to the concerns of the peoples of the Pacific-Asian region: economic development; political institutionalization; and the problems of security, both internal and external.

In September 1983 three workshops—each devoted to one of the above subjects—were held in Bali, Manila, and Tokyo, with ten to fourteen participants. After an interval of some eight months—during which time the authors, taking advantage of the initial discussions, had an opportunity to revise their first drafts—a four-day meeting of the entire group took place in Berkeley on March 17-21, 1984. Some additional individuals were present at this meeting, scholars who had a general or theoretical knowledge of the subjects under discussion. A full list of the workshop participants and the outside scholars is provided elsewhere. Further revisions in the papers took place during the summer and fall of 1984, prior to this publication, but no attempt was made to impose a standardized format on authors. Hence, there are inconsistencies in such matters as capitalization, abbreviations, translations, and forms of citations.

The volume on development—Asian Economic Development, Present and Future—has recently been published. The volume on security—Internal and External Security Issues in Asia—will follow soon.

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Introduction

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The principal concern of the essays in this volume is the status of political institutionalization in Asia. I have defined this term as the process whereby a political structure is made operational in accordance with stipulated rules and procedures, enabling regularized, hence predictable, patterns of political behavior, minimal trauma in power transfer, and a foundation for the effective development of policies as well as the application of justice. Ideally, successful political institutionalization enables a movement away from the high dependence upon personalized rule and also makes orderly, evolutionary change possible.

Of necessity, a study of political institutionalization requires an examination of closely related subjects: the quest for legitimacy on the part of political parties and governments; the relation between political structure and leadership; and the potentials for change among diverse political systems.

We begin with an examination of socialist institutions in Asia. Since the Soviet Union served as the model both for the Communist parties of the Asian socialist states and for their overall political systems, it is appropriate to explore briefly the Soviet experience, most particularly the manner in which political appeals to the citizenry evolved within the context of a relatively rigid institutional structure. The basic trend has been from an initial emphasis upon the class struggle and an idealistic internationalism to an effort to encompass “the whole people” and an ever stronger appeal to nativist and nationalist sentiments. Increasingly, patriotism and material improvements in livelihood have represented the sources of legitimacy for the system, with traditional Marxist-Leninist themes relegated to the background, little more than ritualistic incantations. At the same time, the Leninist party and state structures remain relatively impervious to change. In this sense, institutionalization has been successfully achieved. Yet a larger question looms ahead: can this political system evolve to keep pace with domestic socioeconomic developments and the larger quotient of interdependence that seems certain to characterize the world of the twenty-first century?
The Chinese experience with socialism, while different in key respects, partakes of some of the same trends and issues. In China, the challenge to Marxism-Leninism has grown increasingly bold, with an insistence that the goal must be Chinese socialism, the precise meaning of which remains elusive. Nationalism is the dominant force in China at present, at least at elite levels. Further, both party and state assert that they must be judged by the degree to which the citizens’ livelihood is improved. Meanwhile, class conflict has been downgraded, with an emphasis upon cooperation among all classes, including “nonexploitative entrepreneurs.”

Whether the general fluidity characterizing the Chinese scene is destined to come to North Korea cannot presently be determined. Historically, the Korean Communist system was built on high quotients of indoctrination and mass mobilization. These conditions together with early economic accomplishments, the pervasive isolation of the society from the outside world, and the encouragement of a cult of personality making the leader and the state synonymous reveal a system having numerous traits in common with certain phases of the Stalinist and Maoist eras, allowing for differences of culture and scale. At present, however, internal and external factors combine to challenge aspects of the current North Korean structure. An autarkic economy is faltering. In addition, the issue of succession, while presumably settled in favor of Kim II Sung’s son, raises questions about the future political system. The decision to turn outward for technology, if implemented, together with the impossibility of duplicating the role of Kim II Sung after his departure, suggest that changes in both the economic and political systems could be in the offing. But once again, the prevailing circumstances must be placed in juxtaposition to a political system strongly resistant to change.

Vietnamese socialism has a highly unique history, partly because of the personality of Ho Chi Minh, but to a greater extent because the Vietnamese socialist movement has operated almost continuously under conditions of conflict with internal and external enemies. Thus, class conflict still comprises an important part of the Vietnamese Communist message, with a corresponding ruthlessness toward opponents except in instances when political realities dictate temporary compromise. The appeal to nationalism, and indirectly to xenophobia, is strong. Economic conditions, however, do not permit the party and government to do more than deplore current deficiencies and pledge remedial actions. Necessity dictates delays in any effort to implement fully a socialist economic order, but orthodox political institutions in the Soviet mold are in place.

Current conditions in Asia’s socialist societies indicate that while the impetus for change in political as well as economic institutions exists, obstacles abound. Democracy, to which all pay homage, is likely to remain Leninist “people’s democracy,” with political rights determined by the Communist party and required to be in conformity with current party dictates. In China, however, as in the Soviet Union, the system permits a dual culture for intellectuals with rights in the discreet, private sphere considerably greater than those in the public arena. In all these societies, if economic conditions improve over time and the political order is not seriously challenged, the frontiers of human rights are likely to be repeatedly tested.
Both the selection and the power of leaders remain only partly under institutional control. If the evolution of the Soviet system is duplicated, one-man rule will gradually give way to oligarchic governance accompanied by the rising prominence of technocrats, underwritten by an all-pervasive bureaucracy. Yet in at least two of the three Asian socialist societies under review, a single individual remains critical to the entire political process. No one would question the vital importance of Deng Xiaoping and Kim Il Sung to their respective political orders, whatever offices they may hold. Some would add Le Duan to a similar level of importance, but this is more problematic. In any case, the issues of political power and succession remain matters not resolved by the formal institutional provisions of either the state or the party.

Of signal importance to the parliamentary system is an independent judiciary. This does not apply to those socialist systems committed to the principle of party dictatorship; under that principle, the courts must be instruments, not judges of the party and the state. Nonetheless, as in the case of post-Stalin Russia, Chinese leaders after Mao have been seeking to pursue “socialist legalism,” restoring legal procedures and safeguards after a reign of terror. There are no signs, however, that the judicial system will soon evolve in any of the Asian socialist societies so as to function as an independent check upon those who wield supreme power.

In each of the states under review, the power and privileges of government officials and party cadres constitute acknowledged problems of major concern. Yet abuses cannot be ended by legal or institutional restraints. Bureaucratic power is built into the socialist system, reinforced by the political traditions of these societies. In all three Asian socialist states, the official-cadre class is huge, privileged, and conservative.

What are the prospects for the future? The acceptance of parties other than the Communist party has been institutionalized, even though such parties are presently mere artificialities, appendages of the government. Possibly they could evolve into more independent entities as is happening in some of the dominant party states. Perhaps there is also a prospect of more meaningful debate over policies not merely in the highest party and government circles, but at the level of the national assemblies, more precisely through a committee system. But the greatest chance for more political openness and participation would appear to be through developments at levels below the national arena. Here, political choice may be afforded the citizen along with increased opportunities for decision making through local and regional political institutions. If the advent of technocrats to higher positions accompanies such developments (even though party cadres continue to occupy the top positions), a more professional system may ensue, with power dispersed, hence limited.

On the other hand, there is a strong chance that Leninist precepts, such as party dictatorship and democratic centralism, will perpetuate a party and state not accountable to the citizenry and fortified by a pervasive system of coercion. Highly personalized authoritarianism may coexist uneasily with impersonal political and legal institutions. Among the various possibilities, the most likely future development would seem to be some movement on the part of the Asian socialist states from a hard to a soft authoritarian system, but with limited safeguards against slippage.
Some of the above themes are explored in greater detail and from varying perspectives in the essays on North Korea and Vietnam by Chin-Wee Chung and Douglas Pike respectively. Understandably, Chung, defining the DPRK system as a monocracy, centers his initial attention on Kim II Sung. Kim has been the principal figure in North Korean politics for forty years and without significant challenge for nearly thirty years—a record matched only by the late Enver Hoxha of Albania. Kim's rise to absolute power was accompanied by the successive purges of his opponents, a pattern typical of Leninist systems in their first phase.

Kim has thus had the opportunity to shape the DPRK's political institutions along with all other aspects of Korean society. Under the 1972 constitution, the formal structure of the North Korean state diverges from both the USSR and PRC models, symbolic of Kim's desire to show his independence. Yet the most important source of power and authority, the Korean Workers' party, is virtually identical in structure and mode of operation to its Soviet and Chinese counterparts, albeit with a stronger mass component. In this fact is indicated the ease with which the Soviet party model can be transmitted to certain other societies irrespective of differences in size, history, and political culture.

If the North Korean party and state structures are wholly or largely importations, however, political behavior—including that which operates within party and state—strongly reflects traditional patterns. Paternalism, including the absolute loyalty to the head of the family, is replicated in the cult of personality surrounding Kim. The political system, moreover, benefits from the heritage of extensive public mobilization and the tightly knit, secret organizational traditions of the past. Kimist ideology, moreover, with chuch'e as its centerpiece, has psychological and political ties to Confucianism. In sum, North Korea under communism has taken its institutional structures from abroad, but operated them largely in accordance with traditional patterns of political behavior, a combination similar to that found in many nonsocialist societies of Asia.

Chung believes that significant institutional changes are less likely to occur in the DPRK than in the USSR and the PRC in the foreseeable future. He feels that changes in leadership rather than in institutions offer the best prospects for new policies.

Pike views the relationship of Vietnamese political institutions and behavior very similarly to Chung. He stresses the distinction between Leninist institutions such as the party—which follow orthodox lines pioneered by the Russians—and political practices which in many instances pursue traditional paths. In Vietnam as in North Korea, strong patron-client ties, the heritage of clandestine politics, and similar vestiges of traditionalism weigh heavily upon the current political scene.

However, Pike puts at least equal emphasis upon the particular conditions under which Vietnamese socialism came to power—conditions of continuous warfare. He believes that this contributed greatly to a certain type of top leadership—paranoid, with low adaptability, and driven by the mystique of an omnipotent, omniscient party. Up to date, only twenty-four individuals have held Politburo seats in the Communist party of Vietnam, illustrative of the very limited circulation of power within the party.
and state. It is Pike's view that Le Duan may be the leading Politburo figure at present, but that he does not occupy the position of Deng or Kim. If the Vietnamese Communists have a stronger record of collective leadership, however, they have also been plagued with continuous factionalism.

One of Pike's central themes is that Vietnam today represents a case of arrested political development, a situation which ironically has been brought about partly by its military successes. Unlike Germany and Japan, Vietnam won its wars and thus finds it more difficult to break with old traditions. "Success through sacrifice" remains a dominant concept in elitist thinking, and Pike doubts that the next generation of top leaders will represent an improvement. Indeed, he believes that they are likely to be less cosmopolitan, sophisticated, and educated than those currently in power, victimized as they have been by the last thirty years of Vietnamese history.

At the same time, Pike believes that the current system is coming under ever greater attack, with the pressures for change building up. The spartan North has been seduced in some degree by the softer South. Young cadres are restive, being progressively disillusioned with the party and with their seniors. Generational conflict is one of the post-1945 developments in Vietnam. Thus, at some point, future leaders in this society will have options. Whether they will abandon the xenophobic, doctrinaire policies of the past is uncertain, at least in the near term. The winds of change in China and East Europe, however, may ultimately affect policies, although the prospects for significant changes in political institutions seem distant.

From an examination of socialist political institutions, we turn to those of Japan, Asia's foremost success story in the post-1945 era. Seizaburo Sato reminds us that in the immediate postwar years, optimism prevailed in Western intellectual circles that economic development, political liberalization, and greater social equity could advance together—despite the prewar examples otherwise of Germany and Japan. As the past forty years have shown, however, various economic-political-social combinations have come into being—among them, economic growth under political authoritarianism; democracy without satisfactory economic growth; and economic development under conditions of both improved and decreased equity.

Japan, however, represents a pattern relatively close to the earlier liberal dream: rapid economic growth has taken place under political institutions in the Western-style parliamentary mode, with maximum political participation and freedom permitted. Economic achievements, moreover, have reduced social inequities, eliminating poverty as a class problem, and allowing almost all citizens to take part in the nation's expanding affluence.

It is possible, however, to misread these facts. As Sato points out, although the American Occupation initiated a revolution in Japan, with major political as well as socioeconomic changes taking place, an element of continuity between prewar and postwar Japan exists which should not be ignored. In the political realm, it has been most clearly evident in the extensive power of the central bureaucracy and the dominance of a single party, conservative in nature. Some observers, indeed, have referred to contemporary Japan as the prime example of a bureaucratic polity, and Japan's dominant party system, while not wholly unique among advanced industrial
societies, is one of the factors distinguishing Japanese democracy from the Anglo-American model.

In his historical sketch of Japanese economic and political modernization, Sato makes a number of important points, among them the fact that given the timing of its efforts, Japan did not have to respond to the pressures for instant democracy so powerful in some of the former colonial societies after World War II. Hence, it did not experience the trauma of having Western-style political institutions in their more advanced forms rapidly fail because the socioeconomic and political foundations to support such institutions were lacking. Japanese political development from the late nineteenth century onward, like that of the early modern West, was relatively gradual, with the evolving political institutions closer to the traditions and proclivities of the society.

Yet this did not prevent successive crises in institutionalization during the 1920s and 1930s, including a reversal of the trend toward heightening the role of the Diet and the political parties. Among the weaknesses of the prewar institutional structure, none was more serious than the confused, divided nature of power and responsibility among the parties, the bureaucracy, and the military. In theory, all were unified under the throne, but this in itself made for a conflictual situation. In practice, Japan's prewar imperial institution functioned increasingly like a modern constitutional monarchy. But since the legal power of the emperor was absolute under the Meiji Constitution, the throne was subject to manipulation by competitive external forces. Correspondingly, since sovereignty did not reside in the people, with parliament the expression of their will, the political parties found it necessary to build coalitions with the bureaucracy and military in a manner similar to the political practices of many developing societies today. The result was the increasing capacity of officials and especially the military to operate independently, a loss of legitimacy for parliament, and a growing confusion of responsibility for decision making.

It is Sato's contention, however, that the decisive factor in the collapse of prewar Japanese democracy was the unfavorable external environment, including developments on the continent of Asia. In his view, had global and regional conditions been more supportive, Japanese political institutions could have evolved satisfactorily. He advances the further thesis, however, that although Japan's involvement in World War II—a result of a weak leadership unable to coordinate or control the plural institutions vying for power—was disastrous in many respects, it did serve to advance greater social equity and an enterprise system based on government-industry cooperation that, combined with the Occupation reforms, provided the foundations for the current era.

Japan's political institutions today rest upon the commitment to popular sovereignty, parliamentary supremacy, and political openness. No basic challenges to the institutional structure appear on the horizon. Yet, as noted earlier, this structure has permitted the establishment of a dominant party system rather than the alternation in power associated with Western parliamentarism, and it has also permitted the continuance of formidable power in the hands of the permanent civil service. There are some signs of change. Bureaucratic power is being challenged by the advent of
stronger, more diverse interest groups operating in the private sector via the political parties. And coalition politics in modest respects has made its appearance. But the Japanese institutional structure is likely to evolve slowly, remaining among the most stable in the contemporary world.

Sato’s conclusions are threefold, each drawn from the Japanese experience. First, the successful creation of liberal political institutions in a society’s early phases of economic modernization is difficult, and the attempt to democratize such societies may be counterproductive. Second, economic modernization cannot succeed unless the people can be mobilized on behalf of the specific goals necessary for its achievement, and, as success is attained, a rising demand for political participation must be accommodated, particularly in terms of enabling citizen involvement in the political process at levels below the top. Finally, the political institutions and behavior patterns of advanced societies need not—and quite probably cannot—be precise duplicates of the classic liberal system that earlier evolved in the West, even if commitment is to a democratic polity.

Sung-joo Han’s essay focuses upon the South Korean polity: the reasons for the emergence of a bureaucratic-authoritarian system; the implications of that system for domestic and international relations; the degree to which institutionalization under the system has taken place; and alternative prospects for the future.

In his analysis of the Park Chung Hee era and in contrasting the recent South Korean political evolution with that of Japan, Han identifies both traditional and contemporary factors that account for the South Korean political structure of today. In the premodern period, Korea had a strong legacy of centralized bureaucracy under an autocratic monarchy, lacking the feudal (hence more pluralist) traditions of Japan. Centralization continued under Japanese colonial administration, leading to the “overdevelopment” of the output institutions such as the bureaucracy and the military, as opposed to the “underdevelopment” of such input organizations as political parties and interest groups.

When dramatic changes finally came, after World War II, the upheaval was major, with the old authority structure and institutions being totally discarded, unlike the adaptation process that had earlier prevailed in Japan, and continued in some degree, even in the aftermath of military defeat. In Korea, all had to be newly built; the experiments in modern political practices came wholly after 1945. Further, the early experiments with parties and parliamentarism were essentially failures. In addition, the Korean War militarized South Korean society, and the atmosphere of constant security threat that has followed sustains that situation.

It is hardly surprising, therefore, that a military-bureaucratic structure was established in 1961. Under the structure, political order was implanted and a coherent economic program enacted, resulting in extraordinary economic growth in the years that followed. Yet economic success itself sowed the seeds of increasing political difficulties for the Park government by the late 1970s. That government, liberated from foreign (American) pressure after the mid-1960s, had taken an authoritarian turn, seeking to perpetuate itself in power. The gap between traditional politics and a socioeconomic revolution spawning a rising middle class steadily widened. Park’s
assassination did not bring an end to the tension between the polity and the society. After a brief interlude, another military regime under Chun Doo Hwan was set up.

In its quest for legitimacy, the Chun government, as one of its initial acts, drafted a new constitution in 1980. Han sets forth the essential elements of this constitution, indicating that its credibility and that of the government now in power will hinge upon whether those provisions can be effectively implemented. Of special importance are those clauses that place limits on the tenure of the president, outline relations between the president and the parliament, and by implication, therefore, require the creation of an effective political party system whereby the electorate has genuine choice.

With the current South Korean leadership having emerged out of conflict and the present constitution yet to be implemented, institutionalization remains weak. Of critical importance to the future will also be the role of key economic and social groups in Korean society. Will they advance or hinder the institution-building process? Han provides his own evaluation of current trends with respect to many such groups: the workers, farmers, students, religious groups, officials and military among others.

He concludes by outlining three possible scenarios for the future. The first—institutionalization by means of creating an effective liberal state, thoroughly democratic in nature—he regards as unlikely. The second—a return to a highly authoritarian system—he sees as certain to produce grave instability, hence, probably avoidable. The third and most likely scenario is that of gradual, possibly erratic, liberalization within a basically authoritarian context. Institutionalization within this framework may be fragile, and from time to time disrupted, but given all the internal and external circumstances confronting this society, it appears to him the most realistic of the alternatives available.

Donald Emmerson introduces us to a broadly gauged analysis of political institutionalization, commencing with an evaluation of various earlier theories of the state and concluding with an effort to apply criteria of institutionalization to the states of Southeast Asia.

Marx denigrated the state as a part of the superstructure, wholly determined by economic forces, and neo-Marxists have generally pursued similar themes, treating the state in class terms, albeit with an effort in some cases to acknowledge a degree of political autonomy. Liberal theorists have seen the state as the arbitrator of competitive interest groups. Gabriel Almond subsequently developed a concept of input-output functions, with the former referring to those tasks incumbent upon the society, such as political socialization, interest articulation, and political communication, and the latter devolving upon the polity—namely, rule formation, application, and adjudication. Rejecting the term “state” because of its formalist-legal connotations, Almond saw political development primarily in terms of “boundary maintenance” in the functions of the governed and the government. His conceptualizations, however, by largely ignoring the formidable coercive and cooptive capacities of the modern state, and focusing upon a highly rational, balanced process, in Emmerson’s view failed to discern the main political trends of our times, those conducive to a state progressively dominant over society, armed with a full array of legal, economic, and political instruments. Finally, a group of free-enterprise economists have depreciated the role of the state, taking the classical position that that state is best which governs least.
The writings of Samuel Huntington helped social scientists turn their attention to the state. Huntington developed four central criteria as measurements of the strength and durability of the state, focusing upon the degree to which the political system was adaptable, complex, autonomous, and coherent. These, in effect, served for Huntington as measures of institutionalization. After examining these criteria critically, Emmerson finds adaptability the most significant of the four, and expands this concept under the themes of longevity, renewability, and reprogrammability, then applies it to Southeast Asia.

In two tables, he seeks to rank the Southeast Asian states, first, with respect to their length of survival as independent states and under their current constitutions, and second, according to the degree to which they have successfully handled important issues, needs, or problems confronting the society. Acknowledging that the method is imprecise and subject to challenge, Emmerson posits it as a pioneer approach to the need to provide some measurements for judging relative institutionalization.

His conclusions are that, within Southeast Asia, Singapore is the most institutionalized state, Kampuchea the least. With Vietnam an exception, the socialist states of the region are less fully institutionalized than their pluralist counterparts. With respect to problem solving, the states of the region have resolved penetration (creating and maintaining the state’s presence in the society) more successfully than other problems. Distribution and growth have also been addressed with relative success, whereas identity, unity, and legitimacy as well as participation have been handled in a less satisfactory fashion. The most difficult problem remains that of succession. These weaknesses suggest that political instability under the bureaucratic-authoritarian system now prevalent in the region could reoccur. Institutionalization, in sum, is a reversible process.

Takashi Shiraishi deals with the important subject of the role of the military in the modern politics of three Southeast Asian states: Thailand, Burma, and Indonesia. Using a modification of Samuel Huntington’s formulation, he outlines three factors that induce military intervention in politics: expertise in the management of force combined with grievances when “rational” achievement is not rewarded; threats to the military’s corporate interests; and an ideology that equates the national interest with the military’s particular interests.

The data advanced in Shiraishi’s essay show that, in the three countries studied, the military inherited different political institutions and cultures; achieved power in different ways; after taking leadership, built different institutions; and reaped different results in terms of the goals set. Thus, any sweeping generalizations about military rule are suspect. In the case of these three states, however, the elements of similarity between Thailand and Indonesia are appreciable, whereas Burma is sui generis.

In Thailand, the absence of a colonial past, hence, the lack of nationalist mobilization, enabled military and bureaucratic elites to achieve dominance relatively easily. Political shifts, moreover, although frequent after 1932, have been generally without strong ideological or institutional consequences. The survival of traditional institutions, notably the monarchy, has played a critical role in modern Thai politics. The king has served as legitimizer, obviating the need for a charismatic leader. This fact, together with the divisions within the military and the decline of the left, has
enabled a power-sharing between military and civilian elites of a centrist-conservative type. The steady rise of a middle class, however, presages continuous demands for more open politics and increased civilian control of the Thai bureaucratic polity. Yet the process of institutionalization here is not likely to be disrupted by major political upheavals.

Burmese history yields a different background. Contemporary Burma emerged from colonialism torn by rebellion, assassinations, and continuing divisions, centering upon the deep cleavage between the dominant Burmans and other ethnic groups existing in the territory known as the Union of Burma. Here, legitimacy rested initially with "the party of the nation" in the absence of traditional sources of support. When that party, the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League, fell apart, the military under General Ne Win finally assumed total power in 1962, claiming a mandate to lead Burma to socialism. In the ensuing years, it created a one-party state which has been in effect a military dictatorship. All potential rivals have been humbled or destroyed, and the key social forces have been domesticated within the framework of the Burma Socialist Program party (BSPP). While the Burmese military has neither achieved socialism nor stabilized the non-Burman portions of the nation, stagnation itself has served to provide a degree of stability. In the absence of new social groups and classes, change is likely only as new leadership and direction emerges from within the ruling military circle. The current political institutions have limited viability. Thus, if Burma seeks the type of modernization to which the states comprising ASEAN are committed, new political currents in the post–Ne Win era are likely.

Indonesia possesses yet another heritage. Here, independence was achieved through a combination of diplomacy and armed struggle. Traditional institutions were largely cast aside, as in Burma, but no "party of the nation" emerged. Politics were dominated initially by a weak center and multiple regional as well as personal divisions. In this setting, a charismatic leader in the person of Soekarno emerged, and, after the failure of Western-style parliamentarism in the 1950s, Soekarno sought national unification under Guided Democracy. His key effort was to create a balance of power, with three elements: the military, the nationalist-Communist forces, and the Islamic elements. Foreign adventurism bolstered nationalism, but also led to deep fissures. The abortive coup of September 30, 1965, doomed Soekarno and brought the military to power.

From 1966, a process of political centralization, institutional reform, and economic development under military-technocratic aegis commenced. Generals developed economic as well as military bases. Growth and corruption were intertwined, but in the process of economic development, new urban and rural middle classes have been created. As in Thailand, pressure from these classes for greater political participation and a more open polity, in Shiraishi's opinion, can only grow. In Indonesia, moreover, unlike Thailand, the military has had to create its own legitimacy, not being able to rely upon traditional institutions. Hence, it has plunged more directly into the political arena, creating its own political organization. In both countries, the capacity of contemporary political institutions to evolve in accordance with socioeconomic change will be tested in the years ahead.
A series of closer examinations of the leading ASEAN states follow Shiraishi. The first essay is by Jusuf Wanandi, dealing with institution-building in Indonesia. After a general survey of the factors favorable to the ASEAN development, Wanandi turns to the reasons why a dominant party system has characterized most polities of the region and, more specifically, why such a system has emerged—and is likely to continue—in Indonesia.

In providing a background to the contemporary Indonesian scene, he notes the strong element of traditionalism present in the governance of both Soekarno and the military, asserting that whether Indonesian—and more specifically, Javanese—cultural values are good or bad is irrelevant, since social and political development must unfold within the cultural context that exists, not that of the liberal West. Like Shiraishi, however, Wanandi notes the emergence of a new middle class, and sees the demand from this class for a more open political process as inevitable. The problem is thus how the new values emanating from the young, urban, educated groups can be integrated into a system that has its roots in Indonesian traditional values—values which he outlines in some detail and which are capsulated in Pancasila (five principles), now serving as the Indonesian national ideology.

After a survey of the four phases through which Indonesian politics have passed since 1945, Wanandi provides his balance sheet on the achievements and the issues confronting the current Indonesian government. He sees GOLKAR as the focal point of future national leadership and policy, and regards the broadening of its processes, along with the consolidation of the political parties and functional organizations, as important for the development of a stable political system. He sees the base of political power broadening, and institutionalization progressing in the Soeharto era in comparison with Soekarno's Guided Democracy, and believes that evolutionary development rather than a radical departure from the existing order lies ahead.

Lee Boon Hiok looks at political institutionalization in Singapore. The challenge to the People's Action party after the separation of Singapore from Malaysia in 1965 was survival, both political and economic. The primary need was to inculcate new values in a population that had little sense of national identity. These values, the PAP leadership believed, had to rest upon a pragmatic approach to all issues, accepting Singapore's multiracial and multilingual society. PAP socialism, once relatively doctrinaire, came to be tempered by the need to gear Singapore's economic policies to a rapidly expanding global economic system.

Lee notes that in the nearly thirty years since it first came to power in 1959, the PAP has consolidated its institutional position in politics and in all other aspects of Singapore life. In the process, it has become more elitist and has had to wrestle with the issue whether in choosing to be considered "a national movement," it is prepared to accept the rules of parliamentary democracy in their fullest dimensions. At root, the dominant party system of Singapore has been sustained by efficient, relatively honest, and eminently successful governance. Arrogance—an attitude of "we know what is best for you"—has recently annoyed a growing number of younger, well-educated, and assertive Singaporeans, posing a challenge to future PAP leaders.
Meanwhile, under PAP supervision, the civil service, statutory boards, and government-owned enterprises have all proliferated. Singapore is indeed an administrative state, and institutionalized in such a manner as to provide regularized, predictable performance in implementing governmental policies. The civil service is scarcely apolitical, however, since political loyalty and commitment to PAP policies have been demanded. In addition, the civil service serves as a recruitment base for political leadership.

Succession has not been fully institutionalized although the quest of Lee Kuan Yew and his first generation cohorts is for individuals who can combine ability with character and sincerity, melding technical and political skills. A host of younger individuals have been elevated to key political and official positions, and some have been adjudged unsuited. Is it possible, however, that the younger PAP leaders who survive will develop a political style more in keeping with contemporary Singaporeans’ needs and desires than the strict paternalism of the old guard? Lee’s essay ends on an optimistic note, with the belief expressed that Singapore’s political elite will continue to adjust, improvise, and innovate to build the nation, pursuing the type of pragmatic policies that have served well in the past.

Malaysia represents another case that permits optimism with respect to the course of political institutionalization, as Zakaria Haji Ahmad makes clear in his essay. He notes that the foundations of Malaysian political stability have rested on six principles: a ruling political elite whose style has been moderate, using methods of accommodation and cooptation; a strong central government in a federal setting; a party system with the dominant party a coalition based on consensus; a cabinet form of government borrowing from the Westminster parliamentary model; the acceptance of the rule of law and civilian dominance; and a working form of constitutional monarchy.

Armed with these institutions and values, the government has sought to handle the problems of communalism and geographic division that will always confront Malaysia. Race sets the tone for virtually every issue in this multiracial society, asserts Zakaria, and he acknowledges that in the aftermath of the May 1969 riots, the government has been impelled to elevate racial harmony as a goal at least equal to that of democracy. The emphasis upon an “Islam-based society” and certain other measures may suggest a hegemonistic rather than an assimilationist style on the part of Malaysia’s ruling party, but Zakaria believes that the politics of compromise and moderation are sufficiently entrenched to prevail, and that the centralization of authority is enough to prevent violent disruptions whether from the Left, the Right, or the separatists. An accelerated drive toward economic modernization, including industrialization, will undoubtedly create further economic and social pressures, but Zakaria believes that in Malaysia, relatively open politics can coexist with rapid economic development in the future as it has in the past.

Chai-Anan Samudavanija, in his analysis of political institutionalization in Thailand, deals extensively with the contrapuntal themes of continuity and change. In the modernization process, the monarchy as an institution has continued to play a vital role in spite of the termination of monarchical absolutism; the military and civilian
bureaucracy, moreover, have consistently represented the dominant force in the thirty-year course of Thailand's political and economic evolution. At the same time, after 1932, parliament and political parties, together with concepts of constitutionalism, popular rights, and socioeconomic reform, were introduced into the Thai polity, and the process of economic development has given rise to new, politically active groups determined to advance such concepts.

In his review of the myriad changes in Thai governments and leadership after 1932, Chai-Anan emphasizes the lack of consensus on the rules of the political game, especially the relation that should exist between the executive and legislative branches of government. Three courses existed: the democratic system modeled after British parliamentarism; a strong executive model, quasi-authoritarian in nature with a weak legislative branch; and the authoritarian model that proscribed an elected legislature and political parties. Throughout most of the past three decades, either the second or third systems have been in operation. Military governments, moreover, have prevailed over civilian governments during that period. Even military rule, however, has not necessarily been stable due to the intense factionalism that has existed within military, and especially army ranks.

Thus, Thai politics have been marked by recurrent coups d'etat, with some fifteen interventions attempted between 1932 and 1982, nine being successful. While none of these resulted in fundamental changes, they necessarily had an adverse effect upon institutionalizing parliament and the political parties. Only four parliaments during that period were permitted to complete their legal tenure. And on occasion, the bureaucracy has been prepared to challenge the parties on such fundamental issues as to whether they can truly represent the people or cope with national problems. In this setting, the monarchy—as the supreme source of legitimacy—has served as safety valve and arbitrator, representing the unity of the nation.

Chai-Anan ends on an optimistic note. Thailand's stability has hinged upon the effective balancing of traditional and emerging forces. Socioeconomic change, now proceeding at an accelerating rate, is tipping the scales in favor of the latter. While the new elements in Thai society have not yet been able to produce a sustained political movement, the evolution taking place will sooner or later be conducive to that end. The course may be rocky, but the direction will be toward institutionalizing a civilian-led polity with the appropriate adjustments in the power of the military and civilian bureaucracy and heightened participation for the citizenry at large.

Carolina Hernandez has accepted the difficult task of exploring political developments in the Philippines at a time of great stress and fluidity. In the opening section of her essay, she posits two facts: developments since the imposition of martial law in 1972 have resulted in a mix of civilian-military controls more favorable to the military than at any previous time in the nation's history; and since the 1970s, the political trends favor the continuance of a dominant party system.

In support of these themes, Hernandez briefly explores the political background of the Philippines, noting that in the decades before 1972, civilian checks over the military were strong, both those derived from the political institutions of the period
and those existing via such social forces as the press. The tradition of a two-party system also existed, and despite numerous abuses in party politics and election procedures, the system was widely accepted as legitimate.

With martial law, the military became a partner of the president in governance. Civilian institutions withered. Proclaiming that his aim was to "save the Republic and build a New Society," President Marcos initially ruled as martial-law administrator without a legislature. Even after the election of an interim legislature in April 1978, and the subsequent lifting of martial law, legislative powers still rested with the president in large measure. Similarly, the martial-law era witnessed a decline in the independence of the judiciary, a reduction in the role of the civil bureaucracy, controls over the press, and a disappearance of the old parties. In place of the latter, one dominant party made its appearance, the Kilusang Bagong Lipunan (KBL), a party organized by the Marcos regime.

Concurrently with these developments, the role of the military was greatly expanded, not merely with respect to security and law and order concerns, but in the judicial, economic, and administrative fields as well. Military budgets and the new educational programs at military schools reflected these developments.

The assassination of Benigno Aquino served to challenge the course of political events. Protests emanated from a broad range of forces within Philippine society, stretched along a lengthy political continuum. In the 1984 elections, the opposition made its voice heard, although it remained deeply divided over both tactics and fundamental ideological issues.

Wisely, Hernandez avoids making a single prediction about the future. The variables are too numerous and too complex to posit a single outcome. She does believe that unless basic changes occur within the next five years, it will be extremely difficult to reestablish a competitive, open political system under civilian control. In conclusion, she sets forth several possible scenarios. One would be the control of succession by the Marcos inner circle, with the possibility of the First Lady making a bid for power, supported by individuals like General Ver. A second scenario would see the military or some portion thereof taking power directly in the name of saving the nation. But if the military refrains from taking power, a third scenario might come into play: the restoration of a democratic system bringing about the reestablishment of a presidential-parliamentary structure based upon free elections and competitive politics, an independent judiciary, and extensive political rights for the citizenry. Whatever the outcome, all can agree that the Philippines stands at an important crossroads, with the precise political procedures and institutions of the present unlikely to survive President Marcos' own tenure in office.

The final work in this volume is an insightful essay by Myron Weiner on institution building in South Asia. Weiner begins with a discussion of the British legacy in South Asia and elsewhere. He notes that that legacy was not singular. In addition to the democratic or Westminster model, the British also left a viceregal model, one that influenced Pakistan and Bangladesh more than did parliamentarism.

Why did institutional paths diverge in the region? One can dismiss the thesis of socioeconomic determinism since on this score, there are limited differences between India and Pakistan, and similar examples could be cited. Weiner finds one important
clue in the different institutional legacies. The Indian elite, unified on the need for secular governance, could accept the parliamentary model and, with it, civilian rule, even as it sought to adapt the Westminster system to a society dramatically different in its culture and proportions. From its birth, Pakistan was wracked by basic differences within elite circles as to what the institutional structure should be. Hence, any given set of institutions lacked the requisite legitimacy to flourish, or even survive.

In recent times, the Pakistan military led by Zia ul-Haq have sought legitimacy through a measure of Islamization, but this goal too is challenged, principally by the Westernized middle class. Meanwhile, in the judiciary system, three traditions compete: the British legal tradition, the autocratic military tradition, and the Islamic legal tradition. And the government, as in Bangladesh, betrays its concern over legitimacy by promising constitutionalism and the restoration of some form of parliamentarism. Lacking a clear national identity, and with two institutional traditions—the viceregal and the parliamentary—competing for legitimacy, the governments of these states must be considered in precarious condition.

But India’s democratic structure must also be regarded as fragile. Indian democracy has now survived for a third of a century (with a twenty-one-month interlude). Yet the organization of India’s dominant party, the Congress party, was seriously weakened by Mrs. Gandhi’s paternalistic view of Indian politics. And notwithstanding the strong electoral showing the party achieved in the 1984 elections under the leadership of Rajiv Gandhi after Mrs. Gandhi’s assassination, the party’s organizational structure remains weak and the new prime minister remains to be tested.

As the Indian center has declined in recent years, the states have grown stronger. A balance sheet on this development can be debated, but with the increase of regionalism, strong protest movements based upon communal, ethnic, or sectoral grievances have emerged, difficult for the state to control. Thus, political violence has risen along with class-oriented politics. The central political problems of India lie in the management of state-center relations. Highly personalized government is not likely to suffice, and if a weak center is unable to cope with growing violence, will it not be caused to use the military and the police more extensively?

Weiner concludes with the view that India’s parties, parliamentary institutions, and press continue to demonstrate extraordinary vitality, but there is the risk that the institutions of coercion will become more powerful in the absence of effective political organization and with leaders unable to meet effectively the serious challenges that lie ahead. Which institutions will prevail, he asks; those of the state or those of society?

Among the conclusions that can be drawn from these studies, the following would appear to merit further exploration:

The political systems that exist today extend in their variations along a lengthy continuum, but the center of political gravity rests with quasi-authoritarian systems that provide for a strong executive, not infrequently military, with weak legislative and judicial branches of government, restrictions upon the political freedom and rights of participation for the citizen, yet with tolerance or support for pluralistic social and economic institutions within the society.
The rationale for such systems is easily set forth. The initial goals of developing societies are invariably nation-building and socioeconomic development. The achievement of these goals is thought to require a politically centralized and unified political order so that continuity of rule and security from threat, external and internal, can be guaranteed.

Yet by their very nature, these quasi-authoritarian systems can rarely be institutionalized effectively. They remain fluid and essentially unstable. In such systems, the governing elites themselves acknowledge the limited or transient legitimacy of the institutions through which they rule by promising future structural changes. The resulting gap between promise and performance, coupled with the degree of political openness actually existing, enables dissidence to gather strength. In the very success of their social and economic programs, moreover, these regimes must confront rapidly emerging new classes who present a long list of political demands. Thus, although the combination of a quasi-authoritarian political order and a pluralist socioeconomic society (including a vigorous government-encouraged private economy) has demonstrated strong growth potential, and may be the most logical strategy for developing states, at some point in the development process, a challenge relating to the political system and its institutionalization must be faced.

Yet possibly, this challenge can be met. Quasi-authoritarian political systems operating within a pluralist social framework have demonstrated a strong capacity for survival and change in a number of different settings. Although the possibility of a return to a more restrictive political system exists, moreover, an evolutionary potential exists for greater political openness. Indeed, while political trauma is likely to be recurrent, most quasi-authoritarian systems of Asia are currently in the process of such a trend, with the issues of executive-legislative relations, civilian governance, and more meaningful forms of citizen participation high on the agenda.

What are the prospects for Asia’s Leninist states, governments with a higher quotient of authoritarianism? Like its Soviet counterpart, Asian Leninism in its early operational mode has been prone to breed highly personalized rule, with power gravitating largely or wholly into the hands of a single individual. In this phase, the leader is the supreme institution. Hence, with his departure, a political upheaval of some type often occurs.

In another respect, however, the Leninist political system is more easily institutionalized at an early point than are other systems. The key political organs are highly centralized and elitist, and competitive forces, whether within the political arena or in the broader socioeconomic system, can be banned or controlled. A single ideology is imposed on the citizenry at large. And the instruments of coercion insure conformity and continuity.

Over time, however, Leninist political institutions may come under even greater pressure because of the very permanence (rigidity) that has been their strength. The capacity of these institutions to adjust to the same forces of socioeconomic growth as those confronting the quasi-authoritarian structure remains to be tested, but the preliminary evidence is not encouraging. Can such basic concepts as party dictatorship, democratic centralism, and a "monolithic" people be altered in such a manner as to provide timely changes in the political structure?
Yet another theme warrants attention. Whatever their form, transplanted political institutions invariably take their primary coloration from the historic traditions and culture of the society into which they are introduced even as they serve to change that tradition and culture. Thus, whether the basic form is Leninist, bureaucratic-authoritarian, or parliamentary-democratic, institutions within these categories will vary from society to society.

Nor should we assume that at any point in the future, a general convergence will take place, with the same basic institutions or the same degree of institutionalization prevailing. Keeping this stricture in mind, one can detect certain broad trends or possibilities—chief among them, some Leninist states gravitating toward quasi-authoritarian systems and certain quasi-authoritarian systems evolving in the direction of more open, democratic structures. But as noted, the possibility of reverse movements is also present and, indeed, ongoing in some regions. Systems based on competitive politics, parliamentarism, and maximum political openness—systems generally defined as democratic—are themselves not immune to change, including movement toward political restriction. One cannot assume that democratic structures are sufficiently institutionalized, even in mature, industrial societies, as to be permanently ensconced. In the course of further socioeconomic development, these systems confront new problems and face a future that is by no means assured.

One final theme should be stressed. Whatever the basic political system, a paradox makes itself felt, as should now be apparent. The need for firmer institutionalization stands in some degree of contradiction with the need for greater flexibility. With the tempo of the global industrial revolution quickening and now entering a dramatic new technological phase, human capacities to make rapid structural changes in social and political institutions so as to keep abreast of this revolution have never been put to such stern tests. Hence, whatever the political system, the struggle to achieve regularity, hence stability, has to be coupled with the need for continuous political adjustment in facing the most pervasive socioeconomic revolution in mankind’s history.
1. The Evolution of Political Institutions in North Korea

Chin-Wee Chung

The most important feature in North Korean politics is Kim Il Sung's domination of all aspects of North Korean political life. Kim is not merely a political leader—he is a father figure for all North Koreans, perceived to be a choice of heaven, his leadership preordained long before his arrival. Kim's power is absolute. All political systems are dominated by him. North Korea has had no change in leadership since the inception of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) in 1948. Kim's decision to make the transfer of power hereditary is a unique political action, not attempted by any other communist state. Indeed, Kim has built a political structure to accommodate his personal rule rather than a political system to survive him. It is thus legitimate to view the North Korean political system as a "monocracy," government by a single person.

This essay discusses the rise of Kim Il Sung as the supreme leader in North Korea and analyzes how the main political institutions—the Party and the government—have evolved during the nearly forty years since their inception. It then focuses on the monocratic nature of the North Korean political system and on prospects for political change.

THE RISE OF KIM IL SUNG

As a result of the Yalta Agreement of 1945 and the disposition of Soviet and American forces at the end of World War II, the Korean peninsula was divided at the 38th parallel. South Korea and North Korea were established as different states and progressively became different societies. On each side of the peninsula, there developed a distinct political structure and a different economic system. The two Koreas continue to maintain opposing ideological postures and separate designs for territorial unification.

After the Japanese surrender on August 15, 1945, the northern half of Korea was placed under Soviet occupation. By September 1945, the Russians had established their authority over North Korea and were cautiously working toward the creation of a
political structure patterned after that of the Soviet Union. During 1946–1949, the communists in the North were actively engaged in three major political tasks: mass mobilization, Party consolidation, and institution building. These tasks were difficult because of the confused nature of the North Korean political scene, the absence of viable domestic communist forces, and the lack of organizational or administrative experience on the part of the indigenous powerholders. The domestic communist group had been striving to build up a viable political force since the 1920s but had been unsuccessful because of a lack of popular support, internal strife, and Japanese suppression.¹

The leaders of the returnees from China, later identified as the Ya’nan faction, and the indigenous nationalist (noncommunist) group were relatively well known and popular. But the Soviet authorities preferred to rely on the Soviet-Koreans and on Kim Il Sung’s personal followers who came to be known as the Kapsan group. This group was composed of Kim’s small partisan band who had fought for Korean independence in southern Manchuria until they were forced by the Japanese to retreat into Siberia around 1941. The Soviet occupation forces brought them into North Korea along with the Soviet-Koreans.² In the years following, the Soviet authorities in North Korea, whose military occupation lasted until December 1948, placed Kim Il Sung in a position of prominence and provided him with every opportunity to establish himself as the head of the Korean Workers’ Party and the DPRK government.

The Soviet-Koreans brought to North Korea were descendants of Korean immigrants living in the Soviet Union and most possessed dual citizenship. Within the North Korean apparatus about 200 critical positions were held by these Russianized Koreans as a result of the efforts of the Soviet authorities to insert them into nearly all major political organizations—usually in the position of vice-chairmen. From this position, they could easily transmit Soviet views to both indigenous cadres and the general public. The leaders of the Soviet-Korean group were Hō Ka-i, Pak Ch’ang-ok, and Nam II. Hō Ka-i was primarily in charge of building a new communist party in North Korea. Until 1956, when they were undermined by Kim Il Sung and his faction, the Soviet-Koreans, working with both direct and indirect support from the Soviet Union, played an important part in North Korean politics.³

In October 1945, the need for establishing an organizational structure that could be used by the Soviet occupation led to the creation of the North Korean Central Bureau of the Korean Communist Party (KCP). The official communist party in Korea was founded as a secret organization on April 17, 1925, in Seoul and was admitted to the Comintern in 1926. Almost immediately, a multitude of factions developed within the communist movement; because of the ensuing strife, the Party was dissolved and expelled from the Comintern in December 1928. The Party was revived in Seoul in

September 1945, under the leadership of veteran communist Pak Hôn-yông. Kim Il Sung became the first secretary of the Central Bureau of the KCP on October 10, 1945. According to an official North Korean source, this was the first Korean communist party organization established on the principle of Marxism-Leninism and guided by “true communists.”

With the rise of Kim Il Sung to the leadership of the KCP, Soviet authorities hastened their moves toward the creation of a strong, indigenous North Korean regime fashioned after the Soviet political system. The basic Moscow strategy for Sovietizing North Korea was to use Korean personnel and keep Soviet influence behind the scenes. The Russians thus maintained indirect control without a formal military government.

In February 1946, the North Korean Provisional People’s Committee was established with Kim Il Sung as chairman and Kim Tu-bong as vice-chairman. This committee became the highest administrative organ in North Korea. A year later the People’s Assembly replaced the Provisional People’s Committee with a “permanent” People’s Committee that consisted of various ministries and bureaus. The resulting governmental structure remained unchanged until September 1948. On August 25, 1948, a national election for the Supreme People’s Assembly (SPA) was held. On September 8, the SPA ratified the first constitution and proclaimed the establishment of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea. Kim Il Sung was named premier of the DPRK, and on September 10 his cabinet choices were approved by the SPA.

While Kim Il Sung and the Soviet-Koreans steadily increased their power within the communist party, the influence of the Ya’nan faction and the domestic communists declined. In August 1946, the New People’s Party (NPP) of the Ya’nan group merged with the KCP into a new organization named the North Korean Workers’ Party (NKWP). For Kim Il Sung, the merger of the two parties was a sound political tactic. Whereas the Korean Communist Party was based on peasants and workers, the NPP membership included many intellectuals. By merging these diverse elements into one political party, coalition among these classes was made possible. In fact, agreeing to the merger, the leaders of the Ya’nan faction delivered their organizational strength to Kim Il Sung, then gradually faded from the political scene. The merger also helped Kim Il Sung purge and finally defeat most domestic faction rivals by 1948.4

The key political event before the Korean War, however, was the merger of the NKWP and the South Korean Workers’ Party into the Korean Workers’ Party (KWP) on June 24, 1949. The creation of this unified communist party signified the ultimate victory of Kim Il Sung, who became the leader of both party and government—a development that had not occurred in the Soviet Union until 1941, when Stalin took both posts. Also, by 1949, the power structure at the top of the state and Party was fairly well established.

The creations of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea and the Korean Workers’ Party were primarily the product of externally generated circumstances.

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Unlike Mao, who had earned the mantle of Chinese communist leadership in his own right since January 1935 and had successfully taken over political power in China, Kim Il Sung owed his power to the Soviets. His alleged revolutionary credentials were widely questioned by the North Korean people. Kim’s pressing task, then, was to establish his leadership. Closely related to the problem of legitimacy was that of consolidating his political power.

Kim’s consolidation of power came during and immediately after the Korean War. With control of the military administration, Kim purged General Mu Chông (a prominent leader of the Ya’nan faction and a symbol of collaboration with Beijing), allegedly for the North Korean military defeat in October 1950 and his disloyalty to the higher command during the war. In November 1951, a Central Committee plenum censured Hô Ka-i, the leader of the Soviet-Koreans, for “defective organizational works.” Hô was reported to have committed suicide in March 1953.

Immediately after the signing of the armistice agreement in July 1953, Pak Hôn-yông and his followers were purged on the pretext that they were “American spies” planning a coup d’etat against Kim Il Sung’s leadership. With Pak out of the way, the domestic faction was completely eliminated from North Korean politics.

This final stage of Kim’s power consolidation was followed by the de-Stalinization movement launched by Khrushchev in 1956. In August 1956, Ch’oe Ch’ang-ik of the Ya’nan faction and Pak Ch’ang-ok, who succeeded Hô Ka-i as leader of the Soviet-Koreans, attacked Kim Il Sung openly for his “cult of personality,” his “dictatorial style of leadership,” and his exclusive emphasis on heavy industry leading to the neglect of popular needs. This challenge to Kim’s leadership was indeed the most serious one made after his assumption of the chairmanship of the Korean Workers’ Party in 1949. If Kim was not faced with a combined Sino-Soviet attempt to purge him, he was at least confronted with adversaries who had strong Chinese and Russian connections. Kim and his followers outnumbered the critics, however, and succeeded in expelling these “reactionary and anti-Party elements” from the Party. The finale was reached in 1958 with the removal of Kim Tu-bong. From this time the absolute supremacy of Kim can be dated.

**EVOLUTION OF A CONSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURE**

In the overall institutional structure it provided, the 1948 DPRK constitution was similar to the 1936 Soviet constitution, a natural development because the Soviet Union was the only constitutional model. The tripartite division of functions, election procedures, and enumeration of the rights and duties of citizens followed the Soviet model. The 1948 constitution remained in force, with five minor changes between 1954 and 1962, until the new constitution was adopted on December 27, 1972.

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In setting up the formal governmental structures, the North Korean communists paid special attention to legal and political formalities, that is, constitutionalism. Such an emphasis was important because North Korea was in a bitter competition for legitimacy with the Republic of Korea. Thus, all principles stipulated in the constitutions of both new states would appear to underwrite an essentially Western democratic system. As Friedrich and Brzezinski have pointed out, however, the constitution of a communist state is "not a constitution in the functional Western sense of providing a system of effective, regularized restraints, but a disguise by which a democratic framework is suggested, a kind of window dressing for the totalitarian reality." The constitutional apparatus in North Korea has never resulted in formal institutions of government possessing primary power. Decision-making authority has not been vested in formal governmental institutions, but in the KWP. The constitution itself is a creation of the KWP and an instrument of KWP's dictatorship.

The 1972 constitution of the DPRK begins with the assertion that the DPRK is "an independent socialist state," not a "people's democracy," ruled by the dictatorship of the proletariat (Articles I and 10). Unlike the 1936 Stalin constitution, which defined the Soviet state as "the dictatorship of the proletariat," the 1977 Soviet constitution defines the state as "a socialist state of the whole people, expressing the will and the interests of the workers, peasants, and intelligentsia" (Article 1). The 1982 constitution of the People's Republic of China defines the state system as a "socialist state of the people’s democratic dictatorship" (Article 1). The state is neither quite "a dictatorship of the proletariat" as defined in the 1975 and 1978 constitutions, nor just a "a people's democratic state" as called in the 1954 constitution. It has been argued that the 1982 PRC constitution is a step toward genuine constitutionalism.

In any case, the new constitution of the DPRK was designed to reflect actions already taken and to merge the institutional and leadership legitimacy claims of the northern regime. The 1948 Soviet-style constitution was replaced with one that was said to have been "conceived and authored in person" by Kim Il Sung. Whatever the facts of authorship, the 1972 document more closely embodied the actual values and institutions of the North Korean regime.

The 1972 constitution introduced considerable change in the governmental structure. In the new constitution as in the old, the Supreme People’s Assembly (SPA) is “the highest organ of power” of the DPRK; “legislative power is exercised exclusively by the Supreme People’s Assembly” (Article 73). In general, there is no significant change from the old constitution in terms of the formal powers and functions of the SPA, a body created in the image of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR. Indeed, its size, method of selection, and function are all entirely reflective of the Supreme Soviet, from which model it was drawn. Later versions of the Soviet model were the Chinese National People’s Congress and the North Vietnamese National Assembly.

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In reality, the Supreme People’s Assembly functions merely to ratify decisions made by the KWP and the Central People’s Committee. Because of its size and the limited time it is in session, the SPA has little opportunity to formulate major national policies. Its three- or four-day sessions are taken up by a series of government reports and extended praise for Kim Il Sung’s leadership. They provide an effective means of publicizing national policy and Kim’s personality cult. In practice, the primary function of the SPA is to endow decisions made elsewhere with a legality that encourages public acceptance. In sum, the SPA serves as the legitimizing organ for the DPRK.

The Standing Committee of the Supreme People’s Assembly is elected by that organization to serve as its “permanent body” when the SPA is not in session (Article 85). The old constitution stated that the Standing Committee was the “permanent executive body” of the SPA, but the term “executive” is deleted in the new constitution. Under the 1972 constitution, the constitutional functions of the Standing Committee are substantially reduced. In fact, all its constitutional powers have been transferred to the president of the DPRK and the Central People’s Committee. Just as the chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet is the president of the USSR, under the 1948 constitution the chairman of the SPA Standing Committee acts as titular head of state. As the conflict between Liu Shaoqi and Mao Zedong in China has shown, separate constitutional organs do create rival centers of power and opportunities for factional strife. By concentrating state power in the Central People’s Committee and overlapping the membership of that committee with the KWP Politburo, the North Korean leadership has eliminated at least one source of potential factional strife.

The president of the DPRK is elected by the SPA for a four-year term (Article 90). He is “the head of state and represents the state power.” The newly created office of the president combines the functions of the head of state and the actual exercise of political power. Changes in the governmental structure under the 1972 constitution brought about a concentration of political power in the office of the president. Thus, the powers vested in the presidency conform to the actual power exercised by Kim Il Sung. Here, clearly, the 1972 constitution reflects reality.

The new constitution does not specify a presidential succession. There is no constitutional provision stipulating that, in case of death or resignation of the president, a vice-president shall succeed him. The only vice-presidential function prescribed in the new constitution is to “assist the president in his work.” Kim Il Sung was elected to a four-year term of office, but, as indicated in Table 1, every subsequent term for both the president and the SPA has been extended beyond a strict four-year term without giving specific reasons. Although Article 98 stipulates that the president is responsible to the SPA for his activities, there are no constitutional provisions enabling the SPA to make the president actually accountable to it. All other high-ranking officials can be recalled by the SPA with the president’s recommendation, but the president himself is not subject to recall. In fact, neither the PRC constitution nor the Soviet constitution creates such a powerful position in the government as is found in the presidency of the DPRK.
The new constitution divides the functions of the central government between the Central People’s Committee (CPC), which makes policy and supervises its implementation, and the State Administration Council, which carries out policy.

The introduction of the CPC is an innovation, different from Soviet or Chinese governmental models. The creation of the CPC represented a significant change in the structure of the central government. Headed by the president, the CPC is “the highest leadership organ of state power” in North Korea and is theoretically responsible only to the SPA. The supervisory functions of the CPC over the administrative organizations are repeated at each level of local government. This “supercabinet” combines executive, legislative, and judicial powers. It also provides a close link between the leading organs of the KWP and the government. The powers vested in it are similar to the powers of the Party vested in the Politburo and the Secretariat. A close study of the fifteen-member CPC indicates that the CPC does indeed include the most powerful figures in the North Korean political system. Nine of the twelve top-ranking members of the KWP Politburo (the exceptions being Kim Jong Il, Kim Chung-nin, and Yǒn Hyŏn-muk) sit on the CPC. Why was the CPC created? Professor Chong-Sik Lee has suggested that “the CPC was created and power was concentrated in it to dispense with the myth of legislative supremacy as well as the fiction of the separation of power and authority between party and state.”

The cabinet of the 1948 constitution has been redesignated as the State Administration Council (SAC) headed by the premier. According to the new constitution, the SAC is “the administrative and executive body of the highest organ of power.” The main functions of the SAC are to direct the work of the ministries, to work out the state plan for the development of the national economy, to compile the state budget, to conduct external affairs, to conduct the formation of the people’s armed forces, and to take measures for the maintenance of public order. The SAC does not perform these functions on its own initiative; strict guidance and approval of the president and the CPC are required. Unlike its position under the old constitution, the premiership is no longer the center of the North Korean government. The premier is now a senior administrator who carries out decisions made elsewhere and serves as the chief link between the president and the administrative agencies.

In sum, unlike the 1948 constitution, which was a reflection of the 1936 Soviet model, the new DPRK constitution synthesizes constitutional models from several socialist countries and contains some unique features reflective of the actual distribution of power and also designed to adjust the political system to the current stage of socioeconomic development.

As we have noted, the central government structure, under the new constitution, consists of three pillars of power: the Central People’s Committee, the State Administration Council, and the Standing Committee of the SPA. All are controlled by the president. The CPC is undoubtedly the dominant body, directing the other two organs.

Table 1
Supreme People’s Assembly Elections

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Order of term</th>
<th>Election date</th>
<th>Number of deputies</th>
<th>Constitutional tenure (years)</th>
<th>Actual tenure (years, months)</th>
<th>Constituents per deputy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>8/25/1948</td>
<td>572^</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>50,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>8/27/1957</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>50,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>10/8/1962</td>
<td>383</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>30,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>11/25/1967</td>
<td>457</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>30,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>12/12/1972</td>
<td>541</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.11</td>
<td>30,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>11/11/1977</td>
<td>579</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>30,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>2/28/1982</td>
<td>615</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>30,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

^ Of the 572 deputies, 360 putatively represented the South.
Table 2
Key Members of the North Korean Power Elite
(as of May 1983)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>KWP Central Committee</th>
<th>KWP Political Bureau</th>
<th>KWP Secretariat</th>
<th>KWP Military Affairs</th>
<th>DPRK Central People’s Committee</th>
<th>DPRK State Administration Council</th>
<th>SPA Standing Committee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kim Il Sung</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Presidium member</td>
<td>general secretary</td>
<td>chairman</td>
<td>president</td>
<td>vice-president</td>
<td>People’s Armed Forces premier</td>
<td>chairman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kim Jong Il</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Presidium member</td>
<td>secretary</td>
<td>member</td>
<td></td>
<td>vice-president</td>
<td>People’s Armed Forces premier</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kim Il</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Presidium member</td>
<td></td>
<td>member</td>
<td></td>
<td>member</td>
<td>People’s Armed Forces premier</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O Chin-u</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Presidium member</td>
<td></td>
<td>member</td>
<td></td>
<td>member</td>
<td>People’s Armed Forces premier</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yi Chong-ok</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Presidium member</td>
<td></td>
<td>member</td>
<td></td>
<td>member</td>
<td>People’s Armed Forces premier</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pak Sŏng-ch’ŏl</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>member</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>member</td>
<td>People’s Armed Forces premier</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yim Ch’un-ch’u</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>member</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>member</td>
<td>People’s Armed Forces premier</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sŏ Ch’ŏl</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>member</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>member</td>
<td>People’s Armed Forces premier</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kim Chung-nin</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>member</td>
<td>secretary</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>member</td>
<td>People’s Armed Forces premier</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yŏn Hyŏng-muk</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>member</td>
<td>secretary</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>member</td>
<td>People’s Armed Forces premier</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kim Hwan</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>member</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>member</td>
<td>People’s Armed Forces premier</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O Paek-yong</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>member</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>member</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kang Sŏng-san</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>member</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>member</td>
<td>People’s Armed Forces premier</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chŏn Mun-sŏp</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>member</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>member</td>
<td>People’s Armed Forces premier</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>O Kŭk-ryŏl</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>member</td>
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<td>member</td>
<td>People’s Armed Forces premier</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Paek Hak-rim</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>member</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ch’ŏe Yŏng-rim</td>
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<td>member</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Role</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>So Chung-sok</td>
<td>18</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ho Tam</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hyon Mu-gwang</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yun Ki-bok</td>
<td>21</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chon Pyong-ho</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kong Chin-t'ae</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ch'oe Kwang</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ch'ong Chun-gi</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ke Ung-t'ae</td>
<td>26</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kim Tu-nam</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ch'ong Kyong-hui</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yi Kun-mo</td>
<td>29</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cho Se-ung</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kang Hi-won</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kim Kang-hwan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yi Son-sil</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hong Sung-nam</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hwang Chang-yop</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>secretary</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ho Ch'ong-suk</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>secretary</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>So Kwan-hui</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>secretary</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ch'oe Chae-u</td>
<td>38</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Hong Sung-yong</td>
<td>40</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kim Hae-il</td>
<td>41</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yang Hyong-so'p</td>
<td>54</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yi Yong-ik</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ch'e Hi-chong</td>
<td>153</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Kim Pok-sin</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kim Ch'ang-chu</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

So Chung-sok: member
Ho Tam: candidate
Hyon Mu-gwang: candidate
Yun Ki-bok: candidate
Chon Pyong-ho: candidate
Kong Chin-t'ae: candidate
Ch'oe Kwang: candidate
Ch'ong Chun-gi: candidate
Ke Ung-t'ae: member
Kim Tu-nam: candidate
Ch'ong Kyong-hui: candidate
Yi Kun-mo: candidate
Cho Se-ung: candidate
Kang Hi-won: candidate
Kim Kang-hwan: candidate
Yi Son-sil: candidate
Hong Sung-nam: candidate
Hwang Chang-yop: secretary
Ho Ch'ong-suk: secretary
So Kwan-hui: secretary
Ch'oe Chae-u:            
Hong Sung-yong:          
Kim Hae-il:              
Yang Hyong-so'p:         
Yi Yong-ik:             127
Ch'e Hi-chong:          153
Kim Pok-sin:             
Kim Ch'ang-chu:         

Secretary, vice-premier, chairman.
As noted, the new constitution discards the myth of legislative supremacy embodied in the old constitution. The CPC also controls and supervises the judicial branch, and in fact coordinates and combines all three branches of government, making it the supreme state organ. Although it is not certain at present, the office of the president and the CPC would appear to challenge the preeminence of the KWP Politburo. In essence, the new constitution institutionalizes the power of the innermost ruling elite and strengthens the role of government vis-à-vis the Party in the North Korean power structure.11

Whatever the precise division of powers in practice, the constitutional provisions relating to the CPC and the KWP Politburo represent an effort to establish a close coordination between the party’s decision-making body and the government’s policy-making and policy-executing agencies. In this way, the North Korean communists intend to provide greater efficiency in the management and operation of the governmental and party organizations. Finally, through constitutional revisions Kim II Sung has strengthened and legitimized his personal power.

EVOLUTION OF THE PARTY STRUCTURE

The Korean Workers’ Party (KWP) is the dominant political force in North Korea; it remains the central institution of the North Korean political system, with total control of all political organization. It is centrally organized and disciplined and is the only group having links with all social institutions in North Korea; all other institutions take their meaning, purpose, and power from it. The Party has permeated the entire society to bring about an integrated political structure. It inserts itself into every social institution and group, thereby serving as a means of social integration. It articulates an ideology to which social and economic life is supposed to conform, and both ideology and organization find their essence and their interrelation in the Party. The KWP is the authoritative source of values, and only the Party’s values are legitimate.

Although the 1948 constitution said nothing of importance regarding the role of the KWP in North Korean politics, the 1972 constitution provides the constitutional grounds for KWP dictatorship; Article 4 of the 1972 constitution stipulates that “the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea is guided in its activities by the chuch’ē (self-reliance) idea of the Korean Workers’ Party, which is a creative application of Marxism-Leninism to our country’s reality.” Furthermore, the rule of the KWP is specifically sanctioned by the new constitution, Article 5 being similar to the preamble of the rules of the KWP. Thus, the existence and activity of the DPRK government is based on the KWP, and the Party controls the highest institutional roles of the state. This does not differ from the foundations of the USSR polity. The 1977 Soviet

constitution stipulates that the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) is "the leading and guiding force of Soviet society and the nucleus of its political system, of all state organizations and public organizations" (Article 6).\(^{12}\)

Moreover, like its counterparts in other communist countries, the KWP is patterned after the CPSU, embodying the Leninist organizational principle of democratic centralism. Identical to the CPSU and the Communist Party of China (CPC), the KWP is marked by a pyramidlike hierarchical structure (see Figure 1).\(^{13}\)

According to the Party constitution, the National Party Congress (NPC) is "the highest decision-making organ of the Party." Officially, the NPC is empowered to review, deliberate, and approve the proposals and reports of the Central Committee, the Central Auditing Committee, and other central organs; adopt or revise the basic questions of Party policy and tactics; and elect the Central Committee, and Central Auditing Committee (Article 36). In reality, however, the NPC simply legitimizes the Party and all of its actions, just as the Supreme People's Assembly legitimizes the state and its actions. The congress also represents a means of engendering enthusiasm about the Party activities throughout the nation.

Delegates to the congress are chosen by local Party branches. The North Korean communists have tried to bring legitimacy to Party organizations, using the familiar techniques of Soviet-style elections and so-called democratic centralism. In practice, however, the Party is not organized on the democratic principle of election from the bottom up, but on the authoritarian method of control from the top down.

The NPC is supposed to convene every four years. As shown in Table 3, however, this has not been the case. Thus far six congresses have been held at irregular intervals. Even the minimum legal requirements concerning the timing of the Party's elections and meetings are not fulfilled. This is a good example of the absence of genuine institutionalization, that is to say, of the unwillingness to be bound by institutional rules.

The growth of the KWP membership from only 4 percent (366,000) of the total population in 1946 to over 12 percent (2 million) of the population in 1980 signifies that the KWP has now become a mass political party (see Table 3). The KWP has been generally less selective than the CPC and the CPSU in its recruitment policy. The CPC membership was about 0.8 percent (4,480,000) of the population in 1949 and increased to about 3.9 percent (38,000,000) in 1980. The CPSU membership increased from about 4.5 percent (9,716,800) of the total population in 1961 to about 6.7 percent (18,218,000) in 1981.

The Party constitution provides that, in the intervals between congresses, the Central Committee (CC) of the KWP directs the entire work of the Party, creates various Party agencies, guides their work, and supervises the Party budget. The Central Committee membership, which includes the leading personnel of virtually every important governmental and public organizations in North Korea, is the elite

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13 Ibid., pp. 129–32.
FIGURE 1
Organization of the Korean Workers' Party

group in the power structure, and is relatively better suited to cope with the tasks stipulated in the Party statutes than the NPC. But the CC is still too large, and meets too infrequently and too briefly, to be the real decision-making center of the KWP. In reality, the CC lends legitimacy to the decisions of the Politburo or, more precisely, to those of Kim Il Sung and his cohorts. The CC transmits actions to lower levels, thus linking the peak of the political pyramid with its mass base. Almost all provinces and major municipalities are represented by the CC members. In this way, the CC members are able to explain and interpret the Party decisions at the local level. This communication or transmission function of the CC is important in implementing Party decisions and in controlling provincial and local Party organizations.  

There has been a constant reshuffling in Central Committee membership. Of the 172 members elected at the Fifth Congress in 1970, 119 (69 percent) were new members. At the Sixth Congress in 1980, 175 (70.6 percent) of the 248 members elected were newcomers. Kim Jong Il may have played an important role in the 1980 selection of the new elite who would be in a position to affect his status in the event of his father's demise.

During the Sixth Congress, the KWP made some structural changes in its organization. Among them, the KWP revived a five-member Presidium, the innermost decision-making organ of the Party, while retaining the Political Committee (the "Politburo"). At the Party representative conference held in October 1966, a Presidium was created within the Political Committee; but the Presidium was apparently abolished at the Fifth Congress in 1970. The reorganization of the KWP hierarchy during the Sixth Congress may have been connected with the succession issue, because the changes seem to have helped consolidate Kim Jong Il's position.

The recent makeup of the five-man Presidium has given it the appearance of a collective leadership of sorts, with Kim II, a senior Party hand, O Chin-u, defense minister, and Yi Chong-ok, prime minister, representing the Party, the military, and the government, respectively. But Kim II was too old to play an active role in the power game; Yi has no power base either in the Party or in the military; more than anything else, their allegiance to Kim Il Sung and his son is absolute, and this is the essential qualification for holding power. The precise composition of the KWP Presidium at the end of 1984 is not known. Yi Chong-ok, who was "elevated" to the post of the vice presidency, appears to be no longer a member of the Presidium, and Kim II died on March 9, 1984. It is not clear as of this writing who will replace (or has already replaced) Yi and Kim.  

---


### Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Congress Dates</th>
<th>Membership</th>
<th>Percentage of population</th>
<th>Composition of delegations</th>
<th>Composition of CC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. August 29–30, 1946</td>
<td>366,000</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Total: 801 (breakdown not available)</td>
<td>Total: 999 (87 regular)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. March 27–30, 1948</td>
<td>750,000</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>workers 466, peasants 270, functionaries 234, others 29, absentees 9</td>
<td>workers 439, peasants 192, functionaries 246, others 39, absentees 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. April 22–29, 1956</td>
<td>1,164,945</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
### Table 3 continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Total:</th>
<th>100%</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Workers</td>
<td>1,657</td>
<td>12.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peasants</td>
<td>944</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Functionaries</td>
<td>451</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>191</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Absentees</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>0.5</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Total:</th>
<th>100%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Workers</td>
<td>1,734</td>
<td>11.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peasants</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Functionaries</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>9.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Absentees</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As of May 1983, the secretariat, "elected" by the Central Committee, is composed of a general secretary and ten secretaries. The secretariat was abolished in 1966, but it was revived in 1970, with Kim Il Sung as general secretary. The secretariat within the CC is the executive coordinating center of the KWP. It is responsible for "organizing Party activities designed to implement the line, policies, and decisions of the Party." This body is the executive coordinating center of the KWP and supervises the twenty-two executive departments that handle the Party's daily work.

This analysis of the KWP organizations reveals how closely the KWP emulates its Soviet progenitor. Unlike the Soviet Union, China, and other communist regimes, the North Korean regime came to power not through an essentially domestic and national revolution; rather, it was established by the Soviet occupation force. As the product of Soviet occupation, North Korea's Party, in structure and functions, is virtually identical with the CPSU.

In any case, however, the formal political institutions of most communist states have so far shown a remarkable degree of uniformity. Communism has been able to maintain a common institutional structure despite significant variations of history, political culture, size, and level of socioeconomic development among the societies in which it is implanted. The main reason for the uniformity is that only one basic model for communist institutions has existed, the Soviet model. For North Korea, the Soviet occupation naturally provided a powerful stimulus for the application of the Soviet model. Indeed, such Russian returnees as Hŏ Ka-i and Pak Ch'ang-ok served as architects of the KWP under the supervision of the Soviet occupation forces in Pyongyang.

North Korea created a highly disciplined, mass-based party within a relatively short time through effective organization, ideological indoctrination, coercion in various forms, and mass mobilization via many types of organization. In doing so, the North Korean communists systematically destroyed previous customs, past institutions, and traditional behavior that could have posed obstacles to their attempt at communization of the society. Utilizing Leninism, they then elaborated communist political theory and practice to unite the political mobilization of the masses with the creation and institutionalization of a new political organization.

MONOCRACY UNDER KIM IL SUNG

In North Korea, a unique situation exists with respect to leadership. As noted, Kim's domination is so complete that the DPRK has been characterized as a monocracy. It is a modern not a traditional monocracy because it employs mass organizational tactics to implement mobilization-style politics. Professors Scalapino and Lee define a

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17 Samuel P. Huntington, Political Order in Changing Societies (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968), pp. 33–43. The six communist "revolutionary" states are: the Soviet Union, China, Yugoslavia, Albania, Vietnam, Cuba; the eight "occupation" states are: Hungary, Poland, East Germany, Bulgaria, Rumania, Czechoslovakia, North Korea, and Mongolia.

18 Ibid.
monocracy as "one in which a single man holds total authority and legitimacy over the entire political system."^^ In fact, the North Korean political system relies completely on the personality, ideology, and actions of one man—the Great Leader. For more than thirty-five years, both the ideology and the institutions of North Korean communism have been in the hands of Kim II Sung. As Scalapino and Lee aptly concluded, "He is, perforce, an institution."

What Kim II Sung has built in North Korea resembles more a personalized political system than a communist state. The personality cult of Stalin, or even of Mao Zedong, could not be compared with the present glorifications of Kim. Both ideology and organizations are personalized in Kim II Sung. The cult of personality simply means "the personalization of the state in a single individual."^^ The development of Kim's cult was to insure the supremacy of the man, but in addition, it has served as a source of legitimacy for the regime. By depicting Kim as the Great Leader, one could prove that the new institutions, which were depicted as his own creations, were therefore legitimate. As in other communist states, North Korean authorities also have used the Kim cult to remedy institutional inadequacies.

The public interest of North Korea is invariably equated with the institutional interests of the Party. But Kim II Sung's personal interests take precedence over the institutional interests of the party and the state. In this sense, "What's good for Kim II Sung is good for the North Korean people." Kim has been paving the way for a "monarchical succession." Kim Jong II is being proclaimed uniquely qualified to succeed his father—a political action not yet attempted by any other communist state. Furthermore, North Korea is the only ruling communist regime in the world in which all direct living relatives of Kim II Sung occupy high positions both in the Party and government (see Table 4).^^

To forward political integration and advance the regime's legitimacy, Kim II Sung developed the *chuch'e* (self-reliance) ideology. The origin of *chuch'e* has been variously explained. The concept was first articulated by Kim in a speech to Party propaganda and agitation workers in December 1955, when he stressed the need for "firmly establishing *chuch'e*" and further declared: "Although certain people say that the Soviet way is best or that the Chinese way is best, have we not now reached the point where we can construct our own way?"^^ *Chuch'e* later came to signify an unwillingness to side with either China or the Soviet Union in their disputes. Kim II Sung needed to build the *chuch'e* ideology to compensate for his lack of legitimacy as a revolutionary leader. In the course of its purposeful development, however, it has gained some philosophical substance and internal logic (see Table 5).

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20 Ibid., p. 755.
22 Kim II Sung, *Selected Works*, vol. 1 (Pyongyang: Languages Publishing House, 1964), pp. 1–3, 12. The major factors that enabled the North Korean communists to increasingly emphasize *chuch'e* in formulating domestic and foreign policies during the 1950s and 1960s were: the bitter memories of the Korean War; the postwar political consolidation; the economic progress; the problem of Kim's legitimacy; and the growing conflict within the international communist camp.
# Table 4
Kim Il Sung's Relatives in the Power Structure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Relation to Kim</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kim Jong II</td>
<td>heir apparent</td>
<td>eldest son by first wife</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kim Song-ae</td>
<td>chairwoman, Women's League</td>
<td>present wife</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kang Yang-suk</td>
<td>former vice-president, DPRK</td>
<td>brother-in-law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pak Sung-ch'ol</td>
<td>former vice-president, DPRK</td>
<td>brother-in-law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ho Dam</td>
<td>former vice-premier</td>
<td>brother-in-law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yang Hyong-sop</td>
<td>chairman, Standing Committee of the SPA</td>
<td>sister (cousin; Hô Dan's wife)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kim Ch'ong-suk</td>
<td>deputy director, P'yongan Nampo People's Committee</td>
<td>sister (cousin; Yang Hyong-sop's wife)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kang Hyon-su</td>
<td>chairman, League of All Vocations</td>
<td>brother (cousin)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kim Sin-suk</td>
<td>member of the Central People's Committee</td>
<td>maternal relative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kang Song-san</td>
<td>director, National Political Intelligence Agency</td>
<td>relative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kim Pyong-ha</td>
<td>secretary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5
North Korea’s Guiding Ideology and Goals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Ideology</th>
<th>Immediate Goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NKWP meeting (8/1946)</td>
<td>Marxism-Leninism</td>
<td>establishment of a unified government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd NKWP Congress (3/1948)</td>
<td>Marxism-Leninism</td>
<td>establishment of a unified government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KWP Congress (6/1949)</td>
<td>Marxism-Leninism</td>
<td>establishment of a unified government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd KWP Congress (4/1956)</td>
<td>Marxism-Leninism and Korean people’s revolutionary traditions</td>
<td>establishment of a unified government North; anti-imperialism, antifeudal democratic revolution in the peninsula</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th KWP Congress (9/1961)</td>
<td>creative application of Marxism-Leninism and anti-Japanese revolutionary traditions</td>
<td>development and strengthening of socialist system in the North; anti-imperialism antifeudal democratic revolution in the peninsula</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th KWP Congress (11/1970)</td>
<td>chuch’e</td>
<td>development and strengthening of socialist system in the North; national liberation, people’s democratic revolution in the peninsula</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6th KWP Congress (10/1980)</td>
<td>chuch’e and revolutionary ideology</td>
<td>complete victory of socialism in the North; national liberation, people’s democratic revolution in the peninsula</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chuch'e has become the official ideology of the DPRK; it is a state creed. Everything is done in the spirit of chuch'e. North Korea's agriculture is therefore chuch'e agriculture; its industry, chuch'e industry; and its music, chuch'e music. Pyongyang's relations with other countries are also based on chuch'e. Chuch'e doctrine has reached the level of a religious faith whereby North Korean communists mythicize their history, their nation, and, above all, Kim II Sung.

Chuch'e has served the legitimization of power politics in the North Korean political system. North Korean leaders continue to aim at a high level of ideological exhortation to consolidate their power and gain the people's support. Their perception of legitimacy is almost entirely determined by ideological considerations. Specifically, a policy becomes legitimate when it is consistent with Kim II Sung ideas.

The extent to which chuch'e prevails as the social philosophy in North Korea is unmatched by either Maoism or Stalinism even at the height of their influence. An examination of the alleged origin of chuch'e reveals that the North Korean communists have altered their official position regarding the origin of their ideology from Marxism-Leninism to "indigenous conditions." The 1972 constitution proclaims that North Korea "is guided in its activities by the chuch'e idea of the Korean Workers' Party, which is a creative application of Marxism-Leninism to our country's reality.”

North Korean organs propagate the view that chuch'e is a philosophy superior to any ideological exposition the world has witnessed including Marxism. It has been asserted that chuch'e is based on the Great Leader's new discoveries relating to human nature. Moreover, Kim II Sung is rewriting history with the theme that human civilization originated in Korea and that "the Koreans are a chosen people ordained to lead all the oppressed people to the promised land of chuch'e.”

North Korea now stands at the extreme end of the communist political spectrum in terms of ideological exhortation, mass mobilization, and the cult of personality; it is to be ranked only with Albania. Why? The reasons are to be found in a combination of Korean political culture and the character of a guerrilla political party. North Korea is a paternalistic society in which absolute loyalty to the head of the family has traditionally been accorded great respect. With Kim II Sung as the "father," the entire society has striven to become an extended “family.” Kim II Sung's guerrilla party, moreover, was always based on absolute loyalty to the leader, on tightly knit, secretive organization, and on the total mobilization of the populace.

The very fact that the DPRK is not the product of an epic revolutionary movement led by Kim II Sung but the creation of the Soviet Union had profound implications for North Korean politics. The efficacy and stability of communist political systems depend to some extent on the way in which they are established. Communist legitimacy was weaker in the "occupation" states than in the "revolutionary" ones because less identity existed between communism and nationalism. The

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“occupation” regimes may be able to overcome their initial handicaps by identifying themselves with nationalist sentiments in their countries and asserting their national independence against foreign control.  

The extent to which the Pyongyang regime has falsified the history of Korean independence and communist movements and the extraordinary magnitude of the personality cult surrounding Kim Il Sung are related to the need to bolster the legitimacy of his rule. Indeed, Kim's thought and cult were based on a fabricated history of his alleged contributions to the Korean communist movement before 1945.

Additional factors that have facilitated the highly centralized nature of politics in the DPRK are North Korea's small size, both in terms of population and territory; its homogeneous culture; its ethnic background; the special characteristics of the Korean language and political culture; and the acute concern with national security. The tightness of the North Korean system is related to the degree to which 18 million homogeneous people can be mobilized under a system supervised by a single leader. A pure monocratic system is not possible in a state as vast and as heterogeneous as China, for example. The continuing tension on the Korean peninsula and the presence of American troops also contribute to the perpetuation of Kim Il Sung's dictatorship.

PROSPECT FOR CHANGE

Is change from highly personalized politics to a greater degree of institutionalization possible in North Korea? It appears that communist political institutions will be forced at some point to evolve in response to pressures and changes within their societies. The changes produced in modern societies by technological advances affect all states and their political processes. Since the communist states are the most rigidly centralistic of modern states, these changes could affect them most seriously. Indeed, Kim Il Sung's cult of personality, let alone the cult of his "revolutionary family" and hereditary succession by his son, runs against the currents of the time. In terms of the evolution of communist parties, whether in China, the Soviet Union, or North Korea, the trend is slowly toward pluralism, decentralization, and rational decision making.

Significant institutional change in the foreseeable future seems more likely to evolve in the Soviet Union and China than in North Korea. After the demise of their dominant leaders, Stalin and Mao, the CPC and CPSU were "deradicalized" by placing less emphasis on revolution in the traditional sense and placing more emphasis on modernization and economic development through the dominance of routinized bureaucratic patterns. Also, the Soviet Union and China have experienced changes in leadership and have experimented with the division of key Party and state posts among...
leaders. Only in North Korea has one man continuously held the highest positions in both the Party and state apparatus. And, as noted, Kim II Sung has built a political structure to accommodate his personal rule rather than a political system to survive him. In this sense, North Korea is the most primitive and the most rigid of the Asian socialist states.

Political succession in Soviet-type systems entails considerable uncertainty as to whether instability will ensue. In the Soviet Union, leadership transitions are in fact leadership crises. Top leaders have never retired with honor. They have either died on the job as Lenin, Stalin, Brezhnev, and Andropov did, or they are thrown out and end up as pensioners in disgrace—the fate of Malenkov and Khrushchev. Since the overthrow of Khrushchev and the deaths of Brezhnev and Andropov, however, the Soviet leadership appears to have developed a relatively stable bargaining structure and tacit norms for political interaction. Moreover, informal arrangements for the transfer of power in the Soviet Union appear to have become institutionalized with the important criteria of age, nationality, and work experience used in an identification of potential successors.27

In China, the general thrust of the recent reforms for both Party and state has been toward the “institutionalization and legalization of socialist democracy.”28 During the Twelfth CPC Congress held in September 1982, for example, the movement toward greater separation of power was manifest in the attempt at functional separation of Party and state and in the division of the Central Committee into three concurrent organs: the Central Committee, the Commission for the Inspection of Discipline, and the Central Advisory Committee.

The historical and socioeconomic forces that transformed the Soviet and Chinese parties have been operating in North Korea at least to a degree. The changes that are occurring within the DPRK appear to involve the rise of technocrats within the Party and state structures and an increased demand for technological development and industrialization. The rapid pace of industrialization has been accompanied by a sharp increase in the number of those whom Professor Chong-Sik Lee has called “technical intelligentsia.” Indeed, the number of technical personnel in North Korea increased from 497,000 in 1970 to 1 million in 1976. Also, KWP membership increased from about 1,300,000 in 1963 to approximately 2 million in the late 1970s. A large proportion of the new Party members are likely to be from the new crop of technocrats.29 Technocrats are indeed different from first-generation revolutionaries in their outlook, concerns, and orientation to problems.

At the Third Session of the Seventh Supreme People’s Assembly held in January 1984, the new prime minister, Kang Song-san, another economic manager, delivered a speech in which he placed an unusual emphasis on the importance of economic cooperation with foreign countries and expansion of foreign trade.31 A country such as

28 Ibid., pp. 108–12.
29 Lee, “The Evolution of the Korean Worker’s Party,” p. 69
30 Naewoe Press, no. 372 (February 24, 1984).
North Korea that seeks technological development and industrialization is compelled to expand its economic interaction with the Western industrial world. As a socialist country pursues industrialization, it is bound to adopt or adapt at least some of the cultural, socioeconomic, and behavioral values of the nonsocialist industrialized countries, as has been demonstrated in Poland, China, and even the Soviet Union. Change will unquestionably occur in North Korea with or without Kim II Sung. The question is to what extent, how, and when.

On the negative side, the communist institutional structure is inflexible, with its ability to adapt to an evolving society limited. As for North Korea, the role of Kim II Sung’s personality cult influencing communist institutions will continue to be both intensive and extensive. There is no indication that Kim II Sung is threatened from within the political system. The Party, the military, and the bureaucracy appear to be completely subordinate to him and his authority at present. Also, the regime appears to be in no danger with respect to public attitudes concerning its authority and legitimacy. Neither is there any evidence today to suggest that either the Party or the state is on the verge of major structural changes; nor is there a significant evolution toward greater openness in the society, a deemphasis of ideology, or reduced controls.

If there is to be meaningful change in North Korea, it will more likely come through changes in leadership than through more complex institutional adjustments. The passing of Kim II Sung will certainly result in political confusion, whether of the post-Stalin type in the Soviet Union, the post-Mao type in China, or one of some quite different character. Whoever succeeds Kim II Sung cannot fully inherit Kim’s personality cult, role, or level of control. Thus, communist political institutions will be forced to make some adjustments to the progress of modernization and the post–Kim II Sung political environment.
2. Political Institutionalization in Vietnam

Douglas Pike

This study examines the Vietnamese political culture of the 1980s, chiefly in terms of major political institutions.\(^1\) It sets forth the essentials of the present-day political process in Hanoi so as to permit an estimate of what lies ahead.\(^2\)

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\(^1\) Most material in this essay is drawn from the author’s book-length manuscript on Vietnamese leadership, which has the working title “Operational Code of the Vietnamese Politburo.” Sources of information are: (1) studies done by the author in Vietnam in 1960–75, including interviews with North Vietnamese cadres who were prisoners or had defected; (2) noncommunist Northerners who had earlier known and worked with Politburo figures, including the author’s friend, the late Do Quang Giai, last mayor of noncommunist Hanoi; (3) Party documents, chiefly directives and other internal papers in the Indochina Archive at the University of California at Berkeley.

The Vietnamese society in this century has been subjected to enormous stress, much of it since the end of the Vietnam War, with the result that its political system has undergone profound psychological change. Coping not only with the stress of decades of war but with enormous postwar trauma has steadily warped and altered Vietnam’s political institutions. The leaders of these institutions display classic symptoms of neurosis: a paranoid world view, a low adaptability level, perfidy consistently perceived in the motives of others, merit found in the emotion of hate, a mystique of an omnipotent, omniscient Party, and perpetuation of a cult-type leadership capable of believing the illogical, the irrational, even the absurd. Many of these symptoms were long observable in the North. With the conquest of the South and the subsequent effort to jam together two vastly different sociopolitical systems, northern paranoia has been converted into Vietnam-wide political schizophrenia. It is against this background of irrationality that we attempt to analyze Vietnam’s political institutions.

New Bottle, Old Wine

All political activity in Vietnam today is conducted by fiat according to Marxist rules, but old influences and practices die hard, and in many ways the practice of politics remains deceptively traditional. Formally, all political institutions are orthodox Marxist-Leninist, supported by the standard Marxist rationale. Political power resides in, and flows from, three institutions: (1) the Party’s leadership apparat, namely, the Politburo/Secretariat/Central Committee; (2) the Party cadres/Party members acting through mass organizations as mechanisms of control and regulation; and (3) the philosophy of communism as the ideological basis to justify and rationalize the system. These institutions of power are similar to those found in ruling communist party systems elsewhere. There is the Party-state relationship, which can be conceived as a pyramid within a pyramid: a thin, inner core pyramid (the Party) running from apex to base inside a broader-based pyramid (the state). Thus political control by the Party is from the inside out. This is true with respect to state organs, the armed forces, and the mass organizations which make up the Fatherland Front.

Political participation by rank-and-file Vietnamese is not viewed as a competitive function, as it is elsewhere. Rather, it is treated as an activity—rallies, self-criticism sessions, “congresses”—to soak up the normal political energies that exist in all people. This is not simply Party manipulation; those involved do have a genuine sense of political participation to some degree. This, however, cannot be termed politics in the orthodox sense of the science of power.

The Party asserts, even vaunts, its right to monopolize political power using the standard Marxist arguments of democratic centralism, dictatorship of the proletariat, and the Party as vanguard of the vanguard. If Vietnamese communism differs significantly—and the main yardstick here is the USSR—it is in terms of orthodoxy. Vietnamese Marxism is fundamentalist, close to the original Marxist-Leninist (and Stalinist) model. No winds of liberalism blow here as they do from time to time through Eastern Europe. True, the last few years have witnessed relaxation of dogma as applied to the agricultural production and domestic trade sectors, but this, it is officially asserted, is only a temporary expediency.
The stamp of Marxism on Vietnam today is authentic, but that is not the full political reality. Both the institutions and the doctrine imposed have real meaning, are no mere facade—as may prove to be largely the case in Laos—but behind them is a second reality, or perhaps it would be more correct to say an additional dimension. This dimension is a product of the past, the heritage of a peculiar set of political influences stretching back a millennium: the politics of clandestinism.

The practice of clandestine politics is not merely a penchant for covert political intrigue or the presence of secret political societies, which exist everywhere. Rather, it is a style of politics ingrained in the Vietnamese personality. In the past it was the institution for dealing with the foreign occupier, the Chinese for 900 years, then the French. But its foundation is even more basic. It rests on the Vietnamese belief that society consists of a multitude of threatening and contradictory social forces with which only the enigmatic organization and secret “inness” can cope. It is a belief shored up by experience. Political power in Vietnam has always been something to be fought for, seized, and held exclusively. No court/mandarinate ever willingly shared it, nor has any ruling system since.

Under the French, who abolished participational politics except at the village level, the art of clandestinism reached a level unmatched anywhere. Vietnam became a labyrinth of intrigue.

With the rise of the nationalist sentiment in Vietnam there developed what best can be called a code of clandestinism in politics, a set of unwritten rules, imperatives, and practices, that themselves gradually became a political institution. It flourished in the sects, of which the Cao Dai and the Hoa Hao, both models of political clandestinism, were the best known. The Cao Dai was founded in 1919, ostensibly as a new religious movement seeking to meld all the world’s major religions, but not until 1931, French Sûreté records reveal, did the French become aware that it also was a nationalist, anti-French organization. To someone who has not experienced political clandestinism, it may seem impossible that 10 percent of the people of a colonial nation could belong to an anticolonial organization without the colonizers themselves being aware of it. Something of the same record was established by the Hoa Hao with the occupying Japanese who regarded it as pro-Japanese, an image maintained throughout the war; only later was it revealed that the Hoa Hao actually had supported the Allies.

Clandestinism succeeded chiefly because of compartmentalization of organization. The strategy is to divide the organization into two parts, an overt element that the world sees and is aware of, and a covert one known only to insiders. This is not a case of erecting a cover or a facade, because the overt element is authentic.

Clandestine political leadership has its own value system, and its best leaders possess their own special virtues. The proclaimed leader of a clandestine organization almost never holds real power in all spheres, although he may be influential in one of the several spheres in which the group operates. It is also possible that he is influential in none of them. Often, if one is clever and penetrates this organization, one finds behind the ostensible leader another figure who seems to be the true power holder. Only later, one discovers, the second figure was in effect put there for the clever to
discover and reveal to the world, and behind him is a third figure (or possibly a fourth or fifth) who wields maximum power. It follows then that the ideal leader in the Vietnamese political arena is one who can best stage manage his organization before the public. He must be sly, paternalistic, skilled at intrigue, master of the deceptive move, both dramatist and magician. He must also reciprocate loyalty, protect his followers, and achieve whatever goal is sought: power, status, money. The model of such a leader in Vietnam is the man whom the world calls Ho Chi Minh. He lived under a half a dozen false aliases (some lightly chosen, for they are puns in Vietnamese or Chinese); we still don’t know where he was during most of the 1930s; he has half a dozen official Hanoi biographies that differ in names, dates, basic facts. Ho would tell one interviewer one fact, contradict himself with a second interviewer and, when bearded by a third on the contradiction, would plead that you must allow an old man a little mystery in his life. Ho was behaving exactly as a leader engaged in clandestine politics must behave—by constantly throwing sand in the eyes of the world.

Rules of behavior also exist for the follower in a clandestine organization. He must be in step with the movement, change when it changes. He must know when to be loyal and when the time for loyalty has passed. He never takes an irretrievable position, never makes a final commitment. Certainly no one ever takes him for granted. Proselytizing is common in this world, and no opprobrium is attached to changing sides providing one observes a decent interval. Loyalty may be a virtue but consistency is not. No strong traitor stigma prevails in Vietnam. Most Vietnamese of middle age or older have been on all sides of all political issues.

The communists, who put clandestinism in politics to good use, now are faced with the problem of eradicating it. Their new superstructure of political institutionalism is proclaimed the only political reality. But it is largely a case of old wine poured into a new bottle. The result is a political paradox: the new system in Vietnam now counts for everything, yet at the same time it counts for very little. Where is the reality? This is the first and foremost problem plaguing the student of contemporary Vietnamese politics.

In addition to clandestinism, other political heritages that shaped the conduct of present-day Vietnamese politics should be noted. An important one is geographic regionalism, the famed North-Center-South division of Vietnam, each region with its own self-contained set of virtues, stereotypes, and prejudices. Another is lingering traditionalism, the continued influence of village-oriented social and political relations. A third, the influences of Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism and, to a lesser extent, Christianity. Still another heritage is the subliminal need of Vietnamese political organizations for an outside association, an umbilical cord to foreign sustenance. Every Vietnamese political movement of the twentieth century, communist as well as non-communist, has demonstrated this psychic need.

**Bugs in Amber**

In the entire history of the Vietnamese Communist Party’s Politburo, the supreme power-wielding political institution in Vietnam, only twenty-four persons
have occupied Politburo seats, a minuscule total.3 Those few have not only held Indochina's destiny in thrall, but have made decisions affecting the lives and fortunes of half the world.

The present fifteen-man Politburo holds unchallenged and apparently unchallengeable authority because it sits at the pinnacle of the Party's power hierarchy and because of the personal influence exerted by individual members, particularly the legendary "five of the inner circle."4 Hence much of what is set down here is applicable only to the Politburo as it now is constituted and not to some future Politburo comprising another membership with a different and probably less authoritative role to play.

In general terms, the men5 of the Politburo can be described as praetorian, dogmatic, fanatically tenacious, possessed of a siege mentality, and ossified. Their recent history is one of devolvement, from a masterful and effective leader group into one totally unequal to the new demands placed upon it. Virtually every aspect of the Vietnamese society—economic, social, military, diplomatic, agricultural, industrial, educational, and psychological—is in worse condition today than it was at the end of the war in 1975. There are various reasons for this, but the central one is faulty Politburo leadership.

When the war ended, observers expected that the peacetime leadership would pursue three national goals—internal and external security, rapid economic development, and purified ideology—and would do so in a rational manner. The Politburo itself indicated this in its early postwar pronouncements. But soon good intentions were thrown off course for reasons not entirely clear (discussed later). Worse, challenges arose that were met with bungled responses; problems were not solved but made worse. There were serious difficulties with China, and Pol Pot was proving a troublesome neighbor, but both could have been managed so as to avoid the hostile and resource-draining impasse that resulted. It was considered necessary to "break the machine" in the South, that is, restructure the sociopolitical system there, but this could have been accomplished to Hanoi's satisfaction more effectively and at less cost in human suffering if pursued by slower, gentler means.

3 The Politburo was created by the Third Party Congress (1960). Earlier, the Central Committee was so small that a political bureau was considered unnecessary. The present fifteen members of the Politburo are: General Le Duc Anh, Truong Chinh, Vo Chi Cong, Pham Van Dong, Le Duan, General Van Tien Dung, Pham Hung, To Huu, Vo Van Kiet, General Chu Huy Man, Do Muoi, General Dong Si Nguyen, Nguyen Duc Tam, Nguyen Co Thach, and Le Duc Tho. Two former members are deceased: Ho Chi Minh (1969) and General Nguyen Chi Thanh (1967). Seven others have left, either retiring or having been pushed out. They are (with years of service): Vo Nguyen Giap (1960–80), Nguyen Duy Trinh (1960–82), Le Thanh Nghi (1960–82), Tran Quoc Hoan (1960–82), Nguyen Van Linh (1976–82), Le Van Luong (1976–82), and Hoang Van Hoan (1960–76). These total twenty-four. In addition, for our purposes of listing supreme Party figures, we should add the first two Party secretaries-general of the 1930s, Tran Phu and Nguyen Van Cu; also, an important early figure, Le Hong Phong; all three are deceased.

4 The five, with their birth dates, are Le Duan (1908), Pham Van Dong (1906), Truong Chinh (1907), Pham Hung (1913), and Le Duc Tho (1910).

5 There are no women in the Politburo; for that matter no women in the Hanoi political system can be said to have major political power.
Why did the system that performed so well under wartime conditions prove to be so inadequate in the less demanding atmosphere of peace? How could the Party throw victory away so lightly? Why did common sense not prevail and the Politburo determinedly turn to the task of accomplishing what Ho Chi Minh had promised repeatedly through the long years of war: to make Vietnam ten thousand times more beautiful?^6

The answers to these questions are to be found in the mindset of the top Vietnamese leaders, a mentality which caused them to make rationally oriented policies and then undercut them by arational implementation. Looking back at the careers of these men, one dominant motif appears throughout: force. Their lives always have been bound up with the idea of force, used by them, used against them. It dominates their thinking, fills their rhetoric, conditions their behavior. For a country at war, much is to be said for such a mental outlook; it is, in fact, a necessity in winning against a formidable foe. But peace changes leadership needs, and what once was a virtue can become a vice. In postwar Vietnam, the Politburo continued to operate on a wartime basis. Social change, in North and South Vietnam alike, was compelled where it might have been induced. Social and economic institutions were smashed when they might have been transformed. Political opponents, even the members of the mild “third force,” were imprisoned in “reeducation” camps, exiled to the New Economic Zones, or driven out as boat people, when they might have been converted or at least co-opted. In dealing with intractable Chinese merchants in Cholon or difficult Cambodian villagers at the border, only one approach was known: smash the opposition, crush the resistance, apply maximum force at all points at all times. When this approach failed and problems worsened, the response was more of the same, further application of greater force. This tactic compounded the error, and down the spiral went. Perhaps it was unreasonable to expect these men to behave otherwise. A lifetime of combat had conditioned them, and only one policy response was open: vigorous, relentless, sustained application of force.^7

The Politburo’s collective belief in its own infallibility is perhaps the most important characteristic to be noted here, since it represents the major impediment to any significant improvement in Politburo performance. Sorting through the speeches and other public pronouncements of these men over the years, one is struck by their genius in avoiding personal responsibility. Always the blame lies elsewhere: the

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^6 Whereas the author’s central explanation for this phenomenon is the leadership thought pattern, a more nominal explanation has been suggested: commonly political systems work well in wartime challenge, then suffer a postwar letdown when discipline ends and the latent negative influences in the society rise to the surface, an example being Great Britain after World War II.

^7 The background against which this leadership mindset operates should be fully appreciated. Here is a totally intrusive political system in which time, energy, and private thoughts are occupied by emulation campaigns, agit-prop sessions, education (usually indoctrination), khiem thao (self-criticism) sessions, denunciation meetings, cadres who forever harangue in emotionally charged language; all of this exists for a single purpose: to inculcate militancy, destructiveness, aggression. The traffic in hate is enormous. That this battle is not more successful is a tribute to the innate perversity and stubbornness of the individual Vietnamese—bored by a lifetime assault on his mind and on truth—who skillfully has learned methods to evade the Party’s purposes.
Americans, counterrevolutionaries in their midst, the French, tale-bearing refugees, Chinese in Vietnam or Chinese in China, low-level Party cadres, the Japanese, or the Cambodians. Vietnam's troubles are the result of war, its recent one with the Americans or the one with the French. Or they are due to the depraved culture and other contaminants inherited in the South, or to the world's general perfidy. Everyone, everything is to blame, except themselves. The men of the Politburo are lavish in their public criticism of the system, the Party, above all Party cadres, but always demand that they themselves be regarded as omnipotent.

A second significant characteristic of the Vietnamese ruling elite, also epitomized by the Politburo, is durability—these men probably are the longest-lived group of rulers in modern times. The small band forged into North Vietnam's ruling institution in the crucible years of the Viet Minh war are, save for the few claimed by death, the same who rule all of Vietnam today. The power seizers of 1945 are the power holders in 1984. No society in the modern world has been ruled for so long by so few.

Leadership is durable because it is stable, and it is stable chiefly because it established early and maintained consistently the principle of collective decision making. There has been no towering single power wielder, on the scale of Mao Zedong or Kim Il Sung. Ho Chi Minh never sought such a role, preferring to play the political broker or Politburo referee. He manipulated brutally, but always with deference to the principle of collective rule. The tradition continues unbroken. Le Duan, the leading figure in the Politburo today, is at best only primus inter pares.

Despite expectations by outsiders who look to the high mortality rate of collective leadership schemes elsewhere, the system in Vietnam has proved viable. It does, however, have its drawbacks. One is the uncertainty syndrome, the often delayed and frequently reversed policy decision. The subordination of ego that is demanded leads to tension and generates a need for self-assertion that perpetually threatens to confront the idea of consensus. The outlet for this is factionalism, the one form of political competition permitted under the politics of collective rule. This is divisive, but it has prevented worse developments, such as struggles for power with the outcome to be found in the Nhan Dan obituary column.

It is clear from their writings that for Politburo members, the duty of leadership is not to meet the demands of society or even its needs, but to impose social goals and induce public support through persuasion and coercion. There is no sense here of the "public servant." Leadership in peacetime society is seen much as leadership on the battlefield in war—the sustained application of force, using political power as an abrasive to wear down the opposition.

Successful political leadership is seen as manipulation of society through various motivational devices. Premier Pham Van Dong is reportedly fond of quoting a definition attributed to Stalin: political leadership is the ability to convince the masses

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of the correctness of the Party line. This persuasion, the Politburo believes, is best facilitated by creating a permanent atmosphere of crisis—labeled “national salvation”—in which induced mass anxiety justifies the right of the Politburo few to govern the subject many.

The present Politburo remains unified and politically coherent basically because of the length of association of its members. These men have known and worked with each other for nearly forty years. Originally they came out of similar molds, and for decades they have shared the same political traumas, defeats, and victories. Now they are fused by a common sense of historical destiny. The men of the Politburo, noted the last noncommunist mayor of Hanoi, are like a collection of Rembrandt portraits—all different, yet all the same.⁹

Cynical Vietnamese emigres may insist the Politburo is only a continuation of a millennium of oriental despotism, but its members regard it as a governing institution able to guide Vietnam better than anything previously known there. In speeches and public pronouncements Politburo members express themselves in moralistic language. Their methods of political operation may be crude, vulgar, undifferentiated, but their rhetoric is devoted to righteousness. One can search in vain for indications of self-doubt, of lack of faith; one hears no uncertain trumpets here. Because their doctrine is rigid, their positions tend to be immutable. Means may change but ends are never questioned. Their wisdom and vision are regarded as exemplary, and they can rationalize all shortcomings in rhetoric packed with expressions of grievance and victimization. When they act, it is to claim a legitimate right; when an enemy acts, it is perfidy; even an ally’s shortcomings can be betrayal. The men of the Politburo seem haunted by their heritage, unable to think beyond the goal of self-preservation, even when survival is no longer at question. They cannot transcend their past and so are bugs in amber.

Bung-Di

Vietnamese politics suffers from a centuries-old endemic disease, the Sinic malady of factionalism.⁰ It manifests itself in the great game of bung-di or faction bashing. Factionalism is a product of Vietnamese heritage, with roots as deep as clandestinism in traditional politics, heavily influenced by Confucianism and Buddhism as well as by geographic regionalism and xenophobia.¹¹

A political faction in Vietnam is less than a political party but more than a political clique. It is best thought of as a political combination. Factions form around individuals but traffic in issues, and thus are not simply entourages. They are enduring but not permanent, can break up and reform to meet changing needs. Factions always

⁹ Do Quang Giai, former mayor of Hanoi, to the author.
¹⁰ Perhaps factionalism is not a precisely correct term as used here, if unscrupulousness is inferred; however, it seems the best word available. Actually factio, the original root word for faction in Latin, is appropriate for describing Hanoi politics—it means a contractor for the chariot races in the Roman circus.
¹¹ The author has underway a research project to collect all public statements made by all Politburo members since 1975 and analyze them in terms of factionalism and doctrinal issues.
are contentious to some extent, but they often represent genuine attempts to do something worthwhile. And, as with politics elsewhere, some factional in-fighting goes on for the sheer exhilaration of it.

Officially, factionalism is proscribed in Vietnam, as is any any form of political competition, hence there is no acknowledged mechanism for dealing with it. In general, the system seeks to minimize its impact while ostensibly ignoring it. Great premium is placed on surface harmony and symbolic acts that indicate absence of political competition. Above all, leaders seek to prevent factionalism from developing into a more virulent form of activity.

The arena for bung-di is the overorganized, densely complex matrix of Party-state administrative institutions. It consists of vertical constituencies, based on mutual interests, located in the Party and state organs. At the top these become factions. The leadership seeks to check political in-fighting here by various motivational and mobilizational mechanisms, chiefly communicational devices such as the emulation movement and the self-criticism session, as well as by harnessing the force of group dynamics within the organization itself. Persuasive efforts are backed by state instruments of coercion and periodic Party weed-outs or semipurges. The intent is to contain factionalism without allowing the effect of containment to be divisive. In this, and in all forms of punitive or disciplinary action in the upper levels of the Party, the leadership displays a strong sense of obligation to the long-term faithful, a reluctance to diminish their accomplishments and, in contrast to its behavior toward outsiders, a gentleness in easing them out of authority. The message to underlings is clear: faithfulness pays off.

In general, these techniques have proved effective over the years. With them the leadership has wrought a totality of social control seldom equaled anywhere. This may be comfortable for the Politburo, but it is detrimental to the society, because it eliminates internal pressure and lessens demands on the leadership. The discontent implicit in the presence of factionalism is skillfully absorbed, shunted off, or dissipated—thus the system is denied the benefit of alternatives that is part of a healthy political competition.\(^{12}\)

The rules of bung-di, as in the case of factional in-fighting in other socialist countries, require that political competition be conducted in the name of doctrine, usually applied to specific problems or issues. Marxists regard as unseemly any open political struggle between individuals or groups of individuals; rather, it must be conducted on a more lofty plain of substantive issue. It will be recalled that the political destruction of Nikita Khrushchev was the result of a bitter power struggle, but his actual demise came in a Central Committee vote over his corn production policy in Siberia.

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\(^{12}\) This is not to say that criticism is absent or prohibited in Vietnam. The Party newspapers are full of it; letters to the editor seem to be a major avocation for the average citizen. Khiem Thao (self-criticism) is a flourishing institution. Criticism is not only tolerated, it is encouraged—providing it deals only with means, not ends. Criticism of basic state or Party objectives or questioning the fundamental assumptions on which the society is built are legally treated as crimes punishable by death.
The stock-in-trade of Vietnamese political in-fighting, that is, the substantive stuff of factionalism, need not overly concern us here, because our interest is in institutions, not issues. Some note, however, should be taken of the major issues that have fueled the fires of factionalism over the years.

The great doctrinal issue that raged at the Politburo level throughout the Vietnam war was how to achieve victory, defined as unification of North and South Vietnam under Hanoi’s banner. This debate was technical, dealing with the proper application of dau tranh (struggle) strategy and involving the balance between use of armed dau tranh tactics and political dau tranh tactics. A long-running dispute that continues today is the so-called quality of socialist life argument, namely, how best to solve various social problems, such as youthful alienation, and generally raise the quality of life in Vietnam. Another concerns criteria for determining allocation of resources, particularly manpower, within the society, chiefly for purposes of economic development and national defense.

The greatest and most enduring of doctrinal disputes is the “Red v. Expert” or “Hong v. Chuyen” debate that sprawls across philosophy, technology, psychology, and sociology. It began in the People’s Army of Vietnam (PAVN)—asking which was more important in warfare, man or weapons, whether in producing the fighting man what counted most was ideological motivation or military technology—but has largely been resolved there in favor of the latter, that is, the expert. The “Red v. Expert” dispute has spilled over into civilian society into the factional struggle between the Pragmatists and the Ideologues (or Dogmatists, as some authors prefer to call them) under the rubric of material versus “spiritual” incentives as motivational forces within a society.

It seems certain that much of the future factional in-fighting in Vietnam will revolve around this pivotal issue of ideology and pragmatism. It is central to all, because it concerns the question of how far Marxism can be bent without breaking. And it touches on virtually all aspects and sectors of society, not the least of which is the centrality of the Party, which means the careers of every Party cadre.

It probably is a safe conclusion that the “Red v. Expert” debate in the armed forces has now been resolved in favor of the latter, although what officially exists is a compromise arrangement. A residue remains, the thinking of the older political generals pitted against that of the younger field-grade officer technocrats—what one writer has termed the old guard infrastructure of ideological experience against the younger infrastructure of expertise. The point here is that within the military there are now two ideological constructs coexisting where there was only one. It may be that the ideologue versus pragmatist debate will eventually evolve into a kind of bureaucratic pluralism, then into socialist-style political competition among major Vietnamese institutions.

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14 Truong, “Political Development in the Socialist Republic of Vietnam.”
The contention by some observers in the 1950s and 1960s that Hanoi politics were dominated by the struggle between pro-Beijing and pro-Moscow factions has not stood well the test of time. There may have been some validity to the idea in terms of positions by individual Politburo members on specific issues dividing the USSR and China (such as whether to sign the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty), but it is now clear that the behavior of individual Politburo members throughout the years has been neither pro-Moscow nor pro-Beijing but pro-Hanoi. Today’s present intimacy with the USSR is regarded as a matter of necessity, not sentiment.

The two overriding policy issues facing the Politburo today—and they are intricately linked—are the country’s economic malaise and the military stalemate in Kampuchea. The economic issue in turn is two forms, the short-term problem of how to end economic stagnation and get the engines of production going again, and the long-term question of the what and how of economic development or nation building. The Kampuchea issue is how to extricate the Vietnamese armed forces from the morass while leaving in place a Khmer political arrangement acceptable to Hanoi. Both of these issues—the economy and Kampuchea—appear to transcend factionalism, since they apparently are not regarded as having stemmed from ideological cause. Rather, they are seen as problems, and the argument over how best to solve them cuts across factional lines. There are ideological disputes alive in Hanoi, but for the moment these are relatively minor or transitory.15

Tracking the activities and measuring the fortunes of the contending camps of factionalism in Vietnam consists in determining Party and state policies on various matters and then matching them with policy decisions. Doctrinal issues form one dimension of a faction. Personality, the politics of entourage and protégé, is another. Common experiences and familial ties are sometimes involved. Analysis based on this sort of external monitoring can easily devolve to the level of “reading the entrails.” Hanoi-watching is a favorite parlor game of emigre Vietnamese who treat Hanoi politics as almost pure factionalism, usually in terms of clan relationships—political analysis only slightly above the level of a gossip column. To wit: Le Duan forced the promotion of his son Le Han to the rank of general over the objection of PAVN professionals and thus has lost support among the military; Truong Chinh has never been able to overcome the stigma of being “pro-Chinese” because his name means long march in Vietnamese; Le Duc Tho is distrusted and losing influence because he is “too bourgeois” and is “pro-American”; General Giap was eased out to pasture because he warned against stalemate in the Kampuchean invasion and was proven right; Pham Hung has been hurt politically because of the widespread corruption by his “southern Mafia” and so on. None of this sort of information can be verified, and even if it could, its utility is questionable.

Charting political in-fighting in Hanoi is never neat, and never concluded. Factions once formed are usually durable, but they are not permanent. Within major factions are what might be called subfactions. Temporary factional alliances are

15 As far as the author can determine, the great doctrinal bête noire of the USSR, “anti-Partyism,” never infected Vietnam; nor, except in an indirect manner, did the “capital roadism” of China.
common, as are pseudofactions (two factions that appear to be political enemies but are not). It is a murky, shifting, intrigue-filled political world, with universal mistrust and much dissembling, often for its own sake. No outsider can hope to map such a labyrinth; he does best to confine himself to the study of the speeches and activities of the important factions—primarily the “five of the inner circle”—ever attempting to read between the lines. The positions taken by the factions on major issues can be easily fixed—indeed, Politburo members explain themselves endlessly to the largely nonlistening world—but we can only infer changes, if any, in the relative political strength among the factions.

Caution then remains the watchword in charting the course of political infighting and decision making in Hanoi. In fact, we have not yet reached the point at which outsiders can do serious, meaningful political analysis. Our data base is still inadequate; we lack even the necessary basic biographical information. Scholars, as well as Vietnam’s neighbors in the region, must first do a great deal of elementary research before they can embark on what is needed: advanced, sophisticated political analysis.

Once and Future Kings

Hanoi’s political behavior has always been marked by continuity and steadfastness of purpose, more so perhaps than any other political system in modern times. The hallmark of its political institutions has been their unchanging and unchanged nature. This is a tribute to the present leaders, who, as long as they remain, can be counted on to behave in ways consistent with past behavior, to react as they have always reacted, and to pursue a straight-line projection of past courses of action without radical innovation or abrupt alteration of policy. This continuity also extends to the existing mechanism of collective decision making. An altered Politburo, however, would be a different matter. Should several of the five key members die or become incapacitated, new factors, a new dynamic, would enter.

The question is then, what of future leadership? And what is to be the manner of political succession?16 This is a pressing matter because the average age of the Politburo members is sixty-seven, the average age of the “circle of five” is seventy-five, and the estimated average age of the Central Committee members is sixty-two. As any insurance company’s actuarial table indicates, soon there will be a generational transfer of power in Hanoi.

Whereas other Southeast Asian nations are beset by weak political institutions—the heritage of personalized politics—Vietnam, if anything, is overinstitutionalized. Orderly transfer of power, other things being equal, is a function of consensus. Transfer of power in the rest of Southeast Asia tends to be capricious because consensus is lacking. Vietnam’s collective leadership, although given to factional in-fighting, has been marked by great consensus. And there is in place a firm

16 I found useful in writing this section John H. Badgley’s “Political Succession as a Development Problem in Southeast Asia,” SEADAG Discussion Paper, Boston, March 1969.
but untested transfer mechanism. Whether the existing consensus can be passed on to the next generation of leaders, whether the transfer mechanism itself will actually work, remain great unknowns. Hanoi watchers speculate extensively but it is just that—speculation. We do not know who these future rulers will be. We may know the general political views of their generation, but not their assessment of the present decision-making process nor their evaluation of the organization of the government and Party.

Our best approach to this problem is to study the general characteristics, attitudes, and mindsets of the age group that will eventually assume the leadership role, and then try to infer from this what type of leaders they will be. In the summer of 1969, the author spent several months interviewing North Vietnamese defectors and prisoners in their mid-thirties about their political views. It was an effort to determine the basic political values of the next generation of North Vietnamese leaders. Based on this and other findings, some conclusions can be set down, not about specific future leaders but about the political values of their generation.17

The first and most self-evident conclusion is that the great social trauma of the next generation of Vietnamese leaders, which will condition their thinking and policy making, was the Vietnam War. Every generation everywhere has its own peculiar social experience or trauma that shapes it politically: for Americans of the Lyndon Johnson generation it was the Great Depression; of the John Kennedy generation, World War II; and of this generation, the American cultural revolution of the 1960s that included the Vietnam War. For China’s rulers, it was the Long March; for the Soviets, World War II. For the future rulers of Vietnam, the great social trauma was achieving unification of their country at enormous cost. That heritage, success through sacrifice, will condition their thinking. In their case, the effect will be doubled, relatively speaking, because the Vietnamese have a profound consciousness of the past and, unlike the Americans, are hag-ridden by history.

A singular characteristic uncovered in the study, whose significance is still not clear, was a naive idealism, an arrested political development. Virtually all those interviewed expressed belief in utopianism, the perfectibility of society, the notion that all social problems have solutions. Their attitude was particularly stark when set alongside the attitudes of their cynical equivalents in South Vietnam. The Northerners were simply credulous. The reason is clear: their education in the North had been carefully structured, sheltering them from disruptive ideas, even from most Marxist thought. They knew little of the world and had not been taught to examine ideas critically. They had been told that it was possible to build a problem-free society and they believed it. Clearly they were unprepared to lead in this imperfect world.

More seriously, then and now, the potential leaders of Vietnam are part of a system that precludes their development as future leaders, even if they are middle-level cadres. The centralized governing arrangement does not permit the type of experience in decision making at lower levels by younger members that can hone them for major leadership posts.

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17 Unfortunately the research materials of this unpublished study were destroyed in a fire in the JUSPAO office in Saigon in 1972. Only the author's notes exist.
The question, then, is what kind of leader would an inexperienced idealist, one with a "convent mentality" make? What will be the result when, once in power, he is battered by disillusionment? The Pol Pot social experiment in Kampuchea was an ominous demonstration of one result. Possessed by an abstract dream of social perfectibility, Pol Pot was prepared to eliminate all not deemed fit for utopia.

Probably by the time the future leaders take over in Hanoi they will have been further educated by experience—the years since the war certainly have been instructive for them. Even so, the lingering effects of arrested political development will mark to some degree the next generation of Vietnamese rulers.

The next generation of leaders will be less cosmopolitan and less sophisticated than the present Politburo. They will probably be less educated, and few will speak a foreign language fluently. This will tend to make them less internationally minded, more nationalistic, and even chauvinistic—attitudes reinforced by ingrained native xenophobia. This also will mean even less commitment than in the past to the Marxist notion of worldwide proletarian solidarity. Foreign diplomats stationed in Hanoi in the 1980s report encountering frequent examples of such isolationism among youths. They say the young tend to equate foreign presence—such as USSR technicians—with intrusion into Vietnamese affairs and attempts to dominate Vietnam, even when there is no evidence that this is the case. Commonly, young people express the need for Vietnamese "independence" from outsiders, asserting that Vietnam should go it alone in economic development (which is not the official policy), even if this means less is accomplished or progress is slower. If this is true, the myth of proletarian brotherhood—workers of the world uniting—will have little meaning for the next generation of leaders, and the present close relationship with the USSR may be even less enduring than it now appears.

Vietnamese in their mid-thirties in 1969 demonstrated great loyalty to their social system and faith in their leaders. Virtually without exception they embraced the golden cause of unification, differing only on whether the price to be paid for this was limited or unlimited. That cause having been achieved, it would be assumed, reinforced loyalty and faith.

The study's conclusion in 1969 was that significant change in Party/state organizational structure, in Hanoi's decision-making "operational code," or even basic policy change was not likely after a full-scale generational transfer of power. That conclusion today is highly doubtful. The Party's system performed well during the war years and so earned full support. Since the war it has not performed well at all—and there has been a consequent erosion of confidence and trust. Loss of the sense of the Party's omnipotence among basic level Party cadres is a particularly serious problem.

The system is beginning to change. It is not billed as such, but is described as a "new stage of the revolution." It is change agreed to grudgingly, also change that is inadvertent. Much of it revolves around the economic sector, the institutional ex-

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18 Those interviewed in the study were typical of their generation in North Vietnam at the time; few had gone beyond the seventh grade and some were illiterate. Virtually none had any technical knowledge, that is, mathematics above arithmetic, or had studied physics or chemistry. In the past decade Hanoi has launched ambitious science and technology adult education and "retraining" courses for cadres and other personnel. Undoubtedly the educational level today is several grades higher than in 1969.
perimentation ordered by Resolution Six, designed to increase rice production and facilitate domestic trade. Resolution Six has significantly helped to "solve the grain problem," which may or may not be a permanent change depending on whether the new mechanisms are retained, a sensitive ideological matter. This success has also apparently influenced the thinking of lower-level cadres, especially cadres in the economic arena, although our knowledge of cadre views is limited. The semipermanent Party purge, weeding out inadequate cadres and recruiting new ones chosen more for their technical competence than for their ideological purity, represents another induced change with profound long-range meaning.

Other changes are unintentional, such as the ubiquitous and pervasive "yellow wind" influence, namely, the seduction of the Spartan North by softer Southern values. No longer is the North a convent society. Some change is inadvertent, such as the "creeping" Soviet influence in which Soviet advisors extract social change as the price for economic assistance.

The views of the fifteen men of the Politburo toward these changes, while not identical—certainly there is a difference of opinion on the matter of economic incentive—are generally in close agreement. They seem to treat the innovations as technical rather than ideological—a tinkering with the economic machinery to make it run better—and temporary. And they regard the changes as largely superficial "quick fixes" rather than fundamental alterations of the basic system—to be tolerated (especially those demanded by Soviet advisors) but not necessarily endorsed. At the most they would acknowledge them as necessary Marxist experimentalism, akin to the "market socialism" innovations in Eastern Europe and now China.

Within these changes are two patterns or trends, both of them still incipient but also both latently powerful enough to alter Vietnam's future. The first of these is an amorphous restiveness on the part of young cadres, coupled with a disillusionment with the Party as problem-solving and managerial institution and with older upper-level Party officials, who are seen putting their own interests and careers ahead of Party and country. The 1969 study did not seem to find any identifiable generational conflict. It appears to have begun to develop after the war. Diplomats in Hanoi in recent years tell of a growing gulf between younger and older Party cadres, often described as a demand by young cadres to liberate the Party from "old guardism." The youth versus age issue will probably loom larger in the future in Hanoi than it has in the past, but there is no evidence of mass alienation among youth in Vietnam. The motivational system remains too strong. This attitude toward predecessors, however, could portend the eventual emergence of a revisionist generation.

A second trend is the rise of what might be called praetorianism in Vietnam. It is marked by the permeation of the society with martial qualities, characteristics, and ways of doing things. This is not militarism in the usual sense of the word; perhaps a better term would be the veteranization of Vietnam. It is a function of simple

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demographics. The society is steadily being populated with former servicemen as PAVN itself continues to grow. It is a safe estimate that one out of every two males encountered in Hanoi today is a veteran. A society composed chiefly of individuals with long military experience cannot help but assume martial characteristics, though not necessarily bellicose or militaristic ones. The fact of this phenomenon is clear; its import is not.  

Related to this phenomenon is the more visible role being played by PAVN and its estimated 450 generals in post-Vietnam War affairs. Many senior military figures have demonstrated a growing frustration and an outspoken impatience with the Party’s inability to manage the society. This does not appear to be a challenge, even a reluctant challenge, by the military, but it could become one.

The future of the Vietnamese political system, as systems elsewhere, will reflect a mix of problems and opportunities. As made apparent throughout this essay, a chief problem will be that of leadership. Vietnam simply must elevate a group of rulers whose values and administrative capacities speak to its needs. It must be a group able to deal with existing economic discontinuities—a weak infrastructure, technological incompetence, war damage, population shifts, two economic systems jammed imperfectly together—as well as the less intractable but still knotty problem of economic stagnation. Then it must go on to address the truly enormous challenge of national economic development.

The South represents a present and future problem. The continuing social pathology there must sooner or later be rectified. Hanoi faces the deep challenge of establishing its legitimacy in the South—a complex problem compounded by the Confucian tradition, which demands that rulers be legitimate and follow correct policies and procedures; northern cadres are still not regarded as legitimate authority in the South.

Finally there is the whole range of external problems. This includes defining a relationship with the rest of Indochina (that is, Laos and Kampuchea) acceptable to all, in and out of Indochina, which turns on a settlement of the Kampuchean war. It also requires accommodation with China so that at least tolerable relations are reestablished. It means a less intimate relationship with the USSR. And it requires a long-range modus vivendi with its Southeast Asian neighbors.

In tackling these problems future leaders will be constrained by conditions and forces they inherit, but they will also have options, and what might be called a philosophical choice. They can call on tradition—the spirit that won the war—approaching the future, or they can diverge from tradition, turn outward and break

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20 The “veteranization” of Vietnam is described in the author’s forthcoming PAVN: The People’s Army of Vietnam.

21 This North-South struggle is not as one-sided as it might appear because the South has psychological resources working in its favor. The North is finding that there can be debilitation in absorption. Assimilation of the South ironically could prove to be the self-inflicted act which destroys the Vietnamese Communist Party’s greatest strength, its monolithism. Certainly there are divisive forces at work within the system to an extent never experienced previously.

22 Truong, “Political Development in the Socialist Republic of Vietnam,” has an excellent section on the subject of legitimacy in the South in terms of traditional ethical value systems.
new ground. The first would be the advice of the present Politburo, the second the choice of at least some of the young. The choice is for or against the *status quo*. Generally, Party cadres, even the young, will tend to oppose divergence from tradition.

In a sense the choice is between the older smaller world and a more dimensional world created by technology, in which a minority, chiefly in the military, facing new challenges that can be met only by technological means, would favor turning outward in search of new answers.

Ironically, Hanoi is hampered by the fact that it won the war. Societies suffering devastating defeat—Japan and Nazi Germany being recent examples—have less trouble breaking away from the centripetal force of tradition. This will be more difficult for Hanoi. Still, it has been done by others, by China since the passing of Mao, and, still experimentally, in Poland.

How far Vietnam’s future leaders are willing to diverge from past policy will largely determine their approach to economic development. Many models are available and will not simply be a choice for or against a capitalist market economy. Nor will it come down to Soviet, Chinese, or Eastern European models. Already Vietnam has learned that no social and economic model works well for it; when it tried to combine some of each, the result was “developmental anarchy.” The search continues. Undoubtedly the final mix will most resemble the Soviet model but still diverge in important ways. It will also be conditioned by the economic relationship Vietnam eventually establishes with the nonsocialist world.

One may hope that the future leadership will abandon or at least modify the current Politburo’s assumption that spirit is what really counts and give material needs the attention they deserve, will address economic problems in a more pragmatic or technical manner rather than as moral issues and exercises in patriotism. Future leaders must also abandon the monopolization of decision making at the center now in effect, extreme even for a socialist society, and allocate authority to the regional and provincial levels where latitude can be provided for local situations and a premium placed on initiative rather than blind obedience. Finally, they must eliminate the Politburo’s protracted conflict mentality that once served so well but is now bringing disaster.

We can probably expect that the new leadership—once fully installed and done with its initial shakedown (and given continued absence of challenge)—will be less rigid in viewpoint, less isolated from the general population, and somewhat more flexible in fixing policies. We can also expect several years of continuing competition between the ideologues and the pragmatists that eventually will evolve into a workable compromise that breaks the near monopoly of ideology. Such a compromise will lead to a system that, while still deficient, will better meet societal needs than the present one.
3. Legitimacy and Institutionalization in Asian Socialist Societies

Robert A. Scalapino

This essay deals primarily with three Asian states that have adopted a system of state socialism, with the political elite proclaiming their ultimate goal that of communism: the People's Republic of China, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, and the Democratic Republic of Vietnam.

At the outset, it is necessary to set forth a succinct definition of political institutionalization that can serve as a reference for the subsequent analysis. Political institutionalization is the process whereby a political structure is made operational in accordance with stipulated rules and procedures, enabling more regularized, hence predictable, patterns of political behavior, minimal trauma in power transfer, and a foundation for the effective development of policies as well as the application of justice. Ideally, political institutionalization enables a movement away from the erratic practices and arbitrary decisions stemming from a high dependence upon personalized rule. In its success, it also reduces the likelihood of abrupt, drastic change in basic structure, including revolution, since change is made possible in a legal, evolutionary manner by established procedures.

In the immediate aftermath of a major political upheaval such as revolution, when bitterness and deep cleavages still abound, the new rulers are apt to rely heavily upon coercion to maintain and extend their authority. Yet in the longer run, primary reliance upon coercion is rarely feasible, especially if the goals are those of rapid economic development and maximum political mobilization. Over time, coercion—while useful in establishing the perimeters of permissible behavior for the subjects—is an inefficient and costly method of governance, especially in an era when homage is universally paid to “democracy.” Stable political institutions are required, but if such institutions are to be effective, they must rest upon a foundation of citizen acceptance. In sum, legitimacy must accompany or follow institutionalization, granted a close interrelation between the two. Only under such conditions will the governors have the moral authority (and political capacity) to create a durable body of law and procedure.
To what extent have the Chinese, North Korean, and Vietnamese governments established legitimacy with their own peoples, and what past and current methods have been employed in this quest? In each of these cases legitimacy is first an issue of party—more precisely, of the right of a single party to exercise dictatorial power, since in these societies the state is subordinate to the communist party in theory and generally in practice.

The effort to achieve and maintain legitimacy in these societies has taken two forms. On the one hand, a high premium has been placed upon Marxist-Leninist ideology, an ideology that has encompassed in its unique way the principal code words of twentieth-century politics ("the people," democracy, internationalism) as well as their opposites: class enemies, dictatorship, nationalism. From ideology emanates such moral authority as accrues to party and state. At the same time, a parallel effort has been made to involve the citizen in public politics in some specific ways: mobilization for various campaigns, membership in mass organizations, participation in political study sessions, and voting in elections. The aim is to cause the citizen to perceive that he is a part of the political process.

In advancing their ideological appeal, the Asian Marxist-Leninist states have faced several dilemmas. One paradox has related to the issue of class struggle versus united front. Who are "people," and who are "enemies"? How far can a "proletarian dictatorship" go in encompassing the citizenry at large, and how should those be treated who do not belong to the newly privileged categories? If the postrevolutionary appeal is cast in orthodox Marxist terms, the "proletariat" must be pitted against the "bourgeoisie," and a sizable portion of the populace defined either as "enemies" or "outsiders." In varying degree, such elements become the objects of coercion, hence stand apart from any institutionalization process. But if issues of class are sublimated, a broader base of support may be possible, with legitimacy correspondingly accepted on a more extended front. And by this route, the education and skills of old elites can be used. Such an opportunity is especially important in societies where the peasantry constitute the vast majority of the population, with the urban industrial classes still small and weak, and the tiny but prestigious intellectual community by tradition available for state use.

A second complex problem has been the competitive claims of nationalism and internationalism for priority. Asian communist movements came to power in the context of wars against external forces and were therefore connected with the struggle for national independence. The nationalist quotient in the communist appeal was thus extensive from the outset. At the same time, the new political elite long considered themselves to be loyal members of an international movement, bound by its principles and leadership. Indeed, the moral appeal of communism rested ultimately upon its commitment to the brotherhood of man, with a world classless and unified, possessing a single set of political values and institutions. The process of reconciling these two emotional-political forces has constituted a formidable challenge, affecting both the image of communism and the policies initiated under it.

Meanwhile, a second effort continued, that of committing the citizen to public politics while reducing to a minimum his participation in private politics, namely,
organizational activities outside the official boundaries set up by the communist party and state. On this front also, complexities were encountered. The politics of exhortation is normally short lived. Campaigns, study sessions, and similar activities become ritualistic in time, lending themselves to indifference, boredom, and cynicism. Man may be a social animal, but he is a political animal in the activist sense only when motivation is intense, and even then for relatively short periods of time. To seek to change human nature in this respect has never succeeded. Moreover, despite the collectivist traditions of the Sinic societies of East Asia, the role of private government by the family, clan, and village has a lengthy history, not easily undermined. Only in North Korea is there evidence that tradition in these respects has been breached, and even here, the degree and nature of the change remain matters for further research.

THE SOVIET MODEL

To analyze the initial positions and subsequent evolution of Chinese, Korean, and Vietnamese communism with respect to their quest for an ever more inclusive acceptance, it is essential to look first at the development of Soviet doctrine and practice. Not only was the Soviet model the primary source of inspiration for Asian communism; in its stage of development and immediate problems, Bolshevik Russia bore a certain, if only partial, resemblance to the post-1945 Asian socialist societies.

Two documents, dated July 1918 and March 1919, set forth the initial Bolshevik position on fundamental issues, accompanied by a rationale explaining why support for the new order should be given.¹

The class basis of the new Soviet state was made explicit: government was to be “a dictatorship of the urban and rural workers combined with the poorer peasantry,” with the objective that of “complete suppression of the bourgeoisie, the abolition of the exploitation of man by man, and the establishment of socialism, under which neither class divisions nor state coercion arising therefrom will any longer exist.”² In these few passages, both a definition and a defense of the new dictatorship were set forth.

The 1919 party program was also unequivocal: “In contrast to bourgeois democracy, which conceals the class character of the state, the Soviet authority openly acknowledges that every state must inevitably bear a class character until the division of society into classes has been abolished and all government authority disappears.”³

In this period, the classical Marxist concepts of the state as an instrument of coercion and the declining need for the state as a classless, socialist society emerged, were much in evidence. Dictatorship was to be temporary. But under dictatorship, the rights of “the working masses” were to be without limit, whereas all forms of

² 1918 Constitution, Part II, Article 9.
³ 1919 Program, Section on General Politics, Article 2.
suppression of the "bourgeoisie" were justified to defeat any attempt on its part to engage in a counterrevolution. The quest for legitimacy only extended to the enlarged proletariat as defined by the new elite, not to society as a whole.

Yet even in 1919 the Bolsheviks had to acknowledge the need for both military and civil specialists trained under the old regime. The use of such individuals in the military was approved providing political guidance and full control over them was concentrated in the hands of the working class (the political commissar system). With regard to the "specialists in science and technology left to us by capitalism," the Party proclaimed that although a majority were imbued with bourgeois ideas and habits, the period of sharp struggle due to organized sabotage on their part was over. No concessions should be made to this group of a political nature, but the Party should also oppose the "pseudo-radical, ignorant and conceited opinion that the working class could overcome capitalism without the aid of bourgeois specialists," and higher remuneration should be provided them to insure their maximum performance.\(^4\) In essence, while reserving privileged political status to those defined as "proletariat," and confining the role of the old bourgeoisie to nonpolitical functions, their utilization in the economic and technical realms was justified as a necessary act if socialism were to be defended and advanced.

The so-called Stalin Constitution of 1936 continued to define the state as one resulting from the overthrow of "landlords and capitalists" by a victorious proletarian-led revolution, hence a state of workers and peasants. It omitted, however, any attack upon the "bourgeoisie" and indicated that under socialism, the exploitation of man by man had been eliminated, suggesting that class distinctions were no longer meaningful. At the same time, there was no suggestion that the state was withering away, or that the need for a "dictatorship of the proletariat" had passed. The notion of the state and its coercive power being temporary, set forth explicitly in 1918–1919, now went unmentioned.

Soviet participation in World War II heightened the premium upon cutting across class (and ethnic) lines in an appeal to the entire citizenry to defend the motherland. There was even a restoration of tsarist military heroes, and everywhere the symbols of nationalism were in evidence. Thus, the transformations occurring in the Khrushchev era were natural, culminating in the current USSR Constitution and CPSU rules, both adopted in 1977. It is now proclaimed that the Soviet government, by carrying out far-reaching social and economic changes, has permanently ended exploitation, class antagonisms, and strife between nationalities. An alliance of the working class, collective-farm peasantry, and people's intelligentsia has been consummated, together with the friendship of the nations and nationalities comprising the USSR. Thus, the sociopolitical and ideological unity of Soviet society "in which the working class is the leading force" has been achieved. "The aims of the dictatorship of the proletariat having been fulfilled, the Soviet state has become a state of the whole people."\(^5\)

\(^4\) Ibid., Section on Economics, Article 8.
\(^5\) Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, adopted at the Seventh
The basic evolution of doctrine and practice in the course of the maturation of the Soviet system is clear. Relying upon the myth of classlessness, the political elite has sought progressively to incorporate all citizens into the socialist order. Class conflict has been declared ended and, by implication, the need for the dictatorship of the proletariat over the bourgeoisie concluded. The new premium is upon the maximum unity of all Soviet citizens. Yet there is no suggestion that the need for the state has lessened, or that state authority is scheduled for disappearance, despite the achievement of a classless society. The only diminution of the state in practical terms results from the primacy of party over state, but given the dual functions of the topmost political elite, that has limited meaning. Soviet ideology, as apart from traditional Marxism, now seeks legitimacy for both Party and state, and by incorporating virtually all socioeconomic classes into the “working class,” has cast its appeals for acceptance to the entire society.

Connected with the abandonment of class as a central political instrument has been steadily increased reliance upon nationalism as a central element in the political appeal. In retrospect, internationalism was at its zenith in the opening stages of the new Bolshevik experiment, although even in that era the nationalist appeal to resist foreign invaders in Siberia was a potent Red instrument. In idealistic phrases, the Soviet revolution was proclaimed a part of a global proletarian communist revolution already underway, and the new Soviet state was to serve as a beacon for the oppressed of every land. Indeed, “recognizing the solidarity of the workers of all nations,” the state extended the full political rights enjoyed by Russian citizens to foreigners working in Russia, providing they belonged to the working class or peasantry, and authorized local Soviets to grant them Russian citizenship. Such actions reflected the attitudes of the expatriate Russian intellectuals who played a major role in the initial stages of the revolution, individuals cosmopolitan in experience and outlook.

Implicit also in the initial documents were the activist international policies subsequently conducted by both the Party and the state. All future wars, proclaimed the Party in 1919, would partake of civil as well as international conflict, with the proletariat pitted against the bourgeoisie. New forms of “international capitalist solidarity” such as the League of Nations were dedicated to the suppression of the proletarian revolution, it was alleged, and must be opposed. Hence the fullest solidarity of the global working class was essential, not merely to fight the bourgeoisie, but also to combat false socialists such as the social democrats. The newly established Comintern was dedicated to this purpose.

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6 The Constitution does state: “The supreme goal of the Soviet state is the building of a classless communist society in which there will be public, communist self-government” (p. 14), but this is pale in comparison with the pledge set forth in 1918 promising an end to “state coercion.”

7 See the 1918 Constitution, Part II, Article 20.
Progressively, however, internationalist themes in basic Soviet documents became more muted without wholly disappearing. The trend began when it came to be realized that socialism would have to be built in a single state, thus making the defense of that state coterminous with the defense of socialism. Soon, moreover, the cosmopolitan intellectual revolutionaries, decimated by Stalin’s purges in the 1930s, were succeeded by nativist, xenophobic leaders in whom the deepest instincts of the Russian masses were more accurately reflected. In addition, the wartime experience beginning in 1941 taught all Russian leaders that only patriotism could sustain unbearable sacrifice, and strong nationalist commitments were also required to reknit a badly damaged society in the postwar era. The gradual but sustained building of the Soviet Union into a global power, roughly equivalent in military strength to the United States, reinforced the nationalist tide, causing Russian leaders to elevate “national interest” still further. According to this thinking, only the weak and the noninvolved can afford to be idealistic in practice. The old theme of being encircled by capitalism, and particularly by U.S. global strategic power, was reiterated before the Soviet people to induce acceptance of the new sacrifices demanded, with the emphasis once more on protection of the motherland.

The triumph of nationalism is revealed at least indirectly in current Party and state documents. In the Party rules of 1977, for example, references to the CPSU as “an integral part of the international communist and working-class movement” come at the end of the preamble and appear little more than ritualistic homage to a required but outmoded principle. The Constitution’s reference to the USSR as “part of the world system of socialism, and conscious of its internationalist responsibility” is equally cautious and perfunctory. It is ironical that as the military power of the USSR has increased, enabling it to influence—and in some instances, dominate—international events, the appeals to the Soviet people have been cast ever more strongly in domestic and nationalist terms.

As key features of Soviet ideology were evolving in accordance with the dictates of regime survival, then stability, a parallel effort to enlist citizen participation in the Soviet political process, gradually unfolded. The primary rules were established by the Center. Lenin led Party and state to declare war on “oppositionists” both outside the Party (the Mensheviks and other non-Bolshevik elements disappeared) and within the Party (the Democratic Centralist Opposition and Workers’ Opposition were soon frozen out). By the time of Lenin’s death, the CPSU had a complete monopoly of power, with no other party permitted legal expression. Moreover, Lenin’s Party opponents had been silenced and, in most cases, cast outside any legal political process. A similar development had occurred within all mass organizations. A centralized, “nonfractional” dictatorship of the communist party, headed by a single leader, had become the institutional norm.


9 1977 Amended Rules, Preamble, p. 7.
At the same time, every effort was made to raise the political consciousness of each Soviet citizen and to engage that citizen in the authorized political process as intensively as possible. Socialist education began in the nursery school and was continued throughout the educational experience. When formal education had been completed, the individual attended meetings centering upon his workshop, collective farm, or office, and participated in those grassroots elections that furnished the base of the political pyramid.

Between the "new Soviet man" and his supreme leadership lay the all-important intermediate political elite, the Party members. Beginning as a tiny segment, the CPSU grew rapidly in its first fifteen years of power. By 1926, Party membership had passed 1 million, and by 1933 exceeded 3.5 million. The purge era saw a sharp reduction, but during the war Party membership again expanded as the leadership used every means at their command to induce loyalty. At the time of Stalin's death, there were more than 6 million Party members and that figure reached 16 million in 1976. Although still only 9 percent of the adult population and weighted heavily against such groups as the farmers, the Party now encompasses the great majority of those who might be expected to be politically articulate: the more highly educated, the professional military, the managerial and bureaucratic, and the skilled labor categories. By making certain that such classes are afforded greater economic and political privileges, the system acquires support from all custodians or gatekeepers of the Soviet common man.

Through a process of trial and error, and a series of upheavals that exacted a heavy price, the Soviet system has come to be accepted by the overwhelming majority of the citizenry. Legitimacy is not presently an issue; in strictly political terms, antiregime behavior is minimal. Yet the forces that underwrite Party and state legitimacy, having changed, may become more fragile. Ideology in the form of Marxism-Leninism "adapted to the nature of Soviet society" remains the formal basis for the moral authority of the Party and state, but, as we have noted, the content of the specific political appeals has been significantly altered. Increasingly, moreover, ideology has become dogma, used only in ceremonial fashion.

The primary enemies of the system today are not subversives and rebels, but a widespread cynicism and boredom with politics. The nexus of the sociopolitical system has increasingly rested on traditional patron-client relations, with class as well as ethnic categories of primary importance.

Regime acceptance is now more dependent on the individual's sense of material improvements, hence the social services and economic policies of government. In broader terms, the modern Soviet citizen is concerned with issues of peace and war, and other matters that pertain to his sense of security and national pride. In these, as in other respects, the USSR today combines the attributes of the classic nation-state with some of the special characteristics of the late-developing society.

10 1977 Constitution, Preamble, p. 15.
Against this background, the evolution of the Asian socialist states in their quest for legitimacy can be explored, commencing with China. The communist phase of the Chinese revolution cannot be separated from the politics of the pre-1949 era. Chinese communist leaders found it essential from the outset to continue the appeals for national unity that had characterized their quest for support during the struggle against Japan. The united front, epitomized by such institutions as the earlier local people’s congresses and the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) remained at the forefront of party strategy. Indeed, various noncommunist political parties that could be coopted were commanded to stay in existence so that nonproletarian classes could have representation.

Thus an effort was made initially to confine the class struggle essentially to two groups: the rural gentry whom the Chinese communist movement had long targeted, and those denominated “bureaucratic capitalists,” namely, individuals closely connected with the Guomindang. The elimination of “landlords” was ruthless, with hundreds of thousands (according to some accounts, millions) slain, and most others uprooted. The destruction of the landlord-gentry class together with the successive stages of land reform unquestionably constitute the most profound changes made by the new government in China’s socioeconomic structure. Since the Guomindang elite for the most part had fled China by 1950, the purge of Guomindang remnants, including those from the commercial-business community, was relatively easy. Yet the very presence of the Nationalists on Taiwan made it desirable for the People’s Republic of China to seek support from a coalition of diverse classes. And this was the more necessary because the peasant-soldiers, who with a handful of intellectuals dominated the new leadership, were ill-equipped by training or experience to manage an urban economy.13

Thus, in the Common Program of 1949 and the Constitution of 1954, the emphasis was upon Mao’s “New Democracy.” While the People’s Republic was proclaimed to be a dictatorship led by the working class, the central appeal was to build a broad “people’s democratic united front, composed of all democratic classes, democratic parties and groups, and popular organizations, led by the Communist Party of China.” By this united front, “the whole people” were to be mobilized in the common struggle to fulfill the fundamental tasks required by the transition to socialism. The right of capitalists to own means of production and other capital “according to law” was proclaimed, with the assertion that policies toward capitalist industry and commerce were “to use, restrict, and transform them,” gradually replacing capitalist ownership by transferring ownership to “the whole people.”14


14 The PRC Constitution of 1954, Chapter 1, Article 10.
In an atmosphere of harmony, the Eighth Chinese Communist Party (CCP) Congress, held in September 1956, continued to emphasize the same themes. The revised Party Constitution adopted at this congress proclaimed that Party membership was open to any Chinese citizen who worked and did not exploit the labor of others. The Party keynoter, Deng Xiaoping, urged that the Party work fortify the fraternal alliance of workers and peasants, consolidate the united front of all patriotic forces, and strengthen lasting cooperation with other democratic parties.

The momentous events in China for the next twenty years produced recurrent political upheavals and division, leaving scars that will not soon be healed. Commencing with the Anti-Rightist campaign of 1957, the overall political-ideological turn, engineered by Mao, was to the left, and by stages he moved the Party, the state, and the people into increasingly bitter inner confrontations. With the advent of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, Mao—relying upon hastily mobilized students and the military—assaulted his own Party, dragging down more than three-fourths of the key political elite.\(^{15}\)

One of Mao’s central weapons was to proclaim that the Chinese revolution was jeopardized by bourgeois elements who had wormed their way into the highest Party and state positions. The class struggle thus became a central theme, with old cadres headed by Liu Shaoqi and the great majority of intellectual class made prime targets. It is not surprising that the revised Party Constitution of 1969 proclaimed that the CCP was “the political party of the proletariat,” with its immediate task the complete overthrow of the bourgeoisie.\(^{16}\)

Not until the Third Plenum of the Eleventh Party Congress, held in December 1978, was there a fundamental reversal of course. Before this, the new Constitution, promulgated in 1975, continued to feature the centrality of class struggle and the need for a continuing revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat. People’s congresses, it stipulated, were to be made up primarily of worker, peasant, and soldier representatives. The intellectual class went unmentioned, but in other places, the Leftists had referred to intellectuals as “the stinking ninth category.”\(^{17}\) Even at the time of the Eleventh Party Congress in August 1977, when a new Party Constitution was enacted, the retreat from past policies was halting and uneven. While the “Gang of Four” were rigorously attacked, they were accused of “ultra-Right errors,” and Mao himself was wholly exonerated. Indeed, in this document and in the new state Constitution of 1978, the Cultural Revolution continued to be praised as having

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\(^{16}\) See *The Ninth National Congress of the Communist Party of China*, Documents (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1969), p. 111. The lengthy report of Lin Biao delivered on April 1 is most revealing as an exposition of the views of the group in power at that time, pp. 1–108.

\(^{17}\) See the 1975 Constitution, Chapter 1, General Principles.
advanced Chinese socialism to a new stage of development. The Party and state constitutions of this period, however, did seek to rebuild elite unity, asserting that one could unite with "more than 95 percent" of the masses and cadres, including those comrades who had made the mistake of taking the capitalist road but were now willing to correct their error. And for the first time, the Party Constitution of 1977 spoke of the need to expand the revolutionary united front by including the intellectuals along with workers and peasants. Yet the class struggle continued to be given top priority.

Only in 1982 was the verdict on these fundamental matters reversed in both Party and state constitutions, the way having been paved by the ascendance of Deng and his supporters. In his opening remarks to the Twelfth Party Congress in September 1982, Deng made it clear that after the 1956 congress, gross errors had been committed, which had remained uncorrected in some cases until the Third Plenum. Hu Yaobang, who followed Deng on the podium, openly criticized Mao’s mistakes in his later years, and defined the basic errors of the past as Left, not Right. While calling upon the Party to safeguard the scientific truth of Mao Zedong Thought, he and others now made it clear that this Thought was a collective contribution of many revolutionaries. The Cultural Revolution was harshly condemned as having done tremendous damage to the socialist cause, and it was asserted that class struggle was no longer the principal contradiction, although, within limits, it would continue to exist. The principal contradiction, it was proclaimed, was that between the people’s growing material and cultural needs and the backward level of Chinese production.

Since the new premium was upon the Four Modernizations, the intellectual was to be restored to political equality with workers and peasants, and indeed, the policies adopted suggested that as in the Soviet Union, a new intellectual elite would be cultivated. And once again, the emphasis was on the broadest possible patriotic united front encompassing diverse individuals and groups. Chinese politics had gone full circle, despite the fact that the restoration of the intellectuals to “proletarian” status is apparently meeting with stiff resistance from some of those within the Party elite who feel threatened.

In the course of the extraordinary years between 1949 and 1984, the CCP and the state have also traversed a road leading to an ever greater emphasis on nationalist themes. Given its particular heritage—and that of its society—the Communist Party of China had always flown nationalist banners, but it had also accepted its position as a branch of the international communist movement, loyalty supporting, at least formally, all Soviet positions. When victory came in 1949, Chinese communist leaders made it clear that they intended to play an active role in the global socialist movement “under the leadership of the Great Soviet Union.” In 1954, drafters even wrote into the first Constitution a phrase that China had built “an indestructable friendship with the great Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the People’s Democracies.”

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19 A revealing article criticizing the leftist disdain for knowledge and for intellectuals is that of Li Shanzi, in Ban Yue Tan [Semi-Monthly Talks] no. 8 (April 25, 1983), pp. 9–11.
20 Constitution of 1954, Preamble.
reiterated in the 1956 Party Constitution with the statement that the Party sought "to develop and strengthen China's friendship with all other countries in the camp of peace, democracy, and socialism headed by the Soviet Union," to strengthen the internationalist solidarity of the proletariat, and to learn from the experience of the world communist movement.\(^{21}\)

Rapid deterioration of relations with the USSR followed. During the 1960s, Chinese leaders continued to speak of upholding proletarian internationalism, but that burden, according to them, fell largely upon China and Albania, since the USSR and the Eastern European parties had abandoned the socialist camp. Chinese emphasis was now on the so-called Third World and China's opposition to both superpowers. It was prepared to unite with all parties, including "genuine Marxist-Leninist parties and groups," to overthrow both U.S. imperialism and Soviet revisionism. But in fact, at the height of the Cultural Revolution, Party and state pronouncements and actions had reverted back to a classic xenophobic isolation.

As Chinese foreign policy was reconstructed in the 1970s, lip service was paid to China's adherence to proletarian internationalism, but the central appeal to the Chinese people was staunchly nationalist. Thus, the 1982 Constitution preamble began with the words, "China is one of the countries with the longest histories in the world," and continued with a brief recitation of modern Chinese history that excluded all mention of external assistance or any commitment to international socialism.\(^{22}\) In all recent documents, the key themes have been those of independence and self-reliance, modified in practice by the need to turn outward for science and technology if the twin goals of economic development and national security are to be advanced.

Despite recent efforts to widen the base of support and the unprecedented emphasis upon nationalism, both the Communist Party of China and the state that is under its control face a prodigious challenge in regaining the allegiance of a sizable number of the Chinese people. Cynicism and indifference to politics are widespread, especially among the younger, better-educated citizens. The idealism present in the early years of the socialist era and used so effectively by Mao in his mobilization of youth during the mid-1960s has vanished, a victim of savage infighting and massive policy errors that stretched over two decades.

Some worried Party leaders believed that a drive to revitalize ideology was necessary. A new appeal, that of building "a material and spiritual civilization" under socialism, was launched.\(^{23}\) It was followed by a short-lived campaign against "spiritual pollution" in which both liberalism and various forms of corruption and "bourgeois decadence" were targeted.\(^{24}\) But central to the dilemma now facing Party

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\(^{22}\) The Constitution of the People's Republic of China, adopted on December 4, 1982, by the Fifth National People's Congress of the PRC in its Fifth Session (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1982), 3, Preamble, p. 3.

\(^{23}\) On the material and spiritual civilization theme, see Pang Yongjie and Li Shanquan, "Building Socialist Spiritual Civilization," Beijing Review, no. 18 (May 2, 1983), pp. 16–19.

leaders is the fact that in its concrete policies the government is moving away from basic Leninist principles and challenging doctrines long held sacred in Marxist circles. Consequently, an ideological appeal at present cannot rest primarily upon Marxism-Leninism. The reemergence of a Confucian tone in many pronouncements betokens the triumph of nationalism. The new emphasis is upon a Chinese way to socialism, with the assertion that orthodox Marxism does not hold the answers to (all of) China’s problems. By the end of 1984, no self-proclaimed socialist state had gone so far in seeking to substitute pragmatism for traditional Marxist-Leninist themes. Can this trend hold, or will a counterattack from those threatened by the new revolution be launched? In any event, there can be no more intriguing question than to ask what the future holds for ideology in China.

Under these conditions, there are only two lines of effective appeal to the Chinese citizen in this period of economic and political fluidity: nationalism and material gain. As in the Soviet Union, these two appeals, now reflected in domestic and foreign policies, have taken precedence over all the others. In the broadest sense, therefore, China is moving in a direction similar to that of the USSR in seeking to lay claim to the allegiance of its people and reestablish Party-state legitimacy: abandoning the class struggle in favor of a united front of the whole people and injecting nationalism into all important pronouncements and policies. But it has gone much further than the USSR in challenging the old ideological base upon which it once depended.

THE APPEAL OF THE KOREAN WORKERS’ PARTY

Are the same trends found in North Korea and Vietnam? Although their environmental circumstances have been different, and hence differences of tactics and timing have existed, broad similarities exist. In the early postwar years, the communist leaders of North Korea and North Vietnam were highly aware that they operated in the context of a divided state, hence the control exercised by the communist party in their sector had to be camouflaged lest this fact weaken the appeal to the noncommunists of the South. Thus, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea Constitution of 1948 did not mention a dictatorship of the proletariat, nor any special role for the Korean Workers’ Party. The Constitution merely stipulated that sovereign ty resided with the people and was exercised through the Supreme People’s Assembly and local bodies. Similarly, it was stated that the means of production in the DPRK could be owned by the state, cooperative organizations, natural persons, or private juridical persons, thereby obscuring the commitment to a state socialist system.25

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When the second DPRK Constitution was adopted in December 1972, the prospects for reunification were more remote and the nature of the North Korean state was well known. Thus, a compromise was effected between a full expression of Marxist-Leninist-Kimist principles and the desire to retain an appeal to the South. It was proclaimed that the DPRK was an independent socialist state “representing the interests of all the Korean people,” and Article 2 stated that the DPRK rested on the political-ideological unity of the entire people based on a worker-peasant alliance led by the working class, on socialist relations of production, and on the foundation of an independent national economy.26

Since the intellectuals remaining in North Korea after the Korean War had been completely tamed politically, and were used effectively on behalf of economic modernization, North Korea presented an entirely different picture from that of late Maoist China. Therefore, there was no difficulty in defining “the working intelligentsia” together with the workers, peasants, and soldiers as those holding sovereignty in the DPRK. Yet Party documents including the revised Party bylaws of November 1970 adhered to orthodoxy, declaring that “a dictatorship of the proletariat is exercised in the DPRK, with class and mass lines being pursued.”27

Nonetheless, the trend has been to downplay the class struggle and emphasize the “unity of the whole people” under a monolithic state, while at the same time promising the South that under federation, separate economic and political systems can be maintained, notwithstanding the fact that Kim II Sung has repeatedly been proclaimed the Great Sun of the 50 million Korean people.

In the first years after its emergence, the DPRK had to balance the nationalist and internationalist components of its ideological appeal with caution. Since it was a product of Soviet power and dependent on that power, extravagant homage was paid to Stalin and the role of the USSR in the international communist movement until the end of the Korean War.28 At the same time, a continued effort was made to stress nationalist themes, particularly with reference to the issues of “American imperialism” and reunification. After 1956, the symbol of the DPRK became the constantly reiterated term chuch’ e (“self-reliance”). Identified as the signal contribution of Kim Il Sung to Marxism-Leninism, chuch’ e typified the triumph of nationalism in Korean communist ideology.29

Events that followed the Korean War—particularly, the widening Sino-Soviet cleavage—made possible in fact the DPRK independence that Kim had already proclaimed in theory. He was now able to maneuver between two communist giants deeply hostile toward each other. Using nationalism as his primary weapon, Kim successively purged the so-called Moscow and Ya’nan factions within the Workers’ Party. Simultaneously, he created in North Korea a fortress constructed in equal measure of ideological and military building stones. Cultivating in its people a mixture

26 1972 Constitution, Article 2.
of pride and fear by the most concentrated propaganda ever focused upon a citizenry, and buttressing this propaganda with significant economic accomplishments, an extraordinary cult of personality, and pervasive isolation, the North Korean leadership demonstrated how close one could come to effectuating a monolithic state.

Yet a quotient of internationalism remained, and not merely in rhetoric. The DPRK has sought to fulfill its "internationalist obligations" by giving assistance within its capacities to diverse revolutionary movements in such countries as Sri Lanka, Libya, Iraq, Zimbabwe, and Grenada. To its own people, however, the primary appeal is nationalist: "sacrifice on behalf of the defense of the socialist Fatherland, the ouster of American imperialism from Korea, and peaceful reunification with the South." Given the paucity of data, it is impossible to measure the effectiveness of these appeals, but the available evidence suggests that a large majority of the North Korean people are fully committed to Kim, the Party, and the state in a manner not dissimilar to the situation in Nazi Germany or Stalinist Russia at the height of Hitler's and Stalin's power. Given a situation where leader and system are closely intertwined, however, it is likely that the end of the Kim II Sung era will test anew the loyalties—and political behavior—of the citizenry, especially if the current commitment to turn out for science and technology holds.

**LEGITIMACY IN THE NEW VIETNAM**

The initial task for the Vietnamese communists in framing an appeal to their people and establishing the legitimacy of their party and state was even more complex. The Democratic Republic of Vietnam was proclaimed on November 8, 1946, at a time when the Chinese Nationalists were in occupation of major sections of North Vietnam, and when a number of noncommunist or anticommunist political groups existed in the country, some of them with actual or potential foreign support.

At an earlier point, communist leaders had decided that it was tactically wise to disband the Indochina Communist Party and to operate wholly under the label of the united front, Viet Minh. Thus while the communists were steadily strengthening their

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30 For the precise words, see the Revised Party Constitution of 1979, Preamble: "The Workers' Party of Korea firmly established the monolithic ideological system in the party members and the workers, reforms and revolutionizes the entire society after the examples set by the working class, strengthens the revolutionary ranks with political thoughts, strengthens the proletarian dictatorship against class enemies, develops the economic and defense establishments with the revolutionary spirit of self-reliance, further strengthens the socialist system established in the northern half of the republic, and fights for the complete victory of socialism.

"The Workers' Party of Korea carries out an independent, peaceful line for the unification of the fatherland, drives out the American imperialists, the enemies of the Korean people, from South Korea, opposes the Japanese militarists, and directly supports the anti-American and anti-puppet-regime struggles of the South Korean people to overthrow the puppet regime of landlords, capitalists, and reactionary bureaucrats."

military and organizational bases in the North, eliminating key opponents and tightening discipline within the underground party, on the surface there was scant evidence that a class struggle and a dictatorship of the proletariat were key objectives. The first constitution played wholly upon broad democratic nationalist themes. It spoke of the new Vietnam as being “permeated by the spirit of unity, symbolized by the struggle of the entire nation, and manifested in an enlarged and enlightened democratic regime.” There was no mention of class divisions, the leadership of a single party, or indeed, of a projected socialist economic system. The Constitution merely asserted: “From now on, our people face the tasks of preserving the integrity of our territory, achieving full independence and building up the country on democratic foundations.” It was stated that “Vietnam now goes forward confidently in consonance with the progressive movements of the world and the peaceful aspirations of mankind,” but that was as close to an international identification as was made.

The second Constitution was adopted by the National Assembly in Hanoi on December 31, 1959, under very changed circumstances. Given events since 1954, the possibility of camouflaging the DRV and its leadership no longer existed. Hence, the preamble, after proclaiming Vietnam a single entity from Lang Son to Ca Mau, spoke openly of the leadership of the Indochinese Communist Party from 1930 onward (now the Vietnam Workers’ Party). And it also defined the DRV as a “people’s democratic state based on the alliance between workers and peasants, and led by the working class.” The “far-sighted leadership” of the Vietnam Workers’ Party was hailed, with the pledge that under the DRV government and President Ho Chi Minh, the entire people, brought together in a national united front, would win success in the struggle to unify the nation.

Five years after victory in the war against the United States and South Vietnam, the third DRV Constitution was promulgated on December 18, 1980. At last, the background of the DRV and the role of the Vietnam Workers’ Party was set forth in the frankest manner: “Credit for the great successive victories of the Vietnamese revolution goes to the Workers’ Party of Vietnam, which has creatively applied Marxism-Leninism; charted a correct line to lead the revolution in our country; upheld the two banners of national independence and socialism; consolidated the worker-peasant alliance led by the working class; closely united all social strata within the national united front . . . combined patriotism with proletarian internationalism; and combined the strength of our people with the world revolutionary movement.”

Throughout the years after 1945, it was natural that nationalist themes would dominate the pronouncements of the Vietnamese Communist Party and state. Even in 1982, the DRV was engaged in conflict and the third Constitution spoke of the need to

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33 Constitution of the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam, Adopted by the National Assembly of the DRV, 11th session, held on December 31, 1959, in Hanoi (Hanoi: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1960), Preamble.
34 1980 Constitution, Preamble.
safeguard independence, sovereignty, unity, and territorial integrity against "the Chinese hegemonist aggressors and their henchmen in Kampuchea." Yet this and preceding wars had created a continued need for external assistance, and Vietnam had bound itself tightly to the USSR. Thus, a strong emphasis is given "the militant solidarity" between the DRV and the USSR. The third Constitution praises the Soviet Union as a great progressive force in the world, and the "cornerstone" of Vietnamese foreign policy—an homage not currently rendered by any other Asian socialist state except the People's Republic of Mongolia, another state wholly dependent upon the USSR for security.

Continuous war has adversely affected the Vietnamese economy, notwithstanding massive external assistance. Understandably, therefore, the Fifth Vietnamese Workers' Party Congress, held in the spring of 1982, stressed the need for major economic renovation. A wide range of individuals was subjected to criticism for the miserable economic conditions, with only the Politburo and its basic policies excluded. Unlike other Asian socialist states, the DRV cannot currently base its appeal to its people on the achievement of material gains—only on future hopes in this respect. It must rely primarily upon nationalism, with China now taking the place of France and the United States as the principal foe.

A BALANCE SHEET

In broad terms, the efforts of the Asian Communist parties and states to achieve and maintain legitimacy in the eyes of their people have followed the path trod by the USSR. The trend has been from an emphasis on class struggle to that on a state of "the whole people." This has not precluded the retention of the class struggle as a reserve weapon, and the continuous elimination of dissidents and rival powerseekers—sometimes labeled "antisocial elements," hence outside the category of "people." Nor has it interfered with the emergence of new privileged classes—military, official, and technocratic. At the same time, the internationalism implicit in Marxism-Leninism has been continually diluted in favor of traditional national appeals—mixed, when necessity has dictated, with obeisance to the Soviet Union, but with its justification firmly grounded in a doctrine of national interest.

The degree of success that each party and state has achieved in inducing and holding public loyalty is difficult to measure in the absence of reliable data. In any case, such support has clearly been subject to major changes, depending upon developments. Moreover, the precise nature of the continuum between "support" (with varying degrees of enthusiasm) and "nonresistance" is not easily discernible. As noted earlier, acceptance of the system appears fairly widespread in the Soviet Union, but genuine enthusiasm is difficult to discover, with the level of politicization low, ritual more prominent than spontaneity, and antisocial behavior relatively extensive.

35 Ibid.
The available evidence indicates that public support for the Chinese Communist Party and the People's Republic of China was highest in the years between 1950 and 1956, when memories of the bitter decade that preceded communist victory were still fresh. A low point was reached in 1960–1961 and again in the immediate aftermath of the Cultural Revolution, with problems continuing to the present. The signs of the uphill struggle to recapture legitimacy are extensive: political campaigns elicit limited support; efforts to revitalize the ideological base have run into difficulty; and antisocial behavior has constituted a serious problem. Both the Party and the government have repeatedly acknowledged the enormous challenge of rebuilding public confidence in CCP and PRC institutions, with recent material gains being the most hopeful signs of progress.

For the Party and state in the DPRK, the critical tests would appear to lie ahead. The past combination of lengthy political stability, economic security, intensive indoctrination, and the impressive coercive capacities of the state appear to have molded the populace into true believers, firm—even fanatical—in their loyalty. Beneath the surface, rival factions, quarrelsome competitors, and even a few rebels against the system surely exist, but there is no indication that these constitute a significant threat at present. Nepotism is a very prominent feature of Kim II Sung's rule, however, with his brother, cousin, and uncle as well as his wife and son having occupied key positions, past or present—suggesting strong traditional patterns of political behavior which in the past have led to periodic upheavals. The post-Kim era will determine whether a system built on paternalism, monolithism, and isolation can survive with equal ease under a successor generation and in a period when both economic and security requirements dictate greater interaction with the outer world. At that time the North Korean institutional structure—and the loyalty that appears to accompany it—will be put to more complex tests.

For Vietnam, the challenge is immediate and, in the short run at least, more critical than that facing China and North Korea. Dissidence and disillusionment are massive, especially in the South, and provoke the fullest range of antisocial behavior. Control of the state is not threatened because the Party maintains a huge military-police establishment and the opposition has been shattered by the defeat of 1975. But it will not be easy to command the type of loyalty or induce the set of values in the citizenry necessary to build an effective socialist system, and reaching this point certainly seems unlikely as long as DRV priorities are extensively military.

DEMOCRACY—POPULAR RIGHTS AND REPRESENTATION

If the current appeals of Asian socialist states rely primarily on nationalism and material gains, obtained or pledged, communism has always vied with parliamentary liberalism in claiming to provide a more extensive democracy, combining the politi-
cal, economic, and social emancipation of the masses. Once again, the Soviet Union has provided the model.

The Soviet claim to democracy has rested on three principal propositions: First, extensive freedom for those falling within the category of "proletariat" and more recently "the people," including all the "bourgeois" freedoms of speech, press, assemblage, and religion, as well as some additional rights including the right to work and to enjoy lifelong economic security. Second, participation in the election of Party and government representatives by an indirect or stair-step system whereby lower bodies elect higher bodies, culminating in the selection of the top decision-makers, the Standing Committee of the Party Political Committee (Politburo) and the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress by their parent bodies. Third, the right of the citizen to express grievances in a variety of ways in addition to the electoral route: by discussions in his workshop, collective farm, or, in the case of Party members, the Party unit; by means of petitions to the authorities concerned, or letters to newspapers and other official organs; and in the case of elected Party or government representatives, by questions and discussion at the appropriate level.

Each of these rights is explicitly or implicitly granted in the fundamental laws that have been enacted in the USSR since the founding of the new state, and they have been faithfully replicated in the basic laws of the Asian socialist states. The issues at stake, therefore, are how these rights have been implemented in practice, and what further evolutionary potentials with respect to their effective implementation exist. Once again, we are hampered by a paucity of data, and the analysis that follows must be read with that limitation in mind. Nevertheless, the evidence available is sufficient to advance some hypotheses.

The basic restriction on so-called bourgeois freedoms in Marxist-Leninist states has been simple yet far reaching. Nothing must be expressed in speech, writing, or action that can be interpreted as challenging socialism. And the interpretation of that imprecise restriction rests not in the hands of an impartial judiciary, but with Party and state officials at various levels. Thus, the political elite are in a position to protect themselves and their policies from unwanted criticism, and an accounting for error is correspondingly delayed until the leadership—old or new—determines that this is necessary. At that point, upper echelons within the system give the signal to lower echelons, and public criticism of past policies and/or leaders becomes permissible, even mandatory. But such criticism is generally guided and not allowed to get out of bounds.

The most fundamental issues to be fought out within the USSR pertaining to freedom of expression came at an early point. The trade-union movement, under strong Menshevik influence, sought to preserve union independence, arguing that the purpose of the union movement was to protect worker rights, even if this required a challenge to Party-state decisions. This political effort of trade unionists was smashed, their efforts being declared subversive. The Leninists asserted that the purpose of trade unions and all similar associations was to support socialism, and since the au-
Authoritative spokesman for socialism was the communist party, to support every Party policy unless it was changed through the appropriate means.\textsuperscript{36}

This decision, taken in 1922, and not subsequently overturned, has limited the power of all interest groups in Soviet society. Organizations such as trade unions are not without function; in the formulation of grievance procedures, safety regulations, and similar measures affecting workers, they play a role, as well as in political training and social activities. But unions and similar social or economic organizations cannot represent an independent political force. Whereas in liberal theory, the state is the arbitrator between different, sometimes conflicting interests, the Marxist-Leninist position is that in a "classless society" there must be an identity of interests and a single set of basic policies to serve the whole society. No "separate interests" are legitimate.

The restrictions on individual and group freedoms have resulted in practice in a duality with which most citizens, and especially the intelligentsia, live. Coexisting with formal, open communications are informal communications of a less restrictive nature, usually among one's trusted inner circle. The extent of the gap between these two forms of communication has varied with the general political climate. In the years of rigorous terror under Stalin, fear and intimidation combined to render the informal network of communications minimal and fraught with danger. With the Khrushchev era and subsequently, security police controls over the populace have been somewhat relaxed, and hence what we may term "a grey political culture" has grown up apart from that officially prescribed. The state tolerates a much wider range of criticism—sometimes expressed in the form of jokes—through the informal, oral circuit than are permitted in public. Indeed, Party-state leaders have increasingly recognized the need for tolerance regarding such expressions as a safety valve for discontent.

Among the Soviet intelligentsia, this has led to the emergence of a curiously bifurcated life. In formal speeches and writings, the intellectual elite abide by the rules that require their full support for current Party-state policies, generally in strongly ideological terms. Only indirectly, chiefly through omission or select code words, can they signal any doubts. Yet informally, and among trusted associates, a much wider range of opinion is expressed, with considerable account taken of the realities governing any given situation and rather minimal ideological verbiage attached. There is also some indication that in confidential reports to Party and state leaders, intellectual consultants are permitted a broader latitude than in their public writings. The "need to know" principle applies, with one standard governing information and permissible discussion applied to elites, another to the citizenry at large.

As the government's dependence on the intellectual has increased, especially the reliance on scientists and technicians, the arena of informal freedom has expanded. Thus, when a famous scientist like Andrei Sakharov breaks the rules governing the distinction between private and public expression, the government faces a dilemma.

\textsuperscript{36} This episode is recounted in E.H. Carr, \textit{The Bolshevik Revolution} (London: Macmillan, 1952), pp. 103–115.
To be sure, Sakharov's international stature has given him a degree of protection not available to others. This would not have protected him in the middle and late Stalin era, however; he would have been silenced permanently, with no means of external communication allowed him. To what extent the changes in the treatment of Soviet intellectuals are a product of internal developments and to what extent they are a product of international pressures (together with a desire for an improved international image) warrants further study. In any case, a slow, uneven evolution has taken place, with one result the strengthening of a dual political culture providing psychological satisfaction and conducive to a weakening of ideological-political commitment.

In facing similar problems, the People's Republic of China has pursued widely fluctuating policies, with the imprimatur of the mercurial Mao placed on each shift until his death. At the outset, class played a major role in determining the extent to which an individual expressed his private views—and the latitude given by the government. Workers, poor and lower-middle peasants, and veteran revolutionaries naturally had greater freedom to voice grievances, especially those that related to local conditions. Those who belonged to the “bourgeois” or “landlord” category were well advised to remain silent and inconspicuous. Recent research indicates that, in general, this principle has continued to apply, especially in rural areas.

The issue of the intellectual, as noted, was to divide the top CCP elite. At first, policies were lenient. Few changes, for example, were made in the structure of higher education. The universities continued to operate as previously with respect to admission and methods of instruction, although some sensitive fields such as political science were either abolished or drastically altered. The first watershed came when the Mao-inspired campaign to Let One Hundred Flowers Bloom in 1956 gave way to the Anti-Rightist campaign of 1957. Appalled by the outpouring of criticism—and the boldness of some of it—Mao and his close associates drew the line between flowers and weeds in such a manner as to silence a sizable number of prominent intellectuals in the social sciences, creative arts, and even the sciences. Self-criticism became the only means of salvation and, in many cases, even that did not suffice.

An uneasy period followed, with policy differences escalating into a struggle for power that culminated in the Cultural Revolution. The intellectual establishment came under unprecedented attack, with the performing arts reorganized, a late Stalinist type of heroic literature encouraged, and the universities closed, followed by the restructuring of admission procedures so as to place the premium on students equipped with practical experience in the commune or workshop, and politically loyal. Consequently, the universities became centers of remedial education.

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38 A pioneer study by William Parish and Martin Whyte, Village and Family in Contemporary China (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978), is most revealing.

The end of the Maoist era and the elimination of the "Gang of Four" brought in its wake the political rehabilitation of the intellectual and an unprecedented degree of permissible political openness. Democracy Wall served as the symbol of this openness, but a spate of small intellectual journals also circulated, voicing in varying degrees questions about China's political past and future. In retrospect, it can be seen that these developments served several purposes insofar as the new Party and state leaders were concerned: the profoundly demoralized and disillusioned intellectual community, and particularly its younger generation, were permitted an extensive expression of grievances, with the hope that loyalty could be rekindled; connected with this, the new policies of modernization placed a high premium on science and technology, hence a heightened utility of the intellectuals; and finally, the purposes of Deng and his associates were being directly served since the overwhelming number of attacks were aimed at the past, notably the late Mao era and those who supported it, some of whom were still in power and obstacles to Deng's plans.

Inevitably, as critics grew bolder, the attacks threatened to go beyond the prescribed boundaries, producing opposition from within the coalition that Deng was seeking to build. A retrenchment got under way, extending to the public expression of grievances, contact with foreigners, and artistic freedom. Yet this tightening was not allowed to reverse the commitment to restoring universities as centers of professional training and the elevation of the intellectuals as a class to high status so that science and technology could lead China to new strength. Indeed, it might be argued that the one set of policies was a necessary or at least desirable companion to the other, and that in these respects a Soviet path is once again being pursued.

Meanwhile, the citizen at large is encouraged to criticize precisely those policies and practices that the Party and government themselves criticize publicly: corruption, bureaucratism, the loss of the work ethic, and a faltering political commitment, especially among youth. The media are filled with such criticisms, with transgressors being urged to repent and, in some cases, promised more lenient treatment as a result.

The Party and state thus follow two paths currently: a remarkable candor in admitting massive mistakes in the past and serious problems at present, with citizens encouraged to make specified shortcomings a target of attack; and a strenuous effort to prevent criticism from extending to the incumbent top leadership, basic policies presently approved, or the system itself. Adopting the usual tactic of positioning itself at "the center," the Party attacks both the "Left" and the "Right." "Leftism" consists in denigrating intellectuals and taking an ultrarigid attitude toward such matters as personal appearance. But "Rightism," while a lesser problem, is also a menace.

As noted earlier, a crisis of faith exists in China today at the very top of the political structure. The retreat from Marxism-Leninism has proceeded further than could have been imagined even a few years ago. Mao Zedong Thought is not likely to serve as an effective substitute for a protracted period of time, although by making that Thought whatever suits current purposes, and attaching it loosely to Marxism-Leninism to preserve historical antecedents, China's modern leaders may ultimately find some ideological ground upon which to stand as they conduct a rolling revolution, still highly experimental in nature, which in cardinal respects, defies Marx, Lenin, and Mao.
The pendulum has swung away from the surprising degree of political openness permitted (or tolerated) in the late 1970s, even as the number of Chinese students going abroad for education has risen. "Excesses" led not only to a ban on Democracy Wall and the small journals exposing "fresh thoughts," but to the arrest of exponents of democracy like Wei Jingsheng and the tightening of election procedures after bold critics of the system emerged in the university elections of 1979 and 1980. Warnings against fraternization with foreigners, criticism of literature regarded as antisocialist, and stricter control over expression of all types signaled Party concerns in the early 1980s. Yet with a strong element of confusion present at the top of the political system and a determination by key leaders to protect the intellectuals as a class, seeing them as vital to the success or failure of current experiments, the situation remains fluid.

The dual political culture in evidence in the USSR has deep roots in Chinese tradition, with select individuals challenging authority in diverse subtle ways. Overhanging the present as well as the past, however, is the fundamental cleavage between the massive peasant-soldier base and the slender urban intellectual superstructure characterizing twentieth-century China. Until the socioeconomic revolution now in its preliminary stages acquires greater momentum, the latitude allowed political and cultural expression will continue to fluctuate as an authoritarian government wrestles with the problem of simultaneously promoting and controlling intellectualism. The effort to turn outward for science and technology while preserving China's indigenous value system extends back into the nineteenth century, with the frustrations of the late Qing leaders comparable to those now being felt by Deng and his colleagues.

Whatever the political future of the Chinese intellectuals—and all other Chinese citizens as well—the recent changes, whether in the direction of greater or lesser freedom, were scarcely influenced by existing constitutional guarantees and established institutions. Even in periods of greatest repression, the rights as well as the duties of the citizens were officially guaranteed in extensive detail. Is an effective institutionalization of political rights for the citizenry at large possible under Marxism-Leninism, or some further evolution of the People's Republic? At present, the answer is not clear.

Potentially, there are several avenues whereby the political system might be made more responsive to popular sentiments and interests. One route would require a shift from a one-party dictatorship to competitive party politics or, more possible, a dominant party system where the "opposition," while subordinate, is allowed a degree of self-expression. One notes, for example, developments in Taiwan whereby the Guomindang, while not allowing an opposition party to organize formally (the two other parties legally recognized in Taiwan are in essence appendages to the GMD), is permitting "independents"—those outside the party—to run; in recent elections such candidates have garnered nearly 30 percent of the vote. While China has fostered eight "democratic" parties in addition to the communist party, including a "Revolutionary

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40 For insiders' accounts of these developments, see the documents translated and presented in Freedom at Issue (New York: Freedom House) no. 74 (September-October, 1983), under the title China Spring, pp. 36–41.
Committee of the Guomindang," there is no present indication that these parties will evolve into independent political entities. Both leadership and membership are carefully controlled, and the prestige of such parties is minimal, it being understood that they are creatures of the CCP. On the other hand, in distinction to the USSR, China is continuing the practice of permitting such parties to exist, thereby perpetuating the principle of political diversity. Under certain circumstances, basic questions directed to the ruling party might emerge from such sources, as was briefly witnessed during the One Hundred Flowers Bloom era.

A more likely development relates to politics within the Party. After various experiments, elections to some local offices such as the county and district people's congresses are now conducted by secret ballot, with more than one candidate for each seat permitted. The candidates are selected or approved by higher Party organs, but a limited veto power is sometimes afforded local bodies.

Equally interesting is the announcement in 1984 that in one province, Central Committee members would elect the provincial Party first secretary by secret ballot. If such a procedure were to be sustained and expanded, it might have a significance similar to the very limited suffrage of the early modern West.

It must be emphasized that local officials—Party or government—have had restricted authority. In the past, the PRC political system has provided for neither checks and balances nor the division of powers characteristic of federalism. In conformity with the traditional Chinese system as well as the Leninist state, authority has been concentrated on national economic, social, and political policies at the Center, and the Center has been insulated from popular surveillance or control via the system of indirect elections, thereby providing many levels through which electorate expression can be screened. Current experiments in decentralization, political as well as economic, should thus be watched with special interest. If a more responsive system is ultimately to be institutionalized, it is likely to come through developments at the grassroots level rather than dramatic changes at the top of the structure.

One institutional development at the Center, however, might hold promise, namely, the groups and committees spun off from the National People's Congress (NPC) and the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), particularly the former. Both the NPC and the CPPCC are too large (approximately 3,000 members each) to do more than serve as sounding boards and ratification (legitimization) bodies for government policy. Both, however, are divided into smaller groups based on special subjects or interests. At this level, policy discussions take place and some criticisms are voiced together with suggestions for alternative or additional policies.41

In most cases, the delegates performing such functions have been primed by the government; many expressions are not self-generated. Nevertheless, this may be the institutional locus for a broadening of the participatory function at the national level.

41 An excellent theoretical study relating to this matter is Lucian Pye, The Dynamics of Chinese Politics (Cambridge, Mass.: Oelgeschlager, Gunn and Hain, 1981).
Provincial and local branches—Party and government—provide similar possibilities. In all cases, however, the role of the cadre is crucial, and the critic takes risks if his attack fails to eliminate the target or is out of line with higher policies.

The advent of meaningful political participation and greater political accountability in China is likely to hinge on the outcome of the economic experimentation now under way and, in a more general sense, on the changes that will ensue during the next several decades in the socioeconomic class structure of Chinese society. Political authoritarianism cannot be greatly modified, at least in institutional terms, under the prevailing social patterns.

TRENDS IN NORTH KOREA AND VIETNAM

The institutional structure of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea as it relates to representation, choice, and citizens’ rights is virtually identical to that of the People’s Republic of China. In practice, however, the North Korean political system is much more tightly controlled from the Center and from the top of the power structure. In part, this is a function of size—the territory and population of the DPRK being sufficiently small to enable the effective application of “democratic centralism.”

 Probably no society in the world is as intensely organized as North Korea. Mass organizations including youths, women, urban workers, farmers, and other socioeconomic groups encompass more than 50 percent of the population. The Korean Workers’ Party, which had reached a membership of two million by 1975, now accounts for at least 14 percent of the adult population, making it one of the largest parties in comparison with total population in a Leninist society. As in China, five “democratic” parties in addition to the Korean Workers’ Party are kept in existence. But since 1962, the electorate has had no option except to vote for the government-endorsed slate at the national level (Supreme People’s Assembly), and virtually no choice either in local elections. Viewed as pageants to demonstrate loyalty, elections require 100 percent of the citizenry to participate, with unanimous approval registered.

The available data do not permit an evaluation of the extent to which meaningful discussion and debate take place within the Supreme People’s Assembly and its lesser counterparts. North Korean media, however, while carrying exhortations to improve productivity and to correct such shortcomings as bureaucratism, phrase analyses of past and present conditions in more positive terms than the Chinese media and rarely provide concrete evidence of issues on which differences of opinion exist. Moreover, the ideological content of official DPRK messages remains extremely high, as does the cult of personality. To Kim Il Sung is attributed every social, economic, and political advance.

On the surface, therefore, it would appear that current political and socioeconomic conditions in North Korea are considerably different from those in China, notwithstanding a similar institutional structure. North Korean citizens appear to be more highly politicized and more committed to the current system than their Chinese counterparts. If true, this may be due to an avoidance of upheavals like the Cultural
Revolution, the achievement of a satisfactory livelihood for all citizens, sustained privileges for key elites, including intellectuals, the inculcation of a near-fanatic nationalism under the label *chuch'e*, and—by no means least—the maintenance of a rigorous isolation of the society from the outside world.

The changes occurring within North Korea, even though they can be only dimly perceived from the outside, involve the rise of "technocrats" within the Party and state structures, and an increased premium upon economic performance, notwithstanding the rhetoric of "politics in command." North Korean leaders are aware that South Korea is currently winning the economic competition, with their own economy in considerable trouble. To turn to the advanced industrial world for science and technology in the manner of China becomes ever more urgent. And this development, now clearly signalled, may more or less coincide with the end of the Kim II Sung era and the shift to a second- or third-generation political elite.

The intriguing question about North Korea will thus be the impact of these events on existing political institutions and behavior patterns. It seems unlikely that the intense, primitive indoctrination, centering on an extreme cult of personality and an ultranationalism with xenophobic coloring, can remain permanently effective once more complex economic and political stimuli appear. Whether the effect of new developments will be traumatic, as was the case in the intensively mobilized societies of Hitlerian Germany and pre-1945 Japan (and, to a lesser degree, Maoist China), or whether past cultural and political restraints can serve to control the environment sufficiently to prevent radical change remains to be tested.

North Korea is far from the utopian society proclaimed by its propagandists. Corruption and privilege apply to the higher echelons of cadres. Notwithstanding significant economic gains, moreover, life is relatively spartan for the average citizen, partly because of high military expenditures. Fear of external forces and intensity derived from constant state exhortations appear to be powerful psychological factors playing on almost all citizens, creating an atmosphere of heavy pressure.

While grievances exist that might be articulated, however, the likelihood is for very limited evolution toward the type of institutional changes that would increase Party and state accountability and expand citizens’ rights. The economic, political, and security challenges that lie ahead are too formidable and the political patterns of the past too deeply implanted to permit pervasive change in the near term. The first steps may well take place outside the formal institutional structure, with one-man dominance giving way to a more collectivized leadership, thereby allowing for a stronger articulation of separate interests among competitive elites. Among such interests, the military seems certain to play a cardinal role.42

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The institutional structure of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam is virtually identical to that of East Asia’s other Leninist societies. Here too, parallel Party and state hierarchies exist, with a system of indirect elections assuring elitist control and a monopolization of communist party (Vietnam Workers’ Party) control. A variety of “democratic” parties are permitted existence, supposed to represent diverse groups and classes, but such parties and the mass organizations now in operation are all under the firm control of the VWP. Religious groups have constituted a problem because both Catholics and Buddhists have had a long history of political activism, as have the Cao Dai and Hoa Hao. In seeking to handle this problem, the government has tried to coopt certain leaders, allowing relative privileges to those who are willing to cooperate while applying coercion to others, making independent organization impossible.

Given the religious and ethnic heterogeneity of Vietnam, Party and state make an effort to ensure “balanced slates” of candidates, but choice is restricted essentially to Party cadres who select the nominees for voter approval. There has been no compromise with the concepts of Party dictatorship or an interpretation of legitimate citizen rights that prohibits all forms of “antisocialist” behavior. Many Vietnamese remain under surveillance or in various forms of confinement, and the intellectual class in particular suffers from a stigma attached to their Western training and “bourgeois” background.43

At the same time, Vietnamese authorities, like those in China, feel compelled to admit major policy errors and extensive shortcomings, particularly in the economic arena. Thus, Party and state organs are extensively engaged in critical appraisals of the current scene, with cadre corruption, managerial inefficiency, a lax work ethic, inadequate ideological commitment, and a host of other deficiencies decried. At the same time, given the precarious standing of the Party and state, especially in the South, it is necessary to turn a blind eye to various nonsocialist economic practices, legal and illegal, as a desperate effort is made to improve production and the people’s livelihood. As in China and North Korea, the prospects are for a gradual rise of “technocrats” in the institutional structure, many of them Soviet trained, with a progressive turning outward for science and technology to the extent that this is permitted by the international political environment.

Given Vietnam’s recent history, however, and the current priority accorded the quest for hegemony over Indochina, the Party and state will remain heavily militarized—a fact likely to restrict intellectual-technocratic influence, similar to the situation in North Korea. Indeed, these two societies will continue to represent interesting case studies of the interaction of military and technocratic elites in Leninist societies confronting special security and developmental problems. Meanwhile, Vietnam—unlike China and North Korea—remains in an early postrevolutionary stage, with concern about “enemy classes” and “counterrevolutionary forces” still high, influencing policies that relate to representation and citizen rights. In this context, the mixture of “united front” and “class struggle” principles now being applied is understandable.

LEADERSHIP AND ISSUES OF SUCCESSION

If the foregoing analysis is basically correct, several broad political trends in the three societies under discussion seem probable, each of them with institutional implications. First, at the local levels, a somewhat greater measure of autonomy may be permitted. Since these systems do not operate on federal principles—and hence do not distribute power broadly as among national, regional, and local levels—autonomy does not threaten political control at the center and, when applied in moderation within the economic sphere, stimulates incentives and productivity, while in the political realm providing a sense of participation in matters of local importance. There is always the possibility that such autonomy—carried too far—might challenge central planning and control. Hence, a pendulumlike swing between decentralization and recentralization is probable, but ultimately, even small states like North Korea and Vietnam are likely to find a greater measure of local autonomy useful.

A second probability is the greater diversity of the top elite, with the high levels of militarization characteristic of parties long engaged in warfare and states led by peasant-soldiers gradually being reduced. The emergence of technocrats and their varied roles will be a complex development, subject to twists and turns, but over time they—together with a powerful, professional, civilian bureaucratic class, “generalist” in nature—will vie with military types in a manner not dissimilar to the broad trend in the USSR. This will give rise to pluralistic politics, with elites increasingly complex and more equally balanced, vying for policy priorities and power allocation.

Finally, the role of middle-level elites will grow even more important since, in an essentially centralized system, these elements serve as transmission belts up and down, linking top elites with the masses. As socioeconomic development takes place, this group will be required to take on a greater variety of functions and, in the context of more complex cleavages at the top, to make decisions regarding their own policies that can be of consequence. Either through action or inaction, through a strict compliance with national instructions or evasion, through high morale or descent into corruption, the intermediate cadres—once so crucial to revolutionary victory—will play an ever-greater role in determining the cohesion and direction of the socialist order.

Meanwhile, Asia’s Leninist states will continue to wrestle with the problem of selecting and controlling top leadership. Institutional arrangements in such societies cause power to be shaped in pyramidal fashion. Theoretically, however, the top of the pyramid should be not a single individual but a small oligarchic group, functionally differentiated, composing the Party Politburo. In fact, such oligarchies, although often existent at the outset of a new era, have historically given way to the increasing dominance of one man. In part, this is a product of the political cultures of these societies and the continuing need for a charismatic figure on the part of the masses in a period of traumatic upheaval. In part, it is a product of a system allowing the key figure to control appointments at the center, to coopt essential military-security personnel, and to make the media a personal instrument. Using these means—all rendered
possible under the Leninist ideological-organizational system—the top leader aug-
ments his power to a point where he has virtually unchallengeable control over the
etire structure of governance.

At that point, Lord Acton’s famous maxim applies. Not only can the ordinary
citizen have no effect in curbing the excesses of one-man dictatorship; the elites find
themselves in the same position. Either they are wholly dependent on the leader or
they lack the cohesiveness to take the risks of confronting him. Moreover, they have
allowed the prestige of the Party, hence the system, to depend on his survival.

The history of first-generation leadership in Leninist societies is so well known
that no details are required. Stalin’s final excesses terrorized the Soviet elite more than
the man on the street, because the elite were more likely to run afoul of the aging,
paranoid dictator. But this same elite had participated in making Stalin politically unassailable during his lifetime. A similar development occurred in China under Mao.
Deng and other Chinese leaders have admitted that the cult of personality that came to
surround Mao represented an “abnormality” making institutional restraints impos-
able. Yet today, while Deng’s role and power are decidedly not those of Mao at his
zenith, Deng is regarded both by the elite and the average citizen as the source of
highest authority although he currently holds neither the top Party nor state post. His
collected works are being widely disseminated throughout the country, primarily to
place the “imperial seal” on present reforms.44

Lenin established the precedent of causing leadership to stand outside and above
legal strictures. Illegally deposing the Constituent Assembly, Lenin justified his act by
merely declaring that “the Revolution takes over.” In Mao’s case, institutional
arrangements were made in the aftermath of the revolution to accommodate his desire
to avoid direct participation in day-to-day governance. In the 1954 Constitution, a
provision was made for a chairman of the People’s Republic of China apart from the
general secretary of the Party and the premier, with the chairman’s powers derivative
largely from the National People’s Congress. Mao continued to hold this position until
the upheaval of the 1960s, when he became chairman of the party. Throughout his life,
he shrewdly retained the chairmanship of the Military Commission of the Party, as
Deng has also done, seeking to ensure his control over the military. In fact, however,
Mao’s institutional position like that of Deng proved to be of scant importance, since
power resided in the man, not the office.

In some respects, the Cultural Revolution was the equivalent of Stalin’s purges
of the 1930s. And having deified Mao, none of his targets could defend themselves
against the assaults that took place between 1966 and 1969. Chinese leaders of today
are conscious of the events of the recent past, having themselves been victims. Like
Khrushchev and his colleagues, they are determined that such events should not
happen again. Article 5 of the 1982 Constitution contains the sentence, “No organiza-
tion or individual may enjoy the privilege of being above the Constitution and the

to the publisher’s note, “These works are not only of imperishable historic significance, but also are of
great importance in guiding China’s socialist construction at present and in the future.”

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In this latest document, the offices of president and vice-president (corresponding to chairman and vice-chairman) have been reestablished in addition to the premier. Outside the state structure exists the post of general secretary of the Party, still theoretically the ultimate locus of power.

The central question, however, is whether the method of selecting leadership under the Leninist system can be institutionalized rather than being governed by the personal decisions of a single individual or a small oligarchy subject to complex personal and policy divisions. On this vital issue, the 1982 Party and state constitutions are of limited assistance. As previously, the Party Constitution stipulates that the highest Party organs are the National People’s Congress and the Central Committee elected by it. But the membership in these bodies is in fact chosen by the top Party leaders currently in power. The Party Constitution also states that the Party forbids all forms of personality cult, and further asserts that it is necessary to ensure that the activities of Party leaders be subject to supervision by the Party and the people—but it does not state how this is to be accomplished. By Party law, the general secretary as well as the Politburo and its Standing Committee are elected by the Central Committee. In fact, a slate is presented to the Central Committee prepared by the Party Organization Bureau under the supervision of top Party leaders, with those sitting on the Politburo Standing Committee presumably consulted, but with the key figure—currently Deng—assumed to play a commanding role.

It seems clear that Deng personally selected his long-time associate, Hu Yaobang, to be general secretary although he undoubtedly had to persuade other key figures to accept Hu. Similarly, Deng’s role in the selection of Zhao Ziyang as premier appears to have been decisive. Once again, the state institutional structure is of limited consequence in the selection of the premier. Legally, the premier is selected by the National People’s Congress on nomination by the president, who is himself elected by the NPC. In practice, however, these top officials are selected by Party leaders, with their choices merely ratified by the NPC. There is no record of a single dissenting vote either in this body or in the Party Congress to the choices of the leaders.

Thus, the crucial issue of future Chinese leadership lies wholly outside institutional provisions. Will Hu Yaobang in fact succeed Deng Xiaoping as supreme political figure upon the latter’s demise? What will be the mix between singular and collective leadership in the future, and, indeed, what is the mix at present? Neither the 1982 Party or state constitutions provide answers—or even approaches to these questions. Hu is currently seeking to shore up his power, appointing old associates from the Communist Youth League, his former organization, to key positions. But there are rumors that Hu has various deficiencies as a leader, and that he is not popular with the military. True or false, these rumors interest the articulate Chinese citizen more than the constitutional provisions governing the selection of leaders, and with good reason. The future of Chinese politics hinges upon what type of personal coalitions can be built and maintained.

45 1982 Constitution, Article 5. This article opens with the sentence: “The state upholds the uniformity and dignity of the socialist legal system.”
In this connection, the political role of the military still represents an important yet unsettled issue. At the close of the Cultural Revolution, the People's Liberation Army had assumed the commanding role in Chinese politics, and China was in effect under military rule. The political role of the army has been gradually reduced, with no issue concerning Deng and his associates more than this one. The effort is now under way, moreover, to shift control of the military from the Party to the state, and to reduce the functions of the PLA, placing police and security forces under a separate ministry.

Will these political and institutional changes be successful? Unlike the situation in the USSR, the Communist Party of China rose to power as a military organization, with many of its key leaders peasant-soldiers by background. Thus, the military—more than a pressure group upon the Party as in the Soviet Union—has been a powerful constituent element within the Party, and the events surrounding the Cultural Revolution greatly increased the power of the PLA. The task ahead, as Deng and Hu envisage it, is to continue the “back to the barracks” movement, seeking to make certain that the military are fully subordinate to Party and state control. That some military commanders are unhappy with recent trends has been admitted, and the struggle to bring the PLA under control is not yet finished. Indeed, there is no reason to believe that a political resurgence of the military at some future time is impossible.

As has been noted, however, the current trend in the People's Republic of China is to place greater emphasis on a technocratic, modernizing elite, even within the military. A growing number of intellectuals—using that term broadly—are being placed in upper Party and state posts, suggesting that if and when future struggles over succession arise, modernizers will have greater power than in the past, irrespective of their individual personalities. It also seems likely that, as in the post-Stalin USSR, the phenomenon of a Mao Zedong cannot be reproduced, and a greater measure of collectivity may well be present at the summit. Yet the procedures whereby top leadership is selected remain subject to personal cabals, with responsibility vested in a few hands.

The problem is more dramatically revealed in North Korea. Just as the succession issue in late Maoist China came increasingly to resemble traditional dynastic politics, with court intrigue revolving around the “emperor” and his family, a similar situation exists in North Korea at present. Kim Il Sung has personally designated his son, Kim Jong Il, as his successor and is seeking to ensure that all party and state officials accept this decision. Meanwhile, young Kim is attempting to build his power base, taking advantage of his father's absolute power. He is surrounding himself with young men of his generation, thereby challenging not one but several generations more senior. Recurrent rumors speak of opposition to Kim Jong Il, especially among military figures, but such opposition labors under enormous obstacles as long as Kim Il Sung is alive. Not in modern times has the cult of personality been advanced in such extreme form as in this state. Kim's power over all individuals and institutions in North Korea is absolute, although undoubtedly various actions and events are kept from him. The most recent evidence, moreover, suggests that Jong Il has been given direct responsibility for most administrative matters, with his father moving to a supervisory role.
Once again, these developments are wholly extralegal, outside the institutional structure provided in the Party bylaws and 1972 Constitution, albeit made possible by the institutional structure outlined in those documents. No one can predict whether Kim II Sung’s effort to implant his son in power will survive the elder Kim’s death, but whatever the outcome, neither the average North Korean citizen nor such an institution as the Central Committee of the Korean Workers’ Party, nominally responsible for the selection of the Party secretary-general, will play the critical role in determining North Korea’s future leadership. Kim II Sung himself has long held both top Party and state positions, but at this point his institutional position is of limited consequence; like Mao, he could stand aloof from formal office and remain all powerful.46

The issue of leadership and succession is equally acute in Vietnam. Recently, Hoang Van Hoan, now a political defector in China and formerly a member of the VWP Politburo, provided his version of the evolution of party-state leadership in Vietnam in a biting attack upon the present Hanoi leaders in a “Letter to the Vietnamese Compatriots.” One must bear in mind that this open letter was written by one who was a guest of the Chinese and who had been progressively isolated because of his views before leaving Vietnam. Hoang Van Hoan, praising the “direct leadership of President Ho Chi Minh” of more than three decades, asserted that Vietnam was now wholly under the control of Le Duan who “has formed a secret service network in the country, completely abolishing all the rights of the people explicitly stipulated in the Constitution, and ruthlessly suppressing all those who have different views and those honest people who refuse to be docile and obedient, thus virtually turning the whole [of] Viet Nam into a prison.”47

Scholars have generally assumed that Ho Chi Minh, while primus inter pares, lent his prestige to collective decision making and that his political style—together with the enormous challenges confronting the Democratic Republic of Vietnam in its struggle to survive and expand—created a collective unity at top Party and state levels. Hoang’s assertion that Le Duan now dominates Vietnamese politics in tyrannical fashion, even if exaggerated, suggests that in a period of continuing adversity and serious policy failures, VWP leadership may have gravitated toward factional divisions of a serious nature, promoting at the same time the increased power of a single individual, striving through the appointment of those whom Hoang refers to as “henchmen” and the purging of opponents to bring a troubled situation under control.48 Once again, whatever the precise situation with respect to current Vietnamese leadership, the parallels with the Chinese and the North Koreans are significant. The selection and maintenance of top leadership are outside the institutional processes provided by fundamental Party and state law. Moreover, the trend in this case may have been a greater concentration of power in the hands of one man and his faction to the exclusion of others at the top.

If the Soviet Union is a guide, the “institutionalization” of top leadership selection consists in regularizing the collective decision of the twenty to thirty individuals (or less) that make up the supreme Party organ, the Politburo. Whether through consensus or by a majority, this body’s decisions have been accepted in recent times without serious challenge. Even Khrushchev, having once defied the Politburo by insisting on a vote of the Central Committee, bowed to the Politburo demand for his resignation in 1964. By gentlemen’s agreements, moreover, it has been possible in recent times to exclude one’s opponents without imprisoning or killing them. Indeed, the scanty evidence available suggests that those who opposed a new leader may even be left in office, constituting a competitive faction and lending support to collective leadership.

Yet the systemic problem remains acute. Underlying Marxist-Leninist institutions is the myth that the people are the supreme source of power in the state and that the rank-and-file Party members occupy a similar position in the Party. These fictions are maintained by an emphasis on mass participation in grassroots elections and a constant reference to the mass line, whereby policies are supposedly initiated at the bottom and sent upward, refined by leadership, and then directed downward in the form of law, with all commanded to accept the decision of the “majority,” once determined. In all systems based on “democratic centralism,” however, it is centralism that prevails. And with the citizenry at large removed from any meaningful control over national leaders or policies, all is dependent on the shifting balance of power within the top elite. Moreover, since the Marxist-Leninist system lacks an independent judiciary, there can be no check on the arbitrary actions of leaders from within the top echelons of the structure apart from that initiated by the leaders themselves.

In the past, as we have noted, the balance of power was determined by a mix of bureaucratic, military, and ideological authority. Currently, technocrats are being elevated, not to positions of supreme power, but directly under general administrators and veteran Party and state bureaucrats. Under present conditions, with large military establishments in all three countries, the struggle to contain military power has been continual.

**LAW AND THE JUDICIARY**

Meanwhile, both the USSR and China have stressed restoring “socialist legalism” in the aftermath of the Stalinist and Maoist excesses. This includes the enactment or revision of both civil and criminal codes and, in the case of China, major efforts to make the legal system more professional by training lawyers and judges to take the place of the amateurs assigned to the worker-peasant courts of the past.

The present Chinese leaders insist that those accused of crimes will have the benefit of all the legal safeguards now written into fundamental law, including protection against arbitrary arrest or protracted detention without trial, the right to defense lawyers, and the right of appeal under certain rules. These assurances, it might be added, are being accompanied by an unprecedented sweep against those accused of various crimes, with hundreds of thousands having been arrested in 1982–1983.
Antisocial behavior has deeply worried Chinese leaders, and the recent campaign is designed to curb what has been an outburst of crimes of all sorts, from murder, rape, and robbery to a variety of economic crimes, many of them committed by senior cadres.

The sincerity of the present top leaders wishing to restore "socialist legalism" cannot be doubted since they themselves were victims of the type of utter disregard for the law prevalent in the late Maoist era. It remains to be seen, however, whether a judicial system that operates in the final analysis as an arm of the Party, committed to carrying out Party policy as defined by incumbent leaders, can effect the type of justice that protects the individual or group from the excesses of party-state power, or apply the law evenhandedly to those in and out of office.

Cynicism over such prospects was voiced recently by a Beijing taxi driver. When a passenger in response to a query stated that he was studying law at Beijing University, the driver remarked with a mixture of mirth and indignation, "But there's no law in China!"

Data with respect to North Korean and Vietnamese judicial practices are too incomplete to permit a careful evaluation of past practices and present trends, but the existing evidence suggests that the same basic issues apply, all of them deriving from the concept of law as an ideal rather than a set of precise rules to be rigorously applied—a view embedded in traditional Asian culture; the treatment of judicial institutions as rightfully belonging in the hands of "the people," not specialists; and the requirement that the judiciary operate as an arm of the Party, hence charged with carrying out Party orders, whether or not this accords with some abstract concept of justice. Nonetheless, the trend toward professionalism and procedures derivative from European continental practices, first initiated in the post-Stalin USSR and now, with modifications, emerging in China, should be considered promising. The political "criminal" will still be in a special category, but the institutionalization of legal procedures and safeguards may eventually cover all accused.

THE BUREAUCRACY—SUPREME SYMBOL OF PEOPLE'S REPUBLICS

In a broader sense, the issue of the judiciary is merely a part of the problems encompassing the bureaucracy as a whole. From the beginning of the effort to put Marxism into practice, top authorities recognized that a statist society—and one seeking the consolidation of authority through a single channel—would place enormous power in the hands of the officials. In the 1919 Program of the All-Russian Communist Party, it was acknowledged that various conditions had led to "the partial revival of bureaucratic practices within the Soviet system," and the pledge was made

to carry out a resolute struggle against bureaucratism.\textsuperscript{50} That struggle continues more or less unsuccessfully in the USSR and in all Asian socialist states. One of the recurrent campaigns in China, North Korea, and Vietnam is to enforce on cadres at all levels the idea that they are the servants, not the masters of the people, and to decry their capricious and arbitrary actions. To look at the other side of the coin, cadres, especially of lower ranks, constantly complain that they are caught between the requests of their constituency and the demands of their superiors. Their situation becomes more intolerable when policies at the center are in dispute, with conflicting signals sent out.

Once again, the basic problem is structural. In each of the Asian Leninist systems, the approach to problems is to duplicate rather than to separate functions. Consequently, officialdom proliferates. Moreover, while jurisdictional problems become serious, no adequate method of internal checks and balances exists. The requirements of state socialism naturally exacerbate the situation. Few aspects of economic or political life are divorced from official control or surveillance despite movements toward economic "liberalization." Thus, the bureaucracy as a collectivity is in a position to defeat those who challenge it, including top leaders. Khrushchev’s lament, "How can I be accused of being a dictator? I can’t even get the people operating the Moscow sewers to run them effectively!" might be repeated by Deng. Despite a strenuous campaign to streamline the bureaucracy and to inject into it younger, more professionally trained elements, Chinese officialdom remains huge, intensely conservative, and dominated by the principle of seniority.

This is equally true in North Korea, although, given the smaller scale of this society, it is undoubtedly easier for Kim Il Sung and other officials at the top to reach down into the bureaucratic structure, punishing and rewarding. Vietnam currently presents a chaotic picture, with veteran cadres in the North now joined by Southern cadres chosen on the basis of political loyalty rather than training or competence. Massive inefficiency and rising corruption in cadre circles are now being publicly condemned in all organs. But no solutions are at hand other than continued exhortation—and selective punishment.\textsuperscript{51}

In reality, the current Marxist-Leninist institutional structure meshes well with traditional Confucian political culture in this respect, and the combination makes a frontal attack on the problem of bureaucratism virtually impossible. Traditionally, these societies placed a very high premium on the prestige and authority of the official class. The present economic and political system enhances official power, with cadres continuing to be responsible only to superiors within the system, not to any external source. Authority lines are largely vertical, not horizontal. Naturally, there is a desire among most cadres to preserve the system in its present form, given the fact that their


\textsuperscript{51} For example, see "People’s Complaints, Denunciations resolved in Quang Nam-Da Nang," in \textit{Nhan Dan}, April 25, 1983, p. 3, translated in Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS), Southeast Asia, \textit{Daily Report}, no. 1304 (June 27, 1983), pp. 50–51.
power and privileges derive from it. Thus, a closed, mutually protective order evolves. Topmost officials like Deng, Kim, or Le Duan can charge bureaucratic lines, sword in hand, and decimate a few hundred or a few thousand cadres as "examples," but they do not have the instruments within the institutional framework to make fundamental changes.

CONCLUSION

To draw up a balance sheet on the prospects for more effective political institutionalization in the Leninist states of East Asia is extremely difficult, given the relatively brief period of their existence, the uncertain precedents furnished by the USSR, and the ferment presently taking place in at least two of the three societies under study. Perhaps these trends can be discerned.

On the positive side, the acceptance of diverse parties, even if these are mere creatures of the communist party today, together with the acceptance of functional representation in Party and state organs, and the existence of a committee system in the highest legislative organ suggest that under certain conditions, a monopolization of power by the dictatorship of the communist party might be challenged, from within perhaps even more than from without. Second, if economic growth and educational advances make combined progress, these societies will be characterized by a rising pluralism, notwithstanding pretensions of classlessness and calls for monolithic unity. In that setting, more articulate interest groups can possibly use the instrumentalities available at the grass roots, including the small element of choice currently approved in some cases. Meanwhile, at the top, this same pluralism should be conducive to a general movement from one-man dictatorship to more collective leadership, and to procedures with respect to succession at the top which, while continuing to be highly elitist, will take more regularized forms. Finally, an increased reliance upon law, extensively codified and professionally managed, seems probable.

On the negative side, Marxist-Leninst mythology—especially the use of concepts like "the dictatorship of the proletariat" and "democratic centralism"—will perpetuate a party and state not accountable to the citizenry, and fortified by an extensive coercive system, capped by a powerful military-public security force. Under this system, a highly personalized authoritarianism will coexist with impersonal political and legal institutions, and the more or less continuous clash between these two elements of the state will make steady progress toward institutionalization difficult. In an effort to live with the system, moreover, individuals and groups will develop both the dual political culture noted earlier and a formidable gray economy. Developments in these directions, however natural, are likely to reduce the impetus for change, the drive for institutional improvements. The premium will be on learning to cope with system rather than seeking to change it. Meanwhile, the vast bureaucracy in power have their own reasons for resisting any political reforms that would reduce their authority.

The earlier hope voiced by some Western liberals that the twentieth century would see a convergence between communism and liberalism now seems misplaced,
although one can argue that if communism in most settings has retreated from Stalinism in both its political and economic forms, the Western parliamentary systems have embraced a stronger degree of statist controls. The more likely convergence of the near future, however, is not that of communism and liberalism, but that between the Leninist systems we have been discussing and other “Third World” systems that might be designated as soft authoritarian in character. The “soft authoritarian” states have in somewhat lesser degree the attributes of a one-party monopolization of power, restrictions upon civil rights, and state intervention in the social and economic system. Many of these latter societies, however, by encouraging a significant private economic and social sector, cultivate pluralism at a much more rapid rate (and reach greater affluence as well), thereby opening the path for broader, more rapid political evolution. Perhaps, in these respects, they will prove attractive models for later generations of Chinese, North Korean, and Vietnamese leaders.
4. Institutionalization and Democracy in Japan

Seizaburo Sato

INTRODUCTION

Since the end of World War II, "development" has become one of the most prevalent ideologies in the noncommunist world. The word has many meanings, but generally it has been understood to include three elements: First, economic growth by industrialization and the improvement of agricultural production; second, political democratization, human rights, and a system of rules which guarantee free elections; third, social democratization and a more equitable distribution of wealth.

Development in these three areas cannot be achieved separately because they are inextricably connected. Further, the word "development" implies an evolution in a certain direction. Since all developed countries were the Western nations even after World War II and until relatively recently (it was only during the 1960s that Japan became a member of this club), the word implied the process of coming closer to the developed Western nations (especially the United States, which stood out as the leader), hence the expressions "Westernization" and "Americanization." The optimistic view that development in that direction is desirable and possible for all nations, including newcomers who achieved independence in the postwar years, has faded with the disappointments of the past forty years.

First, development in these three areas does not necessarily take place simultaneously. Even excluding Soviet economic development, we can see how Germany forged a rapidly developing industrial economy alongside the establishment of a *Polizeistaat* during the second half of the nineteenth century, and Japan pushed the development of its heavy industries as the authoritarian military regime increased its strength in the 1930s. The more recent economic development of some of the so-called newly industrialized countries (NICs) has not necessarily been accompanied by liberalization, democratization, or equalization. Especially at the early stage of economic development, the distribution of wealth tends to become more uneven.
On the other hand, such countries as India, Colombia, and Venezuela can be cited as examples of progress in political democratization in spite of economic stagnation (the rapid growth of Venezuela’s gross national product during the 1970s was largely because of the sudden oil price rise). Of course, it may still be argued that economic development at the expense of liberalization and democratization, even if possible from a short-term viewpoint, is destined to eventual failure. The fact that Soviet-type economies are stagnating because of the fossilization of powerful bureaucracies and the lack of spontaneity of the people seems to support this argument. Even in some noncommunist developing nations, authoritarian political systems obstruct economic growth. Also, if political liberalization and democratization make headway, social equalization inevitably follows. (The reverse assumption, that equalization brings about democratization and liberalization, is not necessarily true.) The establishment of liberal democracy, however, does not necessarily provide the guarantee for sustained economic growth. Furthermore, a liberal democracy, once established, can continue to function even under stagnant economic conditions so long as it is not hit by an extreme economic crisis such as at the beginning of the 1930s.

Second, certain domestic and international conditions are needed for growth, and these conditions do not always exist. Some societies have not succeeded in any one of the three areas. Some fail to sustain their initial take-off. Certain communist nations and authoritarian developing nations show symptoms of retrogression.

Third, liberal democracy is not limited to the Western model and can take on forms considerably different from the Anglo-American type. In this respect, the Japanese case merits special note. The Japanese political regime, authoritarian or autocratic in the prewar years, underwent democratization during the years of the American Occupation and became an eminently democratic society based on the principles of popular sovereignty and the guarantee of popular control of government. As we shall discuss later, however, continuity between prewar and postwar Japan still exists, as, for example, in the influence of the central government bureaucracy on the administration of policies from before the last world war until the present day. The incumbency of the Liberal Democratic party, furthermore, has never been threatened by the political opposition despite the enormous social changes that have taken place since the 1950s, during which time Japan regained independence and established her postwar political system.

This circumstance seems to point to an important difference between Japanese democracy and its Western counterparts, especially the Anglo-American type. The Japanese economy has achieved a remarkable growth (especially since the last World War) and still remains one of the most viable economies among the advanced nations. Japan is also one of the most equitable societies in the world in income distribution. The Japanese experience seems to merit further scrutiny because Japan has relatively recently experienced a development transition from an authoritarian to a democratic regime, because Japan has built her democratic regime under cultural, social, and international conditions qualitatively different from those experienced by the West, and because Japan has achieved democratization and social equalization simultaneously with her economic growth.
HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The modernization of Japan started in the middle of the nineteenth century, ignited by the threat posed by the Western powers. Japan's effort toward modernization was aimed at catching up with the advanced nations of the West. The second half of the nineteenth century and the period up to World War I coincided with the "Age of Imperialism," during which time the race for colonial acquisition among the Western powers entered its most intense stage. To catch up with the advanced Western nations meant the buildup of military power capable of coping with Western strength and of an economic-technological base to support Japan's military machine. The basis for such modernization was industrialization. The national slogan fukoku kyohei ("rich country and strong military") was widely accepted by the Japanese in that era.

Successful industrialization requires certain socioeconomic conditions as prerequisites. Important among them are the wider development of the distribution of goods and services, sustained and cumulative investment and technical innovation, the propagation of education and the institutionalization of research activities, the spread of a value orientation toward activist pragmatism, and the progress of social mobility. For these conditions to function, political and administrative systems are needed that assure the maintenance of external security and internal order. In other words, where modernization has progressed, the role of government has been considerable, even in the early industrialized nations. For late-developing nations to become industrially strong, a greater governmental role is necessary because the conditions needed for industrialization are in a more rudimentary state than in the advanced nations who pioneered this process. Moreover, in order to avoid colonization by the imperial powers and to catch up with them, the late comers had to industrialize within a much shorter time.

Besides achieving national security and internal order, the governments of these newly industrialized nations were expected to seek outside capital and technology transfer to organize the allocation systems, to promote the education of the populace, and to inculcate the ethic of hard work among the people. There was also a need for arousing a public sense of identity with the state (national identity) and a devotion to national goals (patriotism) in order to mobilize the maximum number of citizens to achieve these goals. Such efforts, however, hasten the dissolution of traditional institutions and norms, provoking resistance from traditional forces and creating anomie. This explains why late-developing nations waver between a policy of "turning outward" by introducing advanced Western civilization and "turning inward," or "self-reliance," by becoming isolationist and returning to their traditions to achieve self-industrialization. The governments of these nations face the challenge of eliminating the resistance of the traditionalists and at the same time provide their people with a social environment to which they can feel committed.

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To achieve these goals, a strong governmental leadership and an efficient bureaucracy, but not mass political participation, is necessary. To the contrary, as Samuel Huntington points out, if political institutionalization is preceded by popular participation, such a process tends to heighten political instability and increase the danger of frustrating the national effort for a strong industrialized state. However, once the government’s effort to awaken feelings of national identity and patriotism succeeds, then the popular desire to participate will increase. Because the process of industrialization also increases social mobility, the number of those who have become better off economically and more educated will grow. All these benefits intensify the popular demand for participation. If institutions that meet this increasing demand are not created, political dissatisfaction intensifies, threatening political stability.

In the mid-nineteenth century, Japan was better equipped than any other non-Western country to become industrialized. By the early nineteenth century, after an extended peace of more than two hundred years, Japan’s economic activities had achieved a new vigor, her allocation system had developed on a nationwide scale, and the bakufu (Shogunal government) and han (feudal domain) bureaucracies were able to administer growing economic activities effectively as well as maintaining law and order in their domains. In literacy, Japan was comparable to the most advanced Western nations. Instrumental activism was a prevalent attitude not only among the ruling samurai class, practically minded soldiers devoted to their masters and their governments, but also among the common people. Akira Hayami says: “The Edo period experienced no industrial revolution but witnessed an ‘industrious’ revolution.” Especially, the quasi-consanguineous management organization of the wealthy merchants and farmers (Iye-type organization) was a suitable basic production unit for promoting industrialization. It provided a new social grouping that gave a new sense of belonging to those who had been severed from the villages to which they once belonged before industrialization.

During this period the Japanese were well integrated both politically and economically, forming a homogeneous society with a well-educated population, and broad segments of the people shared a sense of belonging to the national entity called Japan. The ruling samurai class, imbued with a strong sense of national identity and residing in most cases in urbanized castle towns severed from their fiefs, supported the building up of Japan as an industrialized and militarily strong modern state. Because of more than two hundred years of peace and stability, a sense of belonging prevailed not only among the ruling samurai class but also among the merchants and craftsmen.

Throughout the period of upheaval of the Meiji Restoration, therefore, there were few popular revolts against han rulers. Common bonds between the governing class and the governed facilitated modernization because it made mass mobilization

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4 On the characteristics of Iye-type organization, see Murakami et al., Iye Shakai, ch. 7.
on behalf of national goals possible. Geographic and demographic factors also contributed to the effective implementation of modernization. Japan in those days had a land area comparable to that of East and West Germany combined, with a population of 30 million. Its size—both in area and population—was small enough to make a centralized, efficient modernization effort possible and at the same time was large enough to create a wealthy, strong nation.

At that time Japan also had a relatively favorable international environment, and thus the timing for modernization was good. East Asia was far away from the Western powers, and China was the focus of Western imperialist interests throughout the nineteenth century. Hence Japan was not faced with a direct military threat until the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–05, although it was vulnerable to encroachment by the West. In sum, Japan was kept under foreign pressure—not so overwhelming as to thwart Japan's national aspirations, but strong enough to give rise to a popular nationalism. Furthermore, with the exception of the United States, even among the advanced Western nations democracy was still in its early stage of historical development. Although universal white male suffrage existed in the United States by the 1830s, the Reform Act of 1832 in England, the most advanced nation economically, limited voting to a mere 4 percent of the population. Indeed, across Western Europe, universal male suffrage became widely accepted only toward the end of the nineteenth century, and it was not until World War I that the privilege was extended to women. Even in Western Europe, therefore, it was not until this period that the word "democracy" became a popular expression capable of exerting political influence. Japanese political leaders during the second half of the nineteenth century were consequently not forced to respond to large-scale popular demands for participation at a time when political institutionalization was still in an early stage of development.

Thus, given these comparatively favorable domestic and international conditions, Japan's political institutionalization during the second half of the nineteenth century produced three special traits that were to exert a lasting influence on the gradual growth of democracy in Japan during the twentieth century; on the process of reversion to an authoritarian regime after the 1930s; and on the distinctive type of democracy emerging after World War II.

1. A centralized bureaucracy predominated. Despite the decentralized features of the Tokugawa political system, Japan had an efficient bureaucracy capable of taking on complex administrative duties. Because the challenge posed by the Western powers heightened the sense of nationalism and because the samurai class was in no position to put up a strong resistance to the Meiji government's policy of centralization of power, Japan's bureaucratic structure was rapidly modernized. The feudal daimyo system was quickly replaced by a new prefectural system, under which the prefectural governors were appointed by the central government, and the past privileges of the samurai class, including their fiefs and stipends, were abolished. Nationally unified systems of taxation, military services, currency, and education were created to eliminate the confusing diversities of the feudal days. By the beginning of the 1890s—that is, within forty years after Commodore Perry opened Japan's doors—the governmental structure of the centralized Meiji regime had been largely completed.
There was organized samurai resistance, including uprisings against centralized institutionalization and popular clamor for participation demanding a national assembly (jiyu minken undo, People’s Rights Movement), but these uprisings were sporadic and poorly organized. The central government could suppress them easily or absorb the movements into the mainstream of the centrally directed institutionalization.

2. In spite of its centralism, the Meiji central government was not a wholly dictatorial or totalitarian regime. The governmental structure, prescribed by the imperial constitution promulgated in 1890 and in force until 1947, was an expression of centralism but had pluralistic features. The cabinet, the Diet, the military, the Privy Council, the Supreme Court, and other central government institutions were all placed under the direct administration of the emperor and thus found themselves in a complex relationship of checks and balances. Furthermore, in administering cabinet affairs, the cabinet members who presided over their ministries “assisted” the emperor legally, and therefore the executive authority of the prime minister was limited.

The popularly elected House of Representatives and the House of Peers—the latter made up of those selected from the aristocracy, the rich, and those especially appointed by the government (most of them ranking former bureaucrats)—were given more or less equal legislative authority in the Diet. Legislation relating to constitutional matters and foreign treaties was subject to review by the Privy Council, a deliberative body outside the Diet whose members were appointed by the executive arm of the government. The Army and the Navy were mutually independent; the Military Administration (the Army and the Navy ministries of the cabinet) enjoyed a wide range of autonomy; the General Staff of the Army and Navy reported directly to the emperor, thus being free from the control of the prime minister.

Under this system, no one government department or agency had dominant authority except the emperor. He had the legal authority to “preside” over these autonomous and divisive organizations as well as being enshrouded by the mythological authority of a “spiritual reign” over Japan as the descendant of a “line of emperors unbroken for ages eternal.” The emperor, in other words, had the equivalent of the combined authorities of both a powerful American president and the Roman pope. The manner in which the emperor could exercise his power was not clear, however. The constitution was vaguely worded, and it was possible to interpret his power as that of an absolute monarch or that of a constitutional monarch. The three successive emperors of modern Japan each operated within the limitations of a constitutional monarch and served as symbols of the national essence rather than wielders of absolute power.

In spite of the growth of a strong centralized bureaucracy empowered with extensive privileges and authorities and in spite of the presence of the emperor at the top of the pyramid, modern Japan, though authoritarian by nature, did not have to become dictatorial or totalitarian. Since the conditions for modernization were favorable, her modernizing leaders did not have to force reforms through absolutist methods. Also, during the second half of the nineteenth century, the modern forms of dictatorship and of totalitarian governing techniques soon to emerge in the West were not yet developed.
The operation of such a complex pluralistic system would have been impossible without broad popular consensus on the national goal of making Japan a strong industrialized nation dedicated to catching up with the advanced Western nations. Japanese pluralism gave the main political groups sufficient rights to prevent their polarization into powerful opposition groups. The integration of the pluralistically independent government institutions was a difficult task, and successive cabinets had to labor in search of working solutions to the incessant factional struggles among these institutions. The difficulty of building a stable coalition is illustrated by the fact that the average life of a cabinet formed under the imperial constitution was less than a year and a half. Even during the trying years of the Russo-Japanese War, the first Katsura cabinet, the longest on record, lasted only four and a half years, from 1901 to 1906. Neither the political parties, which operated from their power base of the House of Representatives and gradually gained a position of influence as they entered the twentieth century, nor the Imperial Army, which attempted to build an authoritarian regime of its own, could find an effective way of dealing with this institutional pluralism.

3. Middle-level institutions and organizations were prominent despite the predominance of the central bureaucracy. Especially noteworthy was the development of local government and private enterprises. As already noted, the prewar prefectural governors, appointed by the central government, exercised extensive control over the affairs of the publicly elected local assemblies as well as over the mayors and village chiefs appointed by such assemblies. The control held by the central government over the police and education systems was especially powerful. Day-to-day administration of local affairs, however, was left to the cities, villages, and traditional local communities (buraku). The prefectural, city, and village assemblies, many of which were established before the national Diet, played a significant role, despite their limited power and authority, in absorbing and localizing the popular demand for participation.

The role played by the central government in Japan’s industrialization was considerable, but it was confined to establishing developmental goals, providing advisory services, and handing out preferential treatment in finance and taxation, leaving the responsibility of industrialization in the hands of private enterprises. At that time, the Japanese government established a number of experimental state-operated manufacturing plants to introduce modern industry in Japan, but these government enterprises soon passed into private hands. In addition, under the unequal treaties forced on it by the Western powers at the opening of the country, Japan remained deprived of the full power to impose import duties until 1911. The Japanese government in those years was unable to provide Japan’s infant industries with the protective shield of tariff barriers, and thus the economic development of Japan through the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was a considerably more market-oriented growth process in a laissez-faire environment than is commonly imagined.5

Besides, in those days the tightly knit employee organization, often called the "Japanese management system," had not yet been contrived by the early Japanese enterprises. The form of business enterprises in Japan at the early stage of industrialization was thus similar to that of the West.

Starting with the final years of the nineteenth century, however, when the heavy chemical industries emerged, giving rise to large-scale production plants, the Western nations entered into a period of so-called organizational revolution, and a new era of "organized capitalism" emerged. In response to this "call of a new era," Japanese businesses (especially those large-scale firms that had played a central role in the economic development of Japan) began developing new institutions such as "business familism," a "life-time employment system," company-led welfare programs, and similar techniques, all of which gradually combined to form the Japanese management system as it is known today. Such a management system, based upon a modified /ye-type traditional organization principle, improved through the process of industrialization, played an important role in ameliorating conflicts between capitalists and workers, or employers and employees, thus preventing the intensification of class confrontation and the spread of anomie.

Under the influence of the further industrialization and the worldwide spread of democracy after World War I, there were indications in Japan of a rise in the organized labor movement. This did not materialize into a large-scale movement partly because of stringent suppression by the central government and partly because of improvements made in labor-management relations within the business units. The developed middle-level institutions and organizations of Japan's local government and businesses give the people a sense of community and provide them with opportunities for participation, thus reducing discontent and tension, and making it possible to channel their vitality into modernization.

The fact that Japan's government structure was pluralistic, though convenient for the political parties to strengthen their influence, made it difficult for a newly formed cabinet to maintain a stable existence. Prompted by the local assemblies and the national Diet, two nationally based political parties were organized as a coalition of local political groups in the early 1880s. At that time, the political parties were no more than private clubs of Diet members and political aspirants, and their election was largely dependent on the support of the local notables (in most cases, the landlords and the local entrepreneurs) who were able to collect a significant number of votes. Therefore, the organization of political parties was still in its infant stage, and the "parties" split repeatedly into factions. They held a majority of the House seats, however, and in the face of their opposition the government could not pass its bills in the House. On the other hand, the oligarchs (the early leaders of the Meiji Restoration with high prestige, later known as genro, elder statesmen), who had held the reins of government since the beginning of the Meiji period (1868), had their own internal struggles and were far from being monolithic.

The political parties and the oligarchs, both of which groups contained the seeds of internal dissension, confronted each other in their struggle for power. Rather than attempting complete mutual elimination, they opted for a modus vivendi through
complex political compromises. While this was a process by which the oligarchs manipulated the political parties, it also provided the avenue for the political parties to make inroads into the political power so far monopolized by the oligarchs. Thus, the political parties began to strengthen their constituency base by deftly using the central bureaucracy and the allocation of public funds. The result was that during the 1920s, aided by the worldwide trend toward democracy, a new era of party cabinets emerged in which the two major political parties alternately shared the reins of the government. These early political parties were weak, however; as the national and international environment deteriorated, the new era of party politics came to an abrupt end only eight years after its inception. The central weakness was that, even during the 1920s, the two major parties continued to rely on the Diet members for their membership and remained dependent on influential local notables in the election districts and supportive central government institutions without building strong grassroots organizations. Therefore, when an election was held, the party in power was always victorious because it could easily mobilize the bureaucratic institutions. The opposition party, on the other hand, would form a coalition with outside forces such as the military, the House of Peers, and the Privy Council. Thus, by turning its minority position in the House into a de facto majority through coalition within the pluralistic government structure, the opposition party was able to stage a comeback to power without recourse to the electorate. Such Machiavellian dealings among these nonparty (or antiparty) groups were destined to weaken the position of the political parties.

A second weakness of the political parties was that the prewar Japanese constitution upheld the emperor as sovereign and the national goal of catching up with the West. This situation produced a political environment that made it difficult for a political party to claim full legitimacy to lead the nation. The parties lacked the oligarchs’ prestige of being the “founding fathers” and the “impartiality and fairness” with which the emperor and his bureaucracy were credited. When it came to the question of who was to lead the country to become a strong industrialized nation, moreover, political parties were no match for the central bureaucracy.

A third weakness of the political parties was that, lacking full legitimacy and being organizationally fragile, they could not fully control the pluralistic government structure. This was especially true because the military persistently refused to accept civilian control and remained independent from the party cabinets.

Despite these weaknesses, if the national and the international environment had been favorable, the party cabinets could have lasted longer and political democracy in Japan could have progressed. As mentioned earlier, the position of the Japanese emperor under the prewar constitution could have been construed as that of a constitutional monarch, and, therefore, it was possible to argue that parliamentary government was a legitimate form of government under that constitution. The Japanese economy, however, fell into a chronic recession during the second half of the 1920s and was dealt a massive blow by the Great Depression, which struck the world in the fall of 1929. The Depression intensified Japan’s economic conflicts with the Western powers. In China, meanwhile, the Nationalist government, which had just completed its nationwide consolidation of power, began its anti-Japanese campaign.
toward the end of the 1920s, aimed at reclaiming the territories leased and the concessions owned by Japan in Manchuria and other Chinese provinces. At the same time, the Russians were emerging once again as a military power in East Asia after a period of chaos and confusion following the Revolution.

Japanese young military officers and radical nationalists were deeply impressed by the spectacle of what appeared to be the coming of a new era of totalitarianism, signaled by the rise to power of Stalin’s Soviet Russia and Nazi Germany, while the countries with liberal political systems—the United States, Great Britain, and France—suffered from a serious and protracted economic recession and social unrest. As political and military pressures mounted both inside and outside, assuming the proportions of a crisis, these young officers and the nationalists sprang a series of coups d’etat and assassinations, precipitating the downfall of party cabinet politics. During the 1920s, several socialist political parties emerged, but their influence remained severely limited.

After the collapse of the party cabinets, a number of attempts were made, with the military as the driving force, to consolidate the pluralistic institutions in the name of “national unity.” Especially as the conflict with China became a full-fledged war, some military factions and the radical nationalists sought to organize a totalitarian regime similar to that of Nazi Germany. All these attempts failed, and throughout the war years, even when the cabinets were headed by powerful generals and admirals, they continued to fall in quick succession. In fact, the real reason that Japan plunged into war against the United States with no prospect of winning was not, viewed from the perspective of Japanese domestic politics, brought about by a reckless dictator, but rather by the lack of a leader capable of controlling and consolidating the pluralistic institutions and of making the decision to avert the war.

History, however, always provides the other side of the coin. The national effort to prosecute the war prompted social equalization in many areas. Within business, for instance, the difference between blue-collar workers and white-collar employees was reduced to a minimum, and loyalty and a sense of belonging among workers and employees were greatly heightened. The result was a nationwide acceptance of the Iye type of Japanese management practice, which had begun in the large businesses during the 1920s. In rural Japan, as government control of food production was strengthened, measures were adopted to encourage tenant farmers to produce more by increasing their crop shares, which resulted in narrowing the income gap between them and their landlords—a marked improvement over past inequalities. Nor can one neglect the implications of the mass entry into the nation’s workforce by women during the war years, when male workers were in short supply.

Furthermore, the central control of the nation’s economy in an all-out war effort brought government and industry ever closer together. The “administrative guidance” provided by the Ministry of International Trade and Industry, the “window regulations” by the Ministry of Finance and the Bank of Japan, the formation of business groups clustering around their main banks, and the system of internal adjustment of conflicting economic interests by trade associations are some of the institutions, born of the wartime experience of economic control measures, that have played a major role
in Japan’s postwar economic growth and provided the important social, economic, and administrative conditions that have supported postwar Japan’s dominant party system.

ESTABLISHMENT OF A DOMINANT PARTY SYSTEM

The defeat of Japan in World War II, the so-called Occupation reforms instituted under the aegis of the American Occupation authorities, and the sustained high economic growth from after the middle of the 1950s have contributed to establishing democracy in Japan by both altering and strengthening some of the political trends summarized in the preceding pages. The democratization of postwar Japan, like Japanese modernization since the Meiji Restoration, was brought about as a combination of evolutionary change from the past and revolutionary change precipitated by outside pressure.

The democracy that became established in Japan after the war was characterized both by continuity and discontinuity with the political institutionalization that had taken place before the war. Therefore, the Japanese democracy that emerged had features that made it different from that of the West, especially from the Anglo-American type. Its institutional expression was a dominant party system.

The first significant postwar change was the acceptance of popular sovereignty and with it the primacy of the national Diet, the political parties, and other democratic institutions under the new revised constitution of 1947. The new structure centered upon a parliamentary cabinet system. Under the new constitution, the national Diet, a bicameral system composed only of publicly elected members, became “the supreme organ of the state power,” and, as a result, the old institutions of political privilege such as the House of Peers and the Privy Council, whose members were not publicly elected, were abolished. The prime minister was to be selected from the Diet membership, the majority of the cabinet members also had to be Diet members, and the cabinet was to be held responsible to the Diet.

All prime ministers since the promulgation of the new constitution in 1947 have been members of the House of Representatives, and the cabinet members have also been mostly Diet members. The executive authority of the prime minister over his cabinet members has been greatly strengthened in comparison with prewar practice. The military, which had held a position of independent power in the prewar government structure, was completely disbanded after the war by the demilitarization policy of the Occupation authorities. The intensification of the Cold War and Japan’s recovery of national independence have caused the advent of a new military, called the Self-Defense Force, but its size up to the present has remained considerably smaller than would be expected by today’s international standards because the American military provide security for Japan. The commander in chief of the Self-Defense Force

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is the prime minister, and the top management of the Defense Agency, directly in charge of the forces' command and administration, is securely in the hands of a civilian director and his staff.

In postwar Japan, given the strong criticism of the "rampage" (dokuso) of the prewar military, a serious division of public opinion has existed over the nation's defense policy, but a broad national consensus has always supported civilian control of the Self-Defense Force. Therefore, it is totally unlikely that the Self-Defense Force might, like the prewar military, attain an independent position free from cabinet control in the foreseeable future. Not only has the governing structure been democratized, but the heterogeneous and divisive nature of the prewar regime has also been fundamentally corrected. The formation of the dominant party system of postwar Japan would not have been possible without such revolutionary changes in the governing structure.

But postwar democratization did not stem from the elimination of old obstacles alone; it was also characterized by continuity. As already pointed out, even under the prewar constitution, different interpretations were possible about the status and role of the emperor, and in fact he was largely a figurehead. Therefore, when the new constitution asserted that "the Emperor is the symbol of Japan, and he is the symbol of unity of the people of Japan," most Japanese did not regard this as strange. Moreover, although the emperor was considered sacred in prewar Japan, the Japanese concept of God is different from that of the Almighty God of the Judaeo-Christian tradition, the Japanese having no clear dividing line between god and human. Thus, when in 1946 the emperor publicly disassociated himself from "godhood," most Japanese were not really surprised. Furthermore, as demonstrated by the emergence of a political-party cabinet system during the 1920s, it was possible even under the prewar constitution for a parliamentary cabinet system to evolve in Japan so long as there were favorable conditions. Besides, many political leaders during the occupation period had participated in political party activities during the 1920s. In terms of the parliamentary cabinet system and the political parties, the postwar democratization of Japan can be seen as a continuation of the prewar experience.

The fact that both the principle of popular sovereignty and the parliamentary cabinet system were written into the new constitution, however, had a profound implication for the legitimization and stabilization of democratic institutions along with the acceptance of a guarantee of the civil rights of the people. Further, when anyone compares Japan before and after the war, there is little doubt that postwar Japan is more peaceful, enjoys more freedom, and is more affluent, and most Japanese have come to believe that it is far better than the prewar regime. Although the postwar constitution was first drafted by the American Occupation authorities and promulgated by the Japanese government with limited revisions (there are some expressions in the text difficult to translate into Japanese), the new constitution enjoys wide acceptance by the Japanese people. Most traditionalists critical of postwar reforms who longed for a return to the prewar regime were purged and kept out of politics during the Occupation period, at the end of which time they were pardoned but remained a minority and lost whatever influence they had had.
The second significant postwar trend is the strengthening of a tendency already seen in prewar Japan. This is the increase in middle-level institutions and organizations, many of which have assumed increasingly important political roles as pressure groups. The authority and the autonomy of local governments have been strengthened, and the prefectural governors, mayors, and village chiefs have been made publicly elected officials. The Ministry of Home Affairs, which controlled the local governments with an iron hand during the prewar years, has been divided into a number of ministries and agencies, and its traditional authority has been dissipated. The local governments in the postwar period have continued their fiscal dependence on the central government, and the central government in turn, through its ministries' and agencies' "directives," "guidance," and subsidies, or by directly sending in their own staffs, has been exerting a significant influence on the affairs of the local governments, especially those of the prefectures. But the relationship between the central government and the local governments no longer takes the form of the prewar vertical chain of command. The prefectural governors, the mayors, the village chiefs, and the members of the local assemblies at all these levels have organized themselves into national federations to function as pressure groups in order to apply their muscle on the central government's decision-making process for their common good. Some prefectural governors, mayors, and village chiefs belong to political parties that happen to be opposition parties at the level of the national government. These so-called progressive local governments increased during the latter half of the 1960s and the first part of the 1970s, during which the popular demand for the fulfillment of environmental protection and social welfare needs reached a new height in most major cities.

In the private sector of Japan's postwar economy, the /iyu-type Japanese management practice, which spread widely during the war years, gained further acceptance and became more refined. In postwar Japan, the organization of labor unions was formally started by the encouragement of the Occupation authorities, but most of the organized unions were so-called enterprise unions, which included as members all permanent employees of each business firm, white-collar and blue-collar workers alike. This form of unionism was in harmony with the personnel policies of the Japanese management system.

Even though the national federations of these enterprise unions often use radical, even revolutionary rhetoric, the individual unions and their members have increased their sense of belonging to the businesses by gaining new positions of influence within them. Rapid economic growth since the mid-1950s has contributed to the strengthening of the union members' loyalty to their businesses as a result of cumulative increases in their wage income. From 1955 until the 1970s, therefore, the so-called spring offensive of Japanese organized labor—the annual contract negotiations by most of the national labor unions—has been no more than a grandiose ceremony confirming the equitable sharing of the fruits of economic growth between management and labor. Business corporations on their part have formed national trade associations, joining their forces in nationwide organizations such as the Federation of Economic Organizations (Keidanren), and have begun their lobbying activities using such organizations as pressure groups.
Momentous changes also took place in rural communities. The landlords, who had begun slipping in power and prestige during the war years, suffered a mortal blow when the Occupation authorities implemented a thorough agricultural land reform program. Along with the landlords the rural power base on which the prewar Diet members relied so heavily collapsed when the notables ceased to be notables. In their place there arose within the farm communities agricultural cooperatives whose members were a new class of independent farmers. The children of the agricultural land reform, they are now beginning to exercise a dominant influence within their communities. Until rapid economic growth started the large-scale exodus of the rural population in postwar Japan, the rural communities' share of national productivity exceeded 40 percent, and naturally the influence of the farm cooperatives as pressures groups was significant. Even after the population exodus had taken place and the urban centers became flooded, the overrepresentation of the rural regions at the national Diet has persisted, and the agricultural cooperatives continue to exercise a strong political influence.

Rapid economic growth has given rise to a variety of new groups, each promoting its special interests; growth has also increased the size of the pie for sharing among these groups in the form of distributable state funds and preferential treatments. The result has been the mushrooming of pressure groups and their lobbying activities. Increased opportunities of participation at the middle levels of society, especially the fact that most workers have been unionized and that the agricultural land reform was forcefully carried out, were effective means of absorbing the discontent of the masses and preventing them from feeling excluded. The democratic reforms of the Occupation authorities reduced the chances of a socialist revolution in Japan and at the same time reduced the traditionalists' chances to stage a counterrevolution; such chances were later rendered completely futile by the remarkably high economic growth.

The third trend in postwar Japan has been the increasing influence of the central bureaucracy, which has survived the shock of defeat in the war and the democratization reform. The Occupation authorities did not place Japan under an American military government (as in Germany) but chose to adopt an indirect method of governing Japan by the use of its own governmental structure. Therefore many Japanese bureaucracies (except the military and the Ministry of Home Affairs) were preserved essentially intact. Under the direction of the Occupation authorities, many wartime leaders were purged, but most of them were military leaders, politicians, and Home Ministry officials; relatively few were high-ranking officials from other government bureaucracies. Besides, in these government offices, the positions thus vacated were quickly filled by career officials in the same agencies who would have eventually assumed these posts anyway.

Finally, the once-important goal of becoming a strong military power was totally renounced, and the new "purified" goals of postwar Japan became economic recovery.

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and growth. In the difficult conditions of the postwar years, strong guidance by the government was deemed indispensable if Japan were to achieve this goal, hence the roles of the Ministries of Finance and International Trade and Industry (which had accumulated their expertise through the wartime experience and ties with the business community) greatly increased.

Japan’s economic growth has produced abundant additional funds with which to pay for administrative instruments of manipulation such as government loans, preferential tax treatments, subsidies, and government contracts. The relationship that grew between the government agencies in charge of economic affairs and the business communities is comparable to that between central and local governments. Government intervention, however, except for the short postwar recovery period, has been predominantly indirect and advisory in place of the direct and imperative wartime economic control with its punitive sanctions. The wartime excesses of the government bureaucracy were not forgotten by the business communities, who were cautious about their possible recurrence.

Postwar changes contributed to the emergence of a dominant party system, in which the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) was to monopolize the reins of the government to the exclusion of other political parties. The LDP, the party in power since its formation in 1955, can be called an example of a party leading an unusually long-term and stable government even among the highly industrialized societies of today, a government that guarantees political freedom in principle. Other examples of long-lasting governments among the advanced nations with liberal democracy are: France under the Fifth Republic, where the conservative coalition government lasted for twenty-three years (1958–1981); West Germany, where the Christian Democratic Union maintained its coalition regime for twenty-four postwar years until the Social Democrats and the Liberal Democrats took over in a new coalition, which in turn lasted for thirteen years; Canada between 1963 and 1984, where the Liberal party’s government remained in power with a single nine-month disruption when the Progressive-Conservative Party took power from May 1979 through February 1980; Sweden, where the Social Democratic government lasted for forty-four years (1932–1976) and staged a successful comeback in 1982 after a six-year interval; and Italy, where, despite frequent changes of governing coalitions, the Christian Democrats have always been at the center of all coalitions.

In most of these cases, however, the long-lasting government was a coalition, forced to relinquish power, at least for a time, under the worldwide chronic recession after the first oil crisis. Here the performance record of Japan’s Liberal Democrats is especially noteworthy in terms of their success in maintaining their one-party government for the past twenty-eight years when compared with the short-lived prewar party cabinets. Moreover, the LDP, which began to lose popular support after the second half of the 1960s, showed dramatic gains from the second half of the 1970s, at least if judged by the popular support as tabulated by public-opinion polls.

How can we explain such exceptional political control? The first reason is the change in Japan’s governing structure, as already discussed. The constitutional sanction of the principle of popular sovereignty and the system of parliamentary
cabinet have helped unify and consolidate the governmental structure, and the postwar cabinets, using the majority support of the Diet, can more easily control the state institutions and integrate them into a functioning whole. But the democratic parliamentary cabinet system, which also exists throughout Western Europe and the British Commonwealth, cannot alone satisfactorily explain the phenomenon of the LDP’s one-party dominance in Japan.

A second reason may be that the simplification of national goals in postwar Japan rendered the achievement of consensus easier than before. As has been explained, the prewar national goals of catching up with the Western advanced nations were carried into Japan’s postwar policy, but the idea of making the nation a strong military power was abandoned, and further industrialization was declared the only means of catching up with the West. Postwar Japan has opted to rely on the United States for its national security, and in so doing has greatly simplified its task of keeping the national burden down. The LDP was first established as a great coalition of nonsocialist political parties, but the fact that such a coalition was possible then, and that it has been successfully maintained since, indicates a broad common acceptance of national goals.

In reality, the LDP leadership, faced with the task of maintaining this great coalition containing a number of factions, almost annually shuffles both cabinet makeup and leadership posts in order to “equitably” distribute the various posts among LDP Diet members; and the terms of the prime minister’s office have been on the average shorter than in most other advanced democratic nations. So, although the LDP has perennially been the party in power, the stability of each of its cabinets has not been high. The LDP is, in fact, a confederation of factions, and the posts of party president (prime minister), cabinet members, and other important party leaders are shared by LDP members over short intervals. This device has made it possible for the party to maintain a flexible position relative to the changing outside world, absorb the intraparty discontent, and give the people a constantly new impression of party leadership—all of these factors helping to stabilize the LDP’s hold on the government.

Third, we can cite the unrealistic position of the opposition parties. Since the formation of the LDP, the Japanese political parties have customarily been referred to as “conservative” and “progressive.” The progressive political movement in postwar Japan has been forged by a variety of Marxist socialist ideologists and those who professed faith in the individualism, democracy, and pacifism conceptually embodied in the new constitution. Among the latter group, however, individualism was never popularly accepted except by a few intellectuals, while democracy was given different interpretations by the conservatives and progressives. Socialism as an ideology has always been of secondary importance in dividing conservatives and progressives, and, as time has passed, it has diminished in political importance. Marxist socialism is not in harmony with the new constitution. When most people, and the supporters of the progressive parties in particular, became the beneficiaries of the new constitution, the selling of Marxist socialism grew difficult. Therefore, when the Japanese Communist Party (JCP) adopted the policy of revolution by violence during the first half of the 1950s under the influence of the Soviet Union and the People’s Republic of China, its
downfall as a political party was foreseeable. Furthermore, the world of capitalist economies, including Japan, grew vigorously after the second half of the 1950s. As the facts about repression and stagnation in the Soviet-style socialist societies became evident, Japanese socialism, with its predominant Marxist influence, suffered a serious blow.

In contrast, the idealistic pacifist movement has continued to show strength until recently and has represented a more formidable "progressive" force in opposition to the government. The primary reason for this is Japan's tragic war experience, which produced strong support for pacifism; secondly, the parties in opposition did not have to face the harsh realities of the Cold War: the security of Japan was almost fully guaranteed by the American nuclear deterrent and America's powerful navy and air force so long as the LDP government maintained friendly ties with the United States. In other words, while the conservatives, as the party in power charged with the responsibility of coping with the realities of the East-West confrontation, were forced to make the difficult decision whether to go ahead with the U.S.-Japan security pact and the buildup of the Self-Defense Force, the progressives could engage in high-sounding, abstract criticism from their sanctuary legitimized by the pacifist new constitution. Thus, the question of whether Japan should embrace the Mutual Security Agreement with the United States and support the expansion of the Self-Defense Force emerged as a major issue for the contending political parties.

The fact that the progressives were able to launch a safe, easy attack on the conservatives by taking the position of idealistic pacifism was later to place a heavy burden on the progressives' effort to expand their political power. But earlier, the idealistic pacifist movement to guard the new constitution from conservative attacks acquired a degree of reality, even urgency, during the latter half of the 1950s. At that time, the LDP remained the powerhouse of the old-time conservatives purged during the Occupation years, many of them dissatisfied with the postwar reforms. During the 1960s, however, the LDP learned an important lesson from the rising tide of the progressive movement against the renewal of the U.S.-Japan Mutual Security Agreement. Starting with the Ikeda administration, the LDP dropped the issue of amending the constitution and, in its place, pushed the idea of economic growth, which had already begun by that time, as the party's highest political goal. As a result, the pacifist movement lost its momentum, and its attack on the conservatives was reduced to pro forma criticism.

The progressives were faced with a political dilemma. It was too much of a political gamble for them to renounce their idealistic pacifism, which had been legitimized by the constitution and supported by a fair number of voters. Therefore, it was easier for them to wrap themselves in abstract idealism divorced from the realities while passively accepting the protected atmosphere of Pax Americana. At the same time, the sustained continuance of Japan's economic growth under the LDP administrations was a serious challenge to the socialist ideology of the progressives. But here too, so long as the labor unions, who comprised the largest segment of the progressives' organizational base, could continue to receive their share of the fruit of economic growth, there was no compelling need for the progressives to consider a
fundamental change in their economic program. Militant postures were in fact useful to progressive Diet members and organized labor leaders in maintaining their status quo. In similar circumstances in West Germany, the Social Democratic party opted to sever its relationship with Marxism in favor of joining the conservative party to form a grand coalition, indeed a historical turnabout, and move toward joining the government. At this moment in history, the Japanese Socialist Party, the principle opposition party, decided to abandon its policy of "structural reforms," and regressed into dogmatic Marxism, which had already lost most of its enthusiastic supporters.

Once the LDP administration, supported by the impotence of the opposition parties, became a long-term occupant of the central power position in Japan, positive feedback began to occur, guaranteeing the incumbent administration an easier time in perpetuating itself just because of its long incumbency. This is the fourth reason that the LDP has been able to hold on for an extended period: the "incumbency effect." As already pointed out, the LDP was first formed as a product of a complex realignment and the resultant great coalition of the nonsocialist political parties after their long history of antagonism since the Meiji period. At the early stage of the LDP's organizational consolidation, therefore, it lacked a sophisticated fundraising organization and effectively functioning pressure groups and remained largely dependent on the personal fund-raising abilities of influential faction leaders. In those early days, furthermore, the dependable constituencies for these nonsocialist political parties were still the rural farming communities and the old urban middle-class population—the traditional basis of conservatism—and for this reason the early LDP had a strong built-in traditionalist orientation.

Burgeoning pressure groups, however, aided by democratization and rapid economic growth have increasingly become aligned with the LDP during its long-term incumbency. LDP Diet members, in the meantime, have continued building their campaign support organizations into a carefully constructed vote-getting machine by brokering public works funds and subsidies and by relaying the needs of their constituencies to the appropriate executive agencies. Thus, the LDP has been able to consolidate its organizing effort not only at the party level, but also by working with pressure groups and voters. This positive effort contrasts with the socialists' approach of remaining a merely structural opposition, with organizational support at present coming only from organized labor.

Among the various interest groups, however, the labor unions alone were not incorporated into the LDP's sphere of organizational influence. But the individual business unions maintained (albeit not at the level of their national federations) an intimate and favorable relationship with business management, and in that sense, at least indirectly, were tied to the LDP administration by way of these corporate ties. Labor union representatives also participated in a number of advisory councils attached to the cabinet and the government ministries and agencies, and thus the unions could hope to exert some influence on the process of governmental policy. The

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Ministry of Labor, in particular, maintains a close relationship with the labor leaders, and often functions within the government as the spokesman for labor's interests. When these aspects are considered, it is not difficult to see that the labor unions are actually insiders of and collaborators with the LDP.

Japan's economic growth did not support just the LDP. The large-scale movement of the rural population into the urban centers as a result of the progress of industrialization deposited a large number of new voters in the large cities whom the existing pressure groups and campaign organizations were unable to recapture. Most of them, however, remained beyond the reach of the Socialist party, which was built upon the support of organized labor. Given these social changes, the LDP, despite its effort to consolidate vote-getting and fundraising organizations, has suffered from losses in vote share and rate of support alongside the Socialist Party. The only political parties that have succeeded, at least in part, in organizing these new urban voters, whom neither the LDP nor the Socialist Party have been able to capture, are the Komei party (Soka Gakkai) and the Communist Party, which has renounced its earlier policy of violent revolution. The significant growth of both parties from the 1960s through the early part of the 1970s can only be explained in the light of these events.

The stormy process of growth in Japan has also produced serious environmental problems and has intensified the demand for replenishing the welfare budget for the benefit of those who have been placed in a relatively disadvantageous position vis-à-vis the sharing of the fruit of economic growth. The advances in personal income in Japan and the further spread of higher education among the populace have in the meantime created a large stratum of population that has come to be known as the "new middle mass." This group is more critical of political leaders than voters in the past and has a strong desire to participate in the social decision-making process. At the beginning, the progressive parties reacted more positively to this new trend, especially on the local-government level. The environmental issue is predominantly a local problem, and participation in policy decisions and the administration of welfare programs bring the participants into close contact with the local government.

The conservatives, on the other hand, who had committed their party to the policy of economic growth and had gained considerable self-confidence in its successful execution, were not sufficiently sensitive to popular demands concerning environment, welfare, and the like; nor were they able to respond in a timely fashion to the mounting popular desire for participation. This happened because they had become too involved in their program of building a political following through the distribution of public funds. Therefore it can be said that the progressives, who remained passive beneficiaries of economic growth but were excluded from power, found themselves in a better position, at least at the beginning, to respond to the changing political needs at the local government level. The result was a mushrooming of progressive-controlled prefectural and city governments after the 1960s. In this respect, the opposition parties did have some opportunities to stage a possible upset of the uninterrupted LDP control.

This chance, however, was quickly lost because of the flexible response that the LDP administration soon developed to this new challenge of the progressives. The LDP administration incorporated into its own policy its concept of environmental protection and welfare program improvement. Environmental problems became national issues through Japan after the spring of 1970; by the end of the year, however, fourteen antipollution bills had been voted into law, and in 1971 the Environmental Agency was created as a bold new LDP response to the environmental issues. In 1973, welfare benefits were improved in the areas of retirement pensions, medical insurance, and social welfare; the Japanese social-security system reached roughly the level of that found in the United States and the Western European nations.

After the first oil shock in the fall of 1973, the ensuing economic crisis redirected the world’s attention from environmental issues back to the question of economic growth. Behind this shift of public concern was also the fact that the strengthening of antipollution measures had stopped unrestrained environmental destruction and even produced some success in reversing the trend. In this period, the loss of government revenues made the further expansion of welfare programs difficult, which took away the luster from the progressive local governments—they were now held responsible for the deficit spending.

The performance of the Japanese economy after the oil crisis was one of the most impressive in the world. The living standards of most Japanese in this period continued to rise, aided by the expansion of the welfare and environmental programs since the beginning of the 1970s. The deterioration of the international environment, however, and the general slowdown of the world economy heightened a sense of uneasiness about the future, and the popular expectations for better living standards were lowered. In these circumstances, when daily life was satisfactory while the future seemed full of uncertainties, most people tended to support the status quo and to seek an avoidance of sudden changes or adventurous politics. This conservative trend translated into political support for the LDP. In fact, the ratio of support for LDP, after continuously falling until shortly after the first oil crisis, began a slow climb despite occasional ups and downs and gained the highest level since LDP formation by the early 1980s.

The fifth reason for the LDP’s ability to stay in power, and perhaps the most important one, has been policy flexibility and generally excellent performance. Of the four successive general elections held since the middle of the 1970s, the LDP was only able to win in three, and by a bare simple majority despite the expected voter tendency to “return to conservatism.” The LDP’s “retrogression,” however, was not necessarily caused by an increase in influence by the opposition parties, but rather by the lack of turnout among the conservative voters, who are LDP supporters. Many stayed home convinced that victory already belonged to the LDP; others did not vote as a protest against annoying public issues such as LDP involvement in scandals and the suggestion of tax hikes. As a result, despite the high percentage of LDP support

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10 Inoguchi, [Modern Japan], ch. 4, and Y. Murakami, Shin Chūkan Taishu no Jidai [The Age of the New Middle Mass] (Tokyo: Chuo Koronsha, 1984), ch. 5.
determined by public opinion polls, the number of LDP Diet seats decreased. The fact that popular criticism against the LDP does not translate itself into votes for the opposition shows the latent strength of popular support for LDP as well as the weakness of the opposition parties.

In summary, reflecting on the Japanese experience in political institutionalization and democratization, three points can be made. Although Japan’s industrialization was started under favorable domestic and international conditions, democracy did not emerge in Japan’s first phase of political institutionalization. This is an indication of the difficulty of fostering democracy in the early stage of industrialization; it also shows how the effort to democratize can often be counterproductive, at least temporarily, to the goals of industrialization.

Industrialization cannot succeed in any country without mass mobilization of the people toward specific goals and success in industrialization will heighten the demand for participation. The government that sets economic modernization as its goal will sooner or later be forced to prepare an institutional framework in which groups with divergent political persuasions are encompassed. The government must provide opportunities for participation, especially at the middle level, to prevent “overloading” of political institutions.

Finally, such a framework does not have to be a democracy in the traditional Western sense. The important function of such a framework is, after all, a flexible response to the changing demands of the people, including their demand for political participation and a high level of societal performance in all respects, including economic growth.
South Korea is at a political crossroads. After four decades of political experimentation with both democratic and authoritarian systems, Koreans are still debating whether a full-fledged democracy is desirable and feasible. Those in power and their supporters contend that South Korea can afford to have only a partly democratic system, one in which some political rights must be curtailed to enable the nation to cope with its security and economic problems. Those who do not accept such a view argue that a democratic system with the liberties of the citizenry fully operative can be just as effective and stable as an authoritarian order, if not more so. Furthermore, they contend, it will provide the society with greater socioeconomic justice, because it is likely to be more responsive to the people. This debate is not unique to Korea. But it is particularly important in Korea because the division of views and interests is itself a major source of political instability.

Contemporary South Korean politics can be characterized as basically authoritarian, with a degree of effectiveness but also of potential instability. A series of questions in this regard require answers. What are the explanations for such a development? What are the internal and external policy implications for South Korean politics today? How stable and well-established—that is, institutionalized—is the South Korean political structure? How is it likely to evolve in the immediate and long-term future? These questions will be explored in the following pages.

THE AUTHORITARIAN LEGACY OF THE PARK GOVERNMENT

Juan Linz defines authoritarian regimes as “political systems with limited, not responsible, political pluralism; without an elaborate and guiding ideology (but with distinctive mentalities); without intensive or extensive political mobilization (except at some points in their development); and in which a leader (or occasionally a small
group) exercises power within formally ill-defined but quite predictable limits.” With minor qualifications, this seems to be a general description of the characteristics of South Korean politics of the past two decades.

In South Korea today, opposition parties, elections, policy debates, and a subsystem autonomy of various official and nonofficial groups and institutions exist and are meaningful, but only to a limited extent. Elections generate competition and debate mostly within the government and opposition parties, but not between them. Because of the built-in safeguards (for the incumbents) in the electoral system, the opposition parties cannot realistically hope to win the presidency or a majority of the seats in the National Assembly. Serious debates on public policy issues are conducted inside and outside the government and its party, but only as long as they do not involve a question of the nature of the governing system or of the presidential leadership. Yet social groups and institutions are generally left free from intense ideological indoctrination or politicization. The state exercises effective negative control aimed at preventing antigovernment activities rather than totalitarian positive control designed to elicit unqualified support for the government or party in power.

Although there are historical and sociological explanations for the authoritarian trends in South Korea, much of the structural and practical applications of authoritarian politics can be traced to the eighteen-year rule of the Park Chung-hee government. Thus, understanding the nature of the Park period is essential for an analysis of contemporary South Korean politics.

Major General Park Chung-hee came to power in May 1961 after toppling the constitutionally established government of Chang Myon, accusing Chang and other civilian leaders of being corrupt, incapable of defending the country from internal and external threats of communism, and incompetent to bring about economic and social transformation. Upon taking power, Park pledged to transfer the government to “fresh and conscientious politicians” when the initial tasks of the revolution were completed. During the ensuing two years, Park made preparations to assume the leadership of a future “civilian” government by (1) banning for at least six years more than 4,000 politicians of previous regimes from political activities; (2) consolidating his own position within the ruling group by purging the recalcitrant elements and potential rivals from the junta; (3) having a new constitution adopted by a referendum that provided for a strong presidential system with a weak legislature; and (4) building a government party, the Democratic Republican Party (DRP), which later aided Park and his supporters in presidential and National Assembly elections.

Following a series of political crises that resulted from Park’s reluctance to relinquish military rule, a presidential election was held in November 1963 under pressure from the United States and domestic political forces. Park formally retired from the military at the end of August to participate in the campaign and won the


2 This was done through the “Political Purification Law” of March 1962. Most of those banned from politics were cleared by early 1963.
election, considered to have been conducted in a reasonably fair manner. He received only 46.7 percent of the votes cast, with his major opponent, Yun Po-sun, receiving 45 percent. Park’s support was particularly weak in the urban areas; he also failed to receive strong support from the so-called military areas along the demilitarized zone. In the legislative election that immediately followed, Park’s party won a large majority, 110 seats out of a total 175. Park was reelected in 1967 by the more comfortable plurality of 49 percent of the votes cast over his chief opponent’s 39 percent. In the second half of the 1960s, all appeared to be going well for President Park’s continued stay in office, except for two elements. One was the agitation of the students, who opposed many aspects of the Park government’s foreign and economic policies as well as his political record; the other was the constitutional restriction on the presidency to two four-year terms.

The first major outbreak of student demonstrations during the Park period took place in 1964 against the proposed Korea-Japan normalization treaty. The students believed that South Korea had made too many concessions to Japan and that the treaty was negotiated in a “humiliating” manner. They demonstrated not only against the treaty but also against what they considered other failures of the Park government. The government initially attempted to mollify the students through postponement of the signing of the treaty and a cabinet reshuffle. As the protest grew in size and intensity, however, the government, well aware of the consequences of an earlier (April 1960) student uprising, sternly suppressed it, declaring martial law and arresting several hundred students. After this event, large-scale student demonstrations occurred many times until the end of the Park regime: in 1965, against allegedly unfair National Assembly elections; in 1969, against the constitutional revision which permitted a third-term presidency; and since 1972 (on a smaller scale), against the Yushin constitution (described later). In the face of a mounting threat to the governing system caused by student disturbances, President Park tightened the legal ban against student activism. In October 1971, the president ordered the expulsion from school of the leaders of demonstrations, rallies, sit-ins, strikes, or other “disorderly activities,” the disbandment of all nonacademic circles and groups on the campuses, and the prohibition of all unauthorized student publications. An April 1974 presidential decree provided for punishment up to the death penalty for student protest activities. This decree, together with the widely publicized Emergency Measure 9, which banned student demonstrations and forbade “dissemination of falsehood,” remained in effect until 1979.

The 1969 constitutional amendment—achieved through a referendum—enabled the president to run for a third term in 1971. This move became the impetus for further student agitation, which in turn triggered heavier penalties for antigovernment activities. The 1971 presidential election, in which Park’s chief opposition candidate, Kim Dae-jung, received 46 percent of the votes cast, indicated that Park’s continued stay in office could be threatened under the existing electoral system notwithstanding the enormous advantages he enjoyed as the incumbent.

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Except for political-intelligence operations and the suppression of student political activism, many of the authoritarian features of the political system did not begin to appear in full force until 1972. There was relative freedom of press, speech, and political activities by government opponents. All three presidential elections held before 1972 were close and could have gone the other way if there had been a greater degree of unity, popular appeal, and determination within the opposition.  

During the 1970s, the restrictions on opposition activities and limitations to effective political competition were legally prescribed. Until 1979, when the Park government collapsed after the president’s assassination, the key legal instrument for this purpose was the Yushin ("revitalizing reform") constitution, which was adopted in a referendum held under martial law in November 1972. The Yushin constitution had been proposed by the Park government assertedly to facilitate the unification of the country, to cope with the changing international situation, and to carry out Park’s socioeconomic development programs. It provided for an indirect election of the president by the National Conference for Unification (whose delegates, being locally elected, were most easily subject to governmental influence and control); appointment by the president of one-third of the 219-member National Assembly (the rest of the membership being elected in 73 two-member districts); an unrestricted number of six-year terms for the president; a reduction of the powers of the legislature and the judiciary; and the curtailment of civil and political rights made possible by presidential decrees.  

A series of "emergency measures" promulgated by the president beginning in January 1974 banned all criticism of the Yushin constitution and any demand for its revision. A March 1975 revision of the criminal code provided for heavy jail terms for any citizen at home or abroad who “insults, slanders or harms by rumors or other means the Government or its agencies.” Student demonstrations and rallies were prohibited by law and presidential decrees, under penalty of imprisonment and expulsion from school.  

Other legal instruments that could be used to weaken the political opposition included the National Security Act (promulgated in June 1960 before the military coup d'etat and revised in September 1962) and the Anti-Communist Act (promulgated in July 1961 and revised in December 1961, September 1962, and October 1963), under which antigovernment activity might be designated as “sympathizing with communism or communists” or “aiding antigovernment organizations,” thereby constituting a

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4 One may ask what would have happened if one of these elections had gone the other way. On this point, a student of Korean military politics wrote: “Park’s victory [in 1963] was in fact a blessing for the future of democracy in Korea. Had the military lost, it can be safely assumed that the military would have ignored the electoral outcome and continued its rule even though such rule would have meant a total destruction of constitutionalism.” Ibid., p. 136.


The arm of the government most directly involved with carrying out these laws was the Korean Central Intelligence Agency (KCIA), which had "practically unlimited power to investigate and to detain any person accused of aiding the enemy." The operation of the KCIA, established in 1961, "severely restricted the right to dissent and to criticize the regime in power."^9

An overall assessment of President Park’s legacy and his contribution to Korean political development indicates that in both cases, a complex balance sheet of negative and positive contributions can be drawn up. One of Park’s negative contributions was his failure to provide for an institutional and political framework in which an orderly succession could take place following his departure from the political scene, voluntarily or otherwise. He left the nation with the Yushin constitution, which was unworkable after his death. It was tailor made for him to prolong and strengthen his presidency, making a major constitutional revision inevitable. When Park died, the country did not have a viable framework within which a new leader or government could be chosen in an orderly way.

Secondly, Park had not been helpful in the institutionalization of political parties and a party system through which a new generation of leaders could emerge and compete before the electorate. He was suspicious of both the progovernment and opposition parties, and considered them necessary evils at best, a threat at worst. Neither his own Democratic Republican Party nor the opposition New Democratic Party was given an opportunity to develop a leadership structure or cultivate grassroots support. As a result, neither party could attract the participation of high-caliber people or induce strong identification on the part of a large number of citizens. Thus, political parties failed to become the principal vehicle through which the struggle for power and the opportunity to make policy could be carried out following Park’s death.

Third, in the course of his prolonged rule, Park had generated so much alienation and opposition against his own rule and also against the sociopolitical system as a whole that, once he departed from the scene, piecemeal changes and peaceful transition became almost impossible. Various persons and groups sought radical solutions and tried to settle old scores immediately. In addition, during Park’s tenure, much of the top elite circulation took place horizontally and within a limited circle of supporters, thus frustrating the hopes for power of many ambitious persons both within and outside of his party. It resulted in intensifying the intraparty as well as interparty power struggle after Park’s death.

Finally, as a result of his increasing loss of popularity, Park made political use of the security issue with the unfortunate result of weakening its credibility. Many people, particularly the students, became cynical about South Korea’s security problems, even though these problems were genuine. At the same time, the political involvement of some government law-enforcement and intelligence agencies resulted in compromising their effectiveness in the tasks for which they were created and caused a decline in their legitimacy.

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8 Kim, Politics of Military Revolution, p. 145.
9 Ibid.
Against the negative legacy, certain positive consequences of the Park era should be mentioned. As a result of Park’s persistent drive for rapid economic development, he succeeded in creating a substantial economic class with a stake in social stability and political continuity. A government in power, regardless of its personalities or party support, could count on its acceptance by an important segment of the society as long as the government was committed to providing continued economic growth, social stability, and security from external threats. Similarly, with his basically agrarian orientation, which found its expression in the Saemaul (“new village”) movement, Park brought about rural development and stabilization. In return, the rural areas on the whole supported the existing regime.

A related consequence of Park’s rule was the regularization of government procedures and the institutionalization of presidential power. These were accompanied by excessive bureaucratization of the government and the proliferation of authoritarian practices surrounding the presidency. In the Korean context, however, they could be seen as serving positive purposes by making the exercise of administrative power by the government and its leaders more economical, automatic, and effective. The increased capability of the military to play a political role may be seen as another important consequence of the Park regime. After Park’s presidency, the military has been ready to intervene when it felt the need. The late president had much to do with this phenomenon because of the way he came to power and because of his heavy dependence on the military to maintain his power.

The picture of Korean society at the time of President Park’s death emerging from this description is that there was a potential for acute polarization and a power struggle, but no leadership structure or institutional mechanisms by which political struggles could be carried out without violence and social disorder. These were the sociopolitical conditions that enabled a group of determined military leaders to take over the government, to carry out social reforms, to find considerable initial support, and to undertake the task of building new political institutions. There was no resistance to the abrogation of the Yushin constitution, which had not enjoyed popular support. The task of disbanding the existing political parties was also made easier because they lacked institutional coherence and popular support.

SOME EXPLANATIONS FOR THE AUTHORITARIAN TREND OF PARK’S GOVERNMENT

Explaining the military takeover of power in 1961 and the “authoritarianizing” trend in South Korea since the late 1960s amounts to two different tasks. To explain the former development, one has to realize the capacity and propensity of the military to intervene in politics, the reasons for the social receptivity to such a takeover, and the weaknesses of the preceding regime(s) toppled by the military. An explanation of the

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11 This is the main subject of Sungjoo Han, The Failure of Democracy in South Korea (Berkeley, 1974).
second phenomenon—the transformation of an existing regime—which is the main concern of this presentation, requires an analysis of the developing and ongoing relationship and interplay between the government and other political forces.

Concerning the authoritarian trend in Korea, various explanations have been offered by both critics and apologists of the government as well as observers purporting to be objective. Neo-Marxist writers argue that the South Korean government had to resort to repressive measures in order to collaborate with the economic interests of international capitalism led by the American and Japanese multinational corporations. This, however, is an oversimplified and distorted view that fails to take into account the realities of South Korean politics.

On a general level, scholars have pointed out factors such as (1) the centralizing and hierarchical nature of Korea’s political culture; (2) ideological cleavages between the rightists and the leftists as well as between authoritarian and liberal-democratic traits implicit in contemporary Korean society; and (3) the unbalanced development of political institutions—that is, the overdevelopment of the “output” organization such as the bureaucracy and the military relative to the “input” organizations such as political parties and interest groups. Other explanations include the leaders’ personal penchant for power, the legacy of Korea’s recent history, especially the Korean War, which has left the society militarized and lacking in civilian values, and the emergence of the “national consensus” on the need for a strong system of governance to cope with the security needs and to complete Korea’s socioeconomic transformation.

Comprehensive as this list of explanations might appear, it is not adequate in two respects. First, it does not distinguish between what might be called the “permissive” factors, which constitute the general background to authoritarianism on the one hand; and the “causal” factors, which act as the direct moving force in authoritarianization on the other. Second, the explanations do not specifically explain why the process of authoritarianization has been accelerated in South Korea since the end of the 1960s.

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14 Han, Failure of Democracy in South Korea.


16 This is the view expressed by many witnesses in the U.S. Congressional hearings on human rights in Korea. See U.S. House of Representatives, Human Rights in South Korea and the Philippines: Implications for U.S. Policy, Hearings Before the Subcommittee on International Organization of the Committee on International Relations, 94th Congress, 1st Session (Washington, D.C., 1975); also, Human Rights in Korea: Implications for U.S. Policy, Hearings Before the Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Affairs of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, 93rd Congress, 2nd Session (Washington, D.C., 1974).

17 Chae-jin Lee, “The Impact of the War on South Korea,” paper delivered at the 1965 Annual Meeting of the Association for Asian Studies, San Francisco.

18 For example, Yi Ch’ong-shik, Yushin Inyŏngwa Han’guk Ch’ongch’i [The Yushin Ideology and Korean Politics] (Seoul, 1977).
It seems that the general-level explanations—sociocultural, ideological, institutional, and historical—stipulate a permissive environment for authoritarian rule. The militarized nature of the society—large numbers of military personnel and veterans, diversion of large amounts of resources to defense, the priority given to military considerations in foreign and domestic policy making, and the permanent atmosphere of emergency—as well as the support that the Park government received from the military, bureaucratic, and business sectors also contributed to creating a political environment that permitted the strengthening of the authoritarian structure.

Another important factor was the relative absence of foreign pressure. Whereas American pressure had been responsible, at least in part, for the reintroduction of the National Assembly and the holding of the presidential election in 1963, major constitutional changes and other political measures of the late 1960s and 1970s were carried through without protest from the United States. It seems that South Korea’s participation in the Vietnam conflict in the second half of the 1960s and early part of the 1970s was an important reason for America’s refraining from applying pressure on Korea’s internal affairs.

The most important impetus for introducing the Yushin constitution came from the Park government’s realization that elections under the existing system (pre-Yushin) would not guarantee continued victories for the DRP candidates, and that, should a favorable outcome be engineered by nonlegal means to give the incumbent an election victory, it would provide the government’s opponents a rallying point, just as such an action had provoked Syngman Rhee’s opponents to collective action in 1960. The 1969 constitutional amendment, which enabled Park to run for a third term, was a turning point in the government’s ability to maintain the electoral support necessary to keep the president in office indefinitely. Many who had a favorable attitude toward the Park government and a high regard for its achievements were disappointed by the decision to tamper with the constitution to prolong Park’s presidency. Since the 1969 amendment only permitted a third term for the incumbent, a further stay in office beyond that term would have required another change in the constitution, which in turn would have cost the Park government more popular support.

During the several years following his narrow election victory in 1963, President Park succeeded in increasing his support levels, primarily due to the successful implementation of the government’s economic development plans. In elections, he and his party were also aided by the availability of disproportionately large amounts of campaign funds, which were of crucial importance in Korea. Because the situation was changing substantially after 1969, however, a significant restructuring of the legal system was deemed necessary if a transition of power either within the government party itself or to the opposition were to be prevented.

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The government advanced the following arguments in defense of the Yushin structure: by eliminating for practical purposes the interparty electoral competition, much "waste" of resources and time that had played a part in previous electioneering by both parties could be eliminated; the government, through its system of "administrative democracy" (to be discussed later), could now concentrate on solidifying the nation's defense and achieving social and economic development without the interference of politics; and the country would not be turned over to a weak government that could easily be toppled again by groups such as the military.

Apologists for the government also argued that an authoritarian, but humane and benevolent, political structure was in tune with Korea's political-cultural tradition and was therefore acceptable to most Korean people. Some of these arguments might have much truth in them. The nation's alleged need to have a strong state, however, happened to coincide with the government's political need to remove through legal means the possibility of effective political competition.

MODERNIZATION AND POLITICS: A COMPARISON WITH JAPAN

The problem of political development—that is, institutionalizing stable, effective, and democratic politics—may be understood more clearly when the Korean experience is compared with that of Japan, which, as a non-Western nation coming out of an authoritarian tradition, has combined democratic politics with relative stability, social order, and rapid economic development in the post–World War II era. In this regard, we may ask why and how socioeconomic modernization has had political consequences in Korea different from those in Japan.

Modernization is defined in many different ways. For our purpose, socioeconomic modernization encompasses four processes: (1) growing social mobility that usually results in urbanization and involves the physical and psychological uprooting of the people from the traditional setting; (2) industrialization, which means the use of new and scientific technology and human organization for greater productivity; (3) increased awareness among the people about the relationship between themselves and the rest of the world; and (4) growth in rational and secularized thinking. Socioeconomic modernization, thus defined, is bound to have a direct and profound bearing upon the politics of a country undergoing that process.

On the negative side, modernization tends to undermine traditional bases of political authority. Furthermore, increased awareness creates demands and expectations that cannot be met by the government. Industrialization creates new social and ideological cleavages and conflicts. Social mobility and urbanization make people more susceptible to ideological agitation and disorderly mass action. On the positive

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side, rational thinking makes the government more efficient. Improved communication and greater awareness make it easier for the government to mobilize national energy for achieving the collective goals set for the country. Economic growth and social development contribute to the expansion of social group, such as the middle class, which can support a democratic system of government.

Given these general tendencies, what actually happens to the politics of a modernizing country during a particular period depends on several factors: the nature of the traditional society of the modernizing country before the beginning of the process; the ways in which social change (modernization) has come about—for example, whether it has taken place in a controlled or uncontrolled manner; the timing of the modernization process; and the external environment that the country confronts.

Before the process of modernization began in the late nineteenth century, Korea was an authoritarian society ruled by a highly centralized bureaucracy under an autocratic monarch. This was in sharp contrast to traditional Japan, which, although equally authoritarian, had maintained a feudal (therefore, more pluralist) society with an emperor whose power was more symbolic than real. The concentration of power in the central government in Korea received a further boost in the twentieth century during Japanese rule, which imposed on Korea a centralized colonial administration. Until the end of World War II, Koreans experienced only a highly centralized executive system, neither checked nor balanced by countervailing power groups such as regional lords or elected representatives. Thus South Korea today has experienced an unbalanced development of political institutions—that is, the “overdevelopment” of the output institutions such as the bureaucracy and the military as opposed to the “underdevelopment” of input organizations such as political parties and interest groups.

Further, social change in Korea took place in an uncontrolled, indiscriminate way. During the colonial period, the traditional elite lost their power and social status; most of their values were discredited and their traditional practices discarded. While Japan had her Meiji Restoration and retained the emperor system, Korea experienced a total dismantling of her former political institutions and authority structure. Socioeconomic modernization was introduced to Korea by a foreign elite who had no interest in preserving its traditional institutions. By contrast, Japan was able to carry out modernization in a relatively selective, controlled manner. Thus, when the Koreans had the opportunity to form their own government after World War II, they had to build almost everything anew. No traditional mechanisms had been preserved by which loyalty to the new government could be generated; yet new means of conferring legitimacy, such as elections, were not institutionalized. In addition, the Korean War (1950–1953) brought about a process of massive, indiscriminate social dislocation and change for Korea from which it is still trying to recover.

Next, there is the question of timing. The type of politics a modernizing country is likely to experience at any given period depends in part upon the time it has had to experiment with modernization. Japan was ahead of most other non-Western countries in socioeconomic modernization. By 1945, she had had three-quarters of a century to experiment with “modern politics,” involving such elements as political parties,
representative democracy, and the military institution. The disastrous consequences of militarism in the pre–World War II period gave democracy a chance to thrive in Japan after the war. South Korea’s experiments with various modern political practices came wholly after 1945. Furthermore, neither the initial results of the charismatic leadership of Syngman Rhee nor those flowing from parliamentary democracy in 1960–1961 could be considered successful. Such unsatisfactory experiences could give an authoritarian system “negative legitimacy”—that is, its acceptance, albeit unenthusiastically, by the people derived from the feeling that other alternatives were not more desirable. A governmental system that would have been rejected if it had been attempted before experimentation with other systems could be deemed acceptable because of the unhappy earlier experiences.

Finally, South Korea has been under a constant and acute security threat since 1948. It has had to maintain a large military establishment, a government capable of mobilizing national resources for defense, and a society oriented toward maximizing security against internal subversion and external attack. Such requirements have tended to favor the rise of a “firm state,” to use the late Indira Gandhi’s expression. Indeed, a substantial portion of the people seems to feel that a “soft state” will not be able to cope with the security problem and handle the task of industrialization, which is deemed necessary for security.

From this discussion of the relationship between socioeconomic modernization and politics, we may draw the following conclusions.

Socioeconomic modernization presents both opportunities for and obstacles to political development, which can be defined as the process of building a stable, effective, and democratic political system. A balanced achievement of these goals is a difficult task for a modernizing country: maximizing one political goal often requires sacrificing other goals.

The politics found in a country undergoing modernization are the consequence of a complex set of factors and circumstances; it cannot be easily blamed on or credited to a particular individual or group of people although he or they can make a material difference.

Political development is a slow, agonizing, and gradual process, which may require many experiments, errors, and setbacks. It would be too optimistic to expect that it can be achieved by the simple decision of the person or persons in power at a given time. On the other hand, without their dedicated effort to realize it (such as by helping to bring about a peaceful transfer of power), the country will have to go through more trials.

With increasing social complexity and growing political awareness on the part of its citizens, a successfully modernizing state will eventually have to respond to the demands for a more pluralistic and democratic system, since legitimacy will be tied to such development. At the same time, as the society comes to have more goods and services at its disposal, it will be better able to afford a political system with a greater degree of consensus, rationality, legitimacy, and freedom.
POLICY CONSEQUENCES OF A BUREAUCRATIC-AUTHORITARIAN SYSTEM

The preceding discussion of the key variables affecting the political consequences of social modernization underscores South Korea's difficulty in realizing politics that combine stability and effectiveness with democracy. For almost two decades after 1961, South Korea opted for something resembling what some political scientists have labeled a "bureaucratic-authoritarian" model of politics.

In recent years, the bureaucratic-authoritarian state as a growing phenomenon in the developing world has received much attention from scholars interested in political and economic development. Building upon Juan Linz's formulations on authoritarianism based on the Spanish experience and using post-1964 Brazil as their primary contemporary example, several scholars have delineated a model of governance that combines an authoritarian political structure with a high level of capability for rapid economic growth. Put in summarized form, the model describes a political system in which a nonpopulist, pragmatically oriented group or individual (most likely from the military) comes to power; imposes a disciplined, centralized executive structure on the polity; adopts a "liberal-internationalist" economic strategy, which stresses export industry, foreign capital, and technology; and achieves a high rate of economic growth through the suppression of workers' wages by using the bureaucratic approach and technocratic personnel in alliance with the "international capitalistic" interests at home and abroad. In short, according to Guillermo A. O'Donnell, it is a comprehensive, dynamic, penetrating, repressive, bureaucratic, and technocratic state closely linked to international capital, of which Brazil is "undoubtedly the 'purest' example." Such a state's developmental strategy—"associated-dependent development," as Fernando Henrique Cardoso calls it—will compel the country to depend on advanced foreign economic and foreign forces. At the same time, upward representation of interests is likely to be relegated to secondary importance or allowed to take the form of corporatism.

Although the model introduced here has been developed with primary reference to South America—particularly Brazil—it seems to have relevance to the governing and developmental patterns of the developing countries in other continents. Many of them experience the takeover of the government by the military, which subsequently attempts to accomplish political consolidation and carry out rapid economic development. The South Korean experience during the past twenty years offers a conspicuous example of success in such an attempt.

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The record of South Korea's economic development under the Park government was remarkable. The main thrust of the industrialization effort in Korea was made with the launching of the first five-year plan, the latest (fifth) plan having been launched in 1982. As the theorists postulate for a bureaucratic-authoritarian state, South Korea followed a strategy of export-led growth that depended heavily on foreign capital and technology, and foreign trade. The Park government's developmental strategy, which contains many elements of the bureaucratic-authoritarian model, can be attributed to the following factors: (1) the availability of foreign capital, especially from the United States and Japan; (2) the inability and unwillingness of the government to attempt a near-total mobilization of domestic resources (in the manner of the pre–World War II Soviet Union, China of the 1950s, or perhaps Meiji Japan); (3) the existence of sufficient state power and bureaucratic capability to carry through developmental plans of a less drastic kind; (4) general acceptance by government planners of the "unbalanced growth" theory, which emphasizes the advantages of developing industry over agriculture, and consumer-goods industry over capital-goods industry; (5) the technological monopoly by the advanced countries and the technology-intensive nature of modern industries; and (6) the desire and willingness of government leader(s) to adopt a pragmatic and efficient method of economic growth. In the developmental effort of the 1960s, South Korea was aided by the availability in the society of a large educated, achievement-oriented working force; a development-oriented, forward-looking, and hard-working bureaucratic elite; and a favorable world market capable of absorbing growing Korean exports.

The most notable service that the Park government rendered in this period was to combine a coherent economic plan with the necessary political backing that its predecessors had not been able to provide. Hahn-been Lee, a senior scholar in public administration, has stated: "In putting into effect a social innovation the seeds of which had been germinating over a period of time through several changing regimes, the military administration played the role of an 'initial adopter.' One might add that it also played the role of an "implementer." The Park government was able to play these roles successfully for a decade because: it was assured of a continuance in power, giving the officials, businessmen, and people an expectation of stability; it received the cooperation of the administrators and technocrats who were happy to be supported by strong state power; and its nonideological, pragmatic, and internationalist approach was consistent with the economic interests of advanced foreign countries. From the point of view of economic growth, foreign capital, from wherever it came, has been beneficial to Korea. It has relieved import and export bottlenecks; stimulated domestic savings; encouraged entrepreneurial, managerial, and technical expertise; and provided for linkage development and positive secondary


29 Hahn-Been Lee, Korea: Time, Change, and Administration (Honolulu, 1968), pp. 144–74.
However, it has had an important negative impact on the government’s goal of maintaining political stability by undercutting its legitimacy and support at home. Japan’s often successful attempt to obtain political concessions from Korea by using its economic influence (as shown in the so-called Kim Dae-jung affair) caused bitterness among the public, whose pride was hurt. As a motivating factor for political action, nationalistic emotions are explosive, as the experience of many developing countries illustrates. The first and largest student protest under the Park government, as stated earlier, was conducted in 1964 and 1965 against what students called a humiliating treaty with Japan. Subsequent student movements have shown that nationalist sentiments are among their most important motivations.

Another serious political challenge to the governmental and socioeconomic systems came from those who opposed them on ideological grounds. Export-led industrialization seemed to render social gaps and contradictions more serious—between the rich and the poor, the industrial and nonindustrial sectors, and the international and nationalist orientations. “Socioeconomic justice” and “national identity” became catch phrases with which dissenters who opposed the entire system attacked the government, its leaders, and the socioeconomic order. No amount of piecemeal political or economic concessions would have appeased this dissent, which seemed to be growing. Furthermore, ideological dissenters attempted with limited success to join forces with the political critics and dissatisfied interest groups.

In the 1960s, the Park government was not in a position to adopt a nationalist, populist single-party option, for reasons that were not necessarily economic. The government could not employ nationalist, anti-imperialist (and therefore anti-American) rhetoric, because of immediate economic necessities and because of South Korea’s unique security problem: South Korea badly needed American help to cope with the military threat of the communist government in North Korea. Therefore, rather than taking the populist option, Park sought to strengthen the presidency and the administrative-executive power at the expense of parliament and the political parties (including the DRP). As we noted in the preceding section, this objective was sought mainly through coercive and remunerative rather than “symbolic” means, and in legalistic rather than ideological terms.

One may have expected that South Korea’s dependence on the United States and Japan could be a restraining factor on the process of authoritarianization in Korea as the advanced liberal democracies might wish to use their economic influence to assist political liberalization in a dependent country. This has not been the case, however, and is not likely to become so—even under an administration committed to human rights abroad. An advanced and powerful nation is not likely to sacrifice its vital economic and military interests for liberal-democratic principles. In any event, the

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30 According to Albert O. Hirschman, “Foreign capital, acting of its own or jointly with local capital, seems to be better equipped than domestic capital alone to take the first ‘unbalancing’ steps in growth sequences” (p. 207).

degree of South Korean economic dependence on either Japan or the United States, although still substantial, is decreasing, and that nation increasingly feels strong enough politically and economically to stand up against pressures that might come from abroad.

To summarize, the government’s successful implementation of industrialization and economic development plans eventually brought about political problems that seriously threatened the stability and effectiveness of the government toward the latter part of the 1970s. By that time, South Korea had undergone a high degree of social mobilization and raised political consciousness. Hence there was pressure both from within and without the ruling party for reviving political competition. The government was faced with three choices: to further tighten its control at the risk of provoking more extreme opposition; to liberalize at the risk of losing power and bringing about political uncertainty; or to build an ideological party and move toward a mobilization system. The third option was not feasible as long as the government pursued a pragmatic and liberal-internationalist economic policy.

THE CONSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK
OF THE CHUN GOVERNMENT

The act of drafting or adopting a constitution indicates no more than the hopes and intentions of those participating in the act. There are at least two possibilities that such intentions may not be carried out: first, the constitutional provisions may be interpreted in ways that are different from what was originally intended; second, the constitution itself may be changed. Nevertheless, as of now, the new Korean constitution is the only guide to the evolution of the political institutions and processes in the years to come. For this reason, a review of its key features is imperative for any prognosis of future Korean politics.

After President Park’s death in October 1979, the Yushin constitution had to be replaced by a new one. An extensive discussion ensued concerning the key provisions of the new document. The main points of contention, not surprisingly, concerned the ways in which executive power was to be acquired and exercised. The main questions were: (1) whether the new government would be a presidential system (like the United States), a parliamentary system (like Great Britain), or some combination of the two (like the French Fifth Republic); (2) whether, if the presidential system was to be adopted, the president would be elected by direct popular vote or by indirect elections; (3) how many years a presidential term would be and whether the president would be allowed to serve consecutive terms; and (4) whether there would be a single or a dual executive system. (Under a dual system, the executive power would be divided between an executive head—that is, the president—who would control primarily the security and foreign policy issues and another executive—the prime minister—who would handle mainly domestic and socioeconomic matters.)
Public hearings and discussions on constitutional revision took place in numerous forms, and drafts were prepared by various public and private institutions and groups including the National Assembly, the executive branch, the two major parties, and other professional and intellectual organizations. In the course of the deliberations, it became evident that most of the power contenders preferred a presidential system of government that would enable the "winner to take all." By the time that open discussion on the matter was abruptly halted on May 1980, with the full extension of martial law, billions of words had been spoken and countless proposals made concerning the new constitution.

After May 17, 1980, the task of writing the draft fell exclusively on the Constitutional Amendment Deliberation Committee, which had been appointed earlier by the executive branch. The draft constitution, which was prepared in closed deliberations, was officially proposed by the president on September 29; it was adopted by a national referendum held on October 22 in which 95 percent of the electorate voted and 91 percent of those voting approved. The main features of the constitution of the "Fifth Republic" are as follows:

1. It provides for a presidential system of government, giving the president extensive executive power. Presidential power is modified somewhat by the provision empowering the National Assembly to call for the resignation of all cabinet members including the prime minister. No-confidence motions against the latter, however, cannot be taken in less than one year from his appointment.

2. The president is chosen in an indirect election by an electoral college to be made up of more than 5,000 delegates who may affiliate themselves with political parties and who may let their preferences be made known to the voters before the popular election. The electoral college is to dissolve on the day it elects a president. Previously, under the Yushin constitution, the members of the National Conference for Unification who elected the president were prohibited from making public their party identity, and the conference was not to be dissolved for seven years after its election.

3. The president is to serve a seven-year term and is barred from seeking another term. Any change in the clause restricting the presidency to one term cannot apply to the incumbent at the time of the constitutional amendment regarding the presidential term. Previously, the presidential tenure was set at six years, and the president was allowed to seek an unlimited number of terms.

4. It provides for a unicameral National Assembly. The term of office of the members of the National Assembly is four years. The National Assembly is composed of members elected directly by the popular electorate and others elected on the basis of proportional representation. Previously, the official term of the lawmakers was set at six years, and one-third of the National Assembly membership was appointed by the president.

5. It provides for a National Assembly of more than two hundred members, the exact number to be decided by the election laws, which were to be legislated by the interim Legislative Council.
6. The president is not allowed to dissolve the parliament in less than one year from its formation. He also shall not disband the National Assembly more than twice for the same reason. Previously, the president was empowered to disband the National Assembly with no exceptional terms on the presidential authority stipulated.

7. Presidential emergency measures are to be taken only when the nation is in a state of war or an extraordinary situation similar to it. The president has to notify the National Assembly about the measures and obtain its concurrence; in case no concurrence is obtained the measures are supposed to lose effect forthwith. Previously, the president was empowered to take emergency measures in case the national security or public safety was seriously threatened, and the National Assembly could recommend the withdrawal of presidential emergency decrees.

The most crucial task for the new constitution is that of institutionalization—that is, the process of acquiring acceptance, value, and credibility. Although the unsuccessful record of a Korean constitution to become an “institution” in its own right facilitated the adoption of the present constitution, that factor will make it harder for this constitution to elicit stable expectations from the general public. During the history of the Republic of Korea, its previous constitutional system experienced seven major revisions (in 1951, 1954, 1960, 1962, 1969, 1972, and 1980); with the exception of the 1960 and 1980 revisions, all were engineered to give the incumbent chief executive more power and longer tenure. Under such circumstances, it is only natural that people would be reluctant to confer immediate credibility to current constitutional stipulations. Therefore, time, effort, and even luck will be required for a successful process of institutionalizing the new constitution.

It is uncertain how the successful candidate for the presidency will be chosen and be regarded after the end of the first seven-year presidential term under the new constitution. Given the tendency in Korea for a bandwagon of support to form around the incumbent under the indirect electoral system, the outgoing president is likely to have a substantial influence on the outcome of the next presidential election even if he cannot become a candidate himself. A concomitant consequence would be to discourage the election and perhaps even the candidacy of individuals considered to be antigovernment or radical.

Another area of concern is the relationship between the president and the parliament. A complete domination of the latter by the former defeats the very purpose of a parliament, but lack of cooperation, hostility, and deadlock between the two institutions would result in undesirable consequences ranging from paralysis of the government to possible alteration of the constitution. This is always a serious dilemma for the presidential system of government and is particularly acute in a polity where the party system is not firmly established. Therefore, a smooth and successful operation of the constitution will depend on the speed with which an effective new party system is established and takes root in Korea prior to the scheduled transfer of power in 1988.
PROBLEMS OF INSTITUTIONALIZATION

Precisely because the present leadership emerged out of sociopolitical instability and conflict, and because as yet the constitutional structure lacks institutionalization, there can be substantial challenges to the process of building a "political order." Most important, the various political groups and sectors including the workers, farmers, students, religious groups, press, military, and bureaucracy will play key roles in furthering or hindering the sociopolitical stability that the government is seeking to maintain on its own terms.

It is impossible to predict precisely the role each of the groups will play and the impact it will have on the process of Korean political development. But any prognosis of the future Korean political process would be meaningless unless at least some diagnosis on the groups' probable roles is made.

How cooperative the workers and farmers will be in the building of a new political order depends on the government’s ability to sustain economic vitality and expansion. A series of labor disturbances in the spring of 1980 indicates a potential for further problems if the workers' demands are not adequately met or if there is a crack in the government’s ability to establish order. The farmers are not likely to resort to collective disorderly action, but their continued positive support is indispensable if any government party is to sustain its electoral majority in South Korea. Despite its emphasis on industrialization, the Park Chung-hee government basically had an agrarian orientation, conferring disproportionate benefits on the rural areas. The fact that the current leaders appear to pay more attention than the previous government to industrial and urban problems may be a positive factor in keeping the labor sector at peace with the government.

Student activism remains the most intractable problem for the government. Because of the large numbers and heavy concentration of university students, their political role during the past two decades has been important and will remain so. A combination of political, social, psychological, and organizational factors keeps the student situation fluid. The government’s goal is to create a campus atmosphere in which the majority of students can concentrate on their studies without being swayed by what the government considers to be a radical minority. Whether the government can achieve its goal will depend upon its ability to generate support among the rest of the society and, in addition, on its willingness to be stern without being heavyhanded, to be flexible without projecting confusion. A related problem area is the religious groups. The nature of the problem is somewhat similar to that associated with student activism although of lesser magnitude and therefore more tractable.

The press in any country tries to probe the limits of its freedom and responsibility. The South Korean government feels that it is premature now to grant full discretion to the mass media. But a process of relaxation is inevitable, given the mobilization of political consciousness by the readership and by the press itself. That process will probably be gradual. What will happen after lifting of all restrictions, if that ever
happens, is a matter of concern not only to the government but also to the press itself and the general public. The government presumably hopes that the press will be able to exercise sufficient self-control so that the government will not be compelled to reimpose censorship. Past experience shows that such hopes are likely to be unrealistic.

The bureaucracy will continue to support the prevailing order because it has a preference for a strong, pragmatic, and stable executive leadership. Those in the bureaucracy who will have been “purified” may grumble quietly, but they will still have a sufficient vested interest in the system not to wish to bring it down. The bureaucracy, however, will remain zealous to protect its prerogatives in policy and personnel matters, particularly vis-à-vis the intrusion or intervention by outside forces such as the military. Thus, the extent to and the manner in which the “civilization” of the military takes place will continue to have a major influence on the morale and effectiveness of the bureaucracy. The military will play a crucial role by providing the necessary physical support and by participating in state affairs. Military support of the present leadership seems to be reasonably intact, but whether unified support will continue depends on a combination of factors including the ability of the leadership to parcel out positions and benefits to everyone’s satisfaction and, at the same time, its capacity to maintain the appearance of order, justice, and continued economic prosperity.

The failure of a stable party system to take root currently presents a serious problem to political institutionalization in Korea. There are several reasons for the weakness of political parties and the party system. First, a serious imbalance between the bureaucracy (including, of late, military officialdom) and political parties has hampered the development of the latter. Powerholders in Korea generally tend to favor and depend more on a bureaucracy that is readily available and generally dependable than on political parties that often pose obstacles to unchallenged power. The large and well-developed military bureaucracy magnifies the problem of bureaucratic supremacy that is the result of a lengthy Confucian tradition and Japanese colonial rule.

Second, parties have not been able to cultivate a stable following among the voters because there was no room after 1948 for ideological deviation from the officially accepted line on virtually all important issues including unification, national defense, socioeconomic development, and the management of wealth. This insistence on ideological consensus is in part the result of traditional Confucian orthodoxy and, since 1948, the physical and ideological confrontation with the communist North. Ideological uniformity has thus deprived the parties of opportunities to offer meaningful policy choices and to effectively organize those sectors of society that are yet to be mobilized politically for support in elections and in other party activities.

A third reason for the weakness of the party system can be found in the many changes of regimes and constitutions that took place, usually by extraordinary means, since the establishment of the Republic. No parties, progovernment and opposition alike, have survived long enough to claim loyalty and support from the public. Instead, parties and their leaders have often been purged and discredited after an uprising, coup d’etat, or other upheaval that have been relatively frequent in Korea.
A fourth obstacle to the development of a strong party system is the private nature of South Korean politics. Personal, fractional, and regional rivalries are still deeply embedded in Korean political behavior. Factions and personal relationships are often formed on the basis of provincial origin, school ties, the same graduating class (as in the case of military ties), common experiences in the past, or a common patron who had assisted the members in financial and other matters. Personal lines (*inmaek*) constitute an extremely important political factor even under circumstances of curtailed political activities. In contrast with political factions in Japan, which in some way contribute to stable party politics, Korean political factions and groupings tend to be fragmented, amorphous, and often lacking in strong personal leadership. In the absence of strong leadership supported by government power, they usually pursue their separate interests, frequently at the cost of hurting the interest of the larger body (such as the party and the party system) of which they are a part.

Finally, the government’s occasional banning of existing leaders from active political participation, as happened during the early Park period as well as in the Chun era, makes institutionalization of political parties difficult. Other restrictive legal measures, including regulations controlling political activities, have reduced the chances for party continuity and stability.

In the first National Assembly election held after the establishment of the Chun government, the ruling Democratic Justice Party received 36 percent of the votes cast; the rest was shared by twelve other parties including the opposition Democratic Korean Party, which obtained 21 percent, and the National Party with 13 percent of the votes. Although the Democratic Justice Party ultimately secured a majority of the National Assembly seats as a result of additional seats obtained by proportional representation, the ruling party was basically a minority party as far as the percentage of votes it received was concerned. Furthermore, the Democratic Justice Party cannot count on the full support of that minority in future elections. At the same time, the opposition parties are considered to be dependent on the discretion of the government in how far they can oppose it. Under these circumstances, the institutionalization of a stable party system can be expected to take an extraordinary effect by both the government and the parties themselves, if it is to be realized.

This review of problems of political institutionalization in Korea should convey the sense that the effort to establish a stable political order in Korea is beset with uncertainties. Yet it is not without a chance of success. The obstacles consist of the following factors: the presumed association of the present government with the previous one, against which much grievance and dissatisfaction had accumulated; the inflated hopes of liberalization shared by a large number of people who were disappointed by the political developments since 1979; the general cynicism of the Korean people toward promises contained in the constitution and their reluctance to

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33 Han, *The Failure of Democracy in South Korea*, pp. 74–75.
trust the words of the government; and the socioeconomic imbalance that might grow as a result of continued economic growth and industrialization.

On the other hand, certain factors would tend to justify a degree of optimism concerning future political development in Korea. These are: the perceived need for order and stability, recognized to be important by a large number of people; the sense felt by many that no viable alternative exists to accepting the present arrangements and that the future will unfold itself; the expected absorption of the previously disfranchised political leaders into the existing parties and party system; and the apparent determination of the present leadership to let the transfer of power take place as envisaged by the constitution.

On a more general level, a few basic problems related to political institutionalization in Korea remain. The tension created by military dominance of the polity is substantial. Political intervention by the military in a country is commonly the result of three factors: the characteristics and proclivities of the military in that country; the nature of the political institutions and the political culture; and the external security environment. As noted earlier, the security threat to which South Korea is subjected is perceived and real, and makes some social militarization (including the large size of the military) inevitable. On the other hand, political dominance by the military lacks legitimacy in Korean society, strongly influenced by Confucianism as well as liberal democratic values as it is. Inasmuch as both the Confucian and democratic institutions are supposed to be based on civilian supremacy, military rule or the appearance of such results in tension and weakness in the system.

Another general problem of political institutionalization is the result of rapid social change. Accelerated socioeconomic modernization seems to have intensified old issues and advanced new ones. The extraordinary improvement in communications and transportation makes highly centralized government in this already bureaucratized country ever more possible, even though cultural regionalism continues as a legacy of the past. At the same time, economic growth and the strategy to bring it about have resulted in new socioeconomic stratification, ideological polarization, and a high degree of sociopolitical mobilization, which tends to make politics more volatile and unpredictable. Also, the emergence of a fairly large, educated, reasonably affluent, and outward-looking middle class makes for growing tension between traditional politics and ongoing socioeconomic change.

Finally, the division of the country into South and North Korea has had a decisive impact on South Korea's politics during the past four decades. It has imposed upon the country a large military establishment accompanied by militarization of the society, ideological uniformity, and rigidity, and it has skewed resource allocation in favor of security and military efforts. South Korea's less than satisfactory experience with its democratic interludes in the postindependence years constitutes yet another factor that works against the successful institutionalization of democracy. The argument that democracy will not succeed because of forces opposed to it works as a self-fulfilling prophecy. Also, a constant sense of security threat and crisis has had the effect of shortening the time horizon of political actors, depriving them of patience, long-term perspective, and flexibility.
Against these obstacles of political institutionalization, the Korean polity has opportunities and potentials that may contribute to making it more democratic yet stable and effective. Such factors include an educated and dedicated elite group in various sectors of the society, economic growth and complexity accompanied by the growth of the middle class and social pluralization, broadening contact and exchanges with the outside world, and the growing sense of success, hence confidence among the Koreans in their ability to manage their own affairs. The long-term political future of South Korea will depend upon how these positive factors balance off with those elements in the society that work against political institutionalization.

It is possible to imagine three scenarios for South Korean politics during the remainder of this decade. One is rapid democratization with full democratic rights and liberties as well as genuinely competitive elections. A second is a radical reversal of the democratization process involving a vicious circle of increasing opposition and repression. A third scenario is one in which South Korea undergoes a slow but steady process in which increasingly more liberal and pluralistic politics emerge. The first scenario is unlikely. The second portends the dangers of heightened conflict and instability. Thus, a gradual liberalization within a basically authoritarian context is the most likely, and perhaps the most optimistic, prospect for South Korean politics in the years to come.
6. Rediscovering the State: Political Institutionalization in Southeast Asia

Donald K. Emmerson

The business of this essay is to explore the meanings of the term “political institutionalization” in two contexts, authorship and application, in order to illustrate its heuristic value for students of Southeast Asia.

To understand the term’s connotations, one should know how and why “political institutionalization” has become popular among social scientists. To demonstrate its worth, one should define the term operationally and use it to compare Southeast Asian states. In taking on these rather vast tasks, this essay sacrifices depth for scope, more by necessity than choice. Students of modern political institutions in Southeast Asia still lack the detailed cross-national data base that a fully disaggregated comparative analysis would require. Accordingly, this essay does not delve into or contrast specific political organizations, but discusses in synthetic terms the more encompassing notion of “the state,” partly because of previous intellectual neglect of that concept, and partly because it seems a logical place to begin to prepare for the narrower-gauge work that will have to be done if “political institutionalization” is itself to become an institutionalized concept in Southeast Asian studies.

To turn first, then, to previous writers: What is it about the state that has so often confounded its observers?

Karl Marx misjudged it. An evanescent piece of superstructure in his eyes, the capitalist state would have to collapse into the grave being dug by its founding class. Proletarian revolution would rout the executive committee of the bourgeoisie. Under proletarian dictatorship, the very need for a state would eventually wither away.¹

¹ In his “Eighteenth Brumaire,” Marx came closest to inverting the primacy of socioeconomic as opposed to political forces. “When you play the fiddle at the top of the state,” he wrote, “what else is to be expected but that those down below dance?” But even this remark did not imply a willful, autonomous, or enduring state-as-such. On the contrary, Marx meant to show how, in mid-nineteenth-century France, bourgeois parliamentary rule had by its raucous example (the “fiddle”) stimulated broad-scale opposition (the “dance”), which had persuaded the bourgeoisie to abdicate its political position for the sake of
Instead, in the century since Marx died, the state has thrived: Enlivened by nationalist sentiments, aggrandized by ruling elites, legitimated by international relations; defended with armed force, buttressed by foreign aid, propagandized through mass media; territorially ensconced, legally empowered, technologically amplified; resource-extracting, labor-mobilizing, commerce-regulating, welfare-meting, dispute-adjudicating, loyalty-demanding, opponent-coopting, subversion-curbing, history-rewriting, future-blueprinting—far from languishing, the twentieth-century state seems hypertrophic, hyperactive, ubiquitous.²

Notwithstanding Chinese, Cuban, and Vietnamese revolutionary successes and the use of Soviet troops in Eastern Europe and Afghanistan to enforce the irreversibility of a pro-Soviet kind of socialism, and regardless of Beijing’s latest tactical zag toward a highly constrained kind of capitalism, the “prerevolutionary-capitalist” state as a historical type is no more on the verge of being toppled than its “post-revolutionary-socialist” counterpart is of being dispensed with.

NEO-MARXISM BEYOND THE “TIPPING POINT”

Unable to celebrate the decline, let alone the demise, of “mere” political authority, Marxists have instead had to reconsider the passivity, dependence, and its prior and primary class interest in making money. In power and under pressure, the French bourgeoisie had acted in conformity with the presumptions of historical materialism by forfeiting its “crown” to protect its “purse”—acquiescing in the usurpation of its own parliamentary regime by a military-backed Bonapartism that could assure the short-run security of bourgeois capital by alternately repressing the lower classes and buying them off with “money as a gift and money as a loan.” Nor, according to Marx, would this authoritarian state prove any more stable than its predecessor, because the bourgeoisie, historically bound to pursue above all its economic interest, would soon chafe under the “socialistic” controls of the new regime. Karl Marx, “The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Napoleon” (orig. pub. 1852), in The Karl Marx Library, vol. 1, On Revolution, ed. and trans. Saul K. Padover (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1971), pp. 243–328, esp. 280–284.

² Note again the modernity of Marx at his least “Marxist,” on the state in mid-nineteenth-century France, where the executive power commands an army of officials numbering more than half a million individuals and therefore constantly maintains an immense mass of interests and livelihoods in the most absolute dependence; where the state enmeshes, controls, regulates, superintends, and tutors civil society from its most comprehensive manifestations of life down to its most insignificant stirrings, from its most general modes of being to the private existence of individuals; where through the most extraordinary centralization this parasitic body acquires a ubiquity, an omniscience, a capacity for accelerated mobility, and an elasticity which finds a counterpart only in the helpless dependence, the loose shapelessness of the actual body politic [Marx, “Eighteenth Brumaire,” p. 277].

A “parasitic body” is not, of course, autonomous; nor did Marx foresee its endurance beyond the overthrow of the bourgeoisie whose material interest in augmenting private profits with public salaries was mainly responsible for the state’s engorgement.

This passage raises the vexed question whether and how to avoid reifying and personifying “the state,” a complex and composite abstraction that varies in time and place. The state is not a sentient being. The life-ascribing language used in this chapter to characterize the state is intended metaphorically to counteract the opposite misinterpretation of the state as necessarily inert, peripheral, or neutral. To be reminded of the danger of confusing the metaphor with reality, one need only contrast the etymology and modern meaning of Thomas Hobbes’s Leviathan (1651), which began its career as a Biblical sea monster epitomizing evil (Job 41). See also Franz Neumann, Behemoth (2nd ed., 1944).
expendability of the state: its active role in maintaining a classless, precapitalist, “Asiatic” mode of production, possibly well beyond the period of initial contact with the colonizing West; its relative autonomy in capitalist society from the relations of production, including its ability to transcend class origin and interest, possibly even transforming one social formation into another, without class struggle, through “revolution from above”; and its apparent tendency to penetrate deeper into—to bureaucratize—capitalist and socialist societies alike, engendering pseudoprivate and parastatal forms of organization that blur the distinction between public and private ownership (or control) and thereby jeopardize reams of theory founded upon that distinction—including, to cite a recent example, the reinterpretation of modern history as the evolution of an economically driven and distinctively capitalist “world-system.”

Although the role of the state in precapitalist society continues to be debated by Marxists, few of them have tried to salvage the notion of a uniquely state-centric “Asiatic” mode of production. But the nature of the capitalist state has become a major—arguably the major—theoretical issue dividing Marxists today. Caught between the oversimplification of economics-first and the heresy of politics-first, Marxists have struggled to accommodate the “relative autonomy” of the state.

Best known among such tightrope walkers is the late Nicos Poulantzas. He portrayed the state in autonomist italics as “creating, transforming, making reality.” But he explained it in reductionist terms as a “condensation of class relations.” So completely was the Poulantzian state “shot through and constituted with and by” class relations that it became, for him, itself “a relation.” Unfortunately, Poulantzas failed to clarify how something as disembodied, lifeless, and derivative as his class-relational or “condensation state” could be as concrete, animate, and original as the “agency state” in which he simultaneously believed.

By balancing economism against superstructuralism, Poulantzas could retain at least a partial claim to being a historical materialist. More recently, another self-identified Marxist, Fred Block, in his own effort to resolve the anomaly of the expansionist state, has been driven “beyond relative autonomy” to acknowledge that “state power is sui generis, not reducible to class power.” Unpersuaded by Poulantzas, because “a condensation cannot exercise power,” Block argues the existence of a “tipping point past which capitalists lose their capacity to resist further state intervention, leading ultimately to the Leviathan state,” which is, presumably, absolutely autonomous; Block cites Nazi Germany. At this point, not only is the capitalist state

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4 For an entrée into this literature, see Bryan S. Turner, Marx and the End of Orientalism (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1978), esp. chs. 1, 2, 6, and References.


tipped out of the hands of the bourgeoisie, but Block himself is tipped out of the basically Marxist fold, if by “basically Marxist” one means the attribution of causal primacy to the relations of production.

LIBERAL-PLURALISM AND THE INDONESIAN “ANOMALY”

If the state has bedeviled leftists, it has not been kinder to liberals. In American political science, overreacting to an earlier formal-legal bias—the state as an ensemble of constitutionally prescribed institutions—Arthur Bentley and (to a lesser extent) David Truman reduced government to an informal process of interacting groups, as if these were the decisive constituents of political life and the organizational state a mere facade, while David Easton advocated abandoning the concept of the state in favor of a general model of “the political system,” a model that in name at least still informs the discipline.7

Meanwhile, according to the liberal-pluralist interpretation of American democracy that flourished in tandem with the “group-focusing” and (later) the “systemization” of political science, if the people did not govern in any literal sense, the elites who did were nevertheless sufficiently plural in number, narrow in scope, and amenable to electoral challenge that no one of them could long determine policy outcomes on more than a few subjects at once. In this benign and widely held (though not uncontested) view, the democratic-capitalist state had no interest of its own, but served as a reasonably neutral forum for the expression, pursuit, and conciliation of the interests of the elite-represented groups of which society was made. The groups were not equal, but inequalities were at least dispersed among them, so that no one group could dominate the others on all dimensions.8

Such a comforting view of American democracy would have mattered less to the study of non-Western politics had Gabriel Almond not drawn his seven universal functions, which every political system (he believed) had somehow to perform, from the experience of the United States and other advanced industrial nations: on the “input” side, political socialization/recruitment, interest articulation, interest aggregation, and political communication; and on the “output” side, rule formation, rule application, and rule adjudication. Almond acknowledged that “the bureaucracy”—he abjured “the state” for its formal-legal connotations—need not only perform, say, the “output function” of applying rules, but could in some political systems help to discharge as well the “input function” of articulating interests.

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Indonesia, he wrote, exemplified the latter circumstance. But this Indonesian condition of unregulated "multifunctionality" was in Almond's eyes anomalous in comparison with his norm: "the modern Western system, [where] each of the functions has a specialized structure which regulates the performance of the particular function by other structures."  

BUREAUCRATIC EXPANSION: BEYOND ALMOND

Almond did not expect modernity to erase entirely the "multifunctionality" of political structures. His formulation was subtler than that. Indeed, in his notion of modern structures regulating the performance of their functions by other structures, one can see Almond teetering on the brink of discovering his own "tipping point," which, had he found it, might have drawn him out of his liberalpluralist paradigm, much as Block in acknowledging the full weight of the state had to risk becoming a non-Marxist. Almond said, in effect, that in a modern or "non-Indonesian" political system, a strong and autonomous structure of associational interest groups would be able to prevent the bureaucracy from playing too large a role in the performance of the groups' own specialty, namely, the articulation of interests. But he did not go on to doubt whether, even in the most modern, industrial, First-World democracy, given the bureaucracy's sheer size and (likely as not) its increasing (not decreasing) multifunctionality, a congeries of private groups, each with its own more or less self-interested agenda, could reasonably be expected to control the bureaucracy's ability to articulate interests. Not to mention the unlikelihood of such control in either the revolutionary Leninist or the colonially bestowed administrations in power in so many Second- or Third-World societies, where private-sector associations typically have less autonomy and strength.

Even in 1960, when Almond's scheme first appeared, "Indonesian-style" multifunctionality unregulated by private organizations was less the exception than the rule, and the pattern would become still more widespread with the failure of democratic experiments and the rise of military and pseudomilitary regimes in the rest of that decade and beyond: Brazil (1964), Nigeria (1966), Philippines (1972), and Thailand (1976), among other Third World examples. By the 1980s, in much of Asia and Africa, Almond's description of the Indonesian "anomaly"—"an indication of poor boundary maintenance between the polity and the society"—had become an unnecessary euphemism for normal, everyday, run-of-the-mill, whatelse-would-you-expect, function-absorbing, sector-penetrating, bureaucratic-authoritarian rule. The Indonesian state itself moved in a similar direction in 1966.  


10 Almond, "Introduction," p. 35.

11 This is not to say that democracy in the Third World is doomed. In 1984, nine of the twelve independent states in South America were either plausibly democratic or planning elections (Everett G. Martin, "Democracy Spreads in South America," Wall Street Journal, March 16, 1984). Whether what Secretary
The point is not that Almond failed to foresee these developments—almost no one else did, either—but that by striking the state from his vocabulary he made it harder to understand why they could occur. By entertaining a plurally functional system rather than a self-interested state, Almond could transfer onto the non-Western world—then still pretty much a blank slate for Western scholarship—an image of public authority as relatively, or at least ideally, disinterested and managerial, processing inputs into outputs, managing the flow of stimuli into feedback, and guarding the good-fences-good-neighbors difference between polity and society. By de-emphasizing Max Weber’s violence-monopolizing state in favor of Talcott Parsons’ self-maintaining system, Almond could in 1960 overlook the modernity of official coercion and cooptation, and could underestimate the creativity of the predatory, system-destroying state (Yahya’s Pakistan); the partisan, system-endangering state (Gemayel’s Lebanon); the corrupt, system-vitiating state (Mobutu’s Zaire); and the interventionist, system-changing state (Mao’s China)—among other types that would become familiar in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s.

From Bentley and Truman to Easton and Almond, the treatment of the state in the mainstream of American political science entailed contradictions comparable to those generated by Marxist analysts. For just as some political scientists attributed to interest groups the causal force reserved by Marxists for economic classes, and thus merely preferred a different means of making the state epiphenomenal, so did others turn the idea of a political system into something no less general and elastic than the Marxists’ notions of a mode of production or a social formation, and thus merely swamped the state in a different abstraction.

Last and briefly, but not least, on the right, free-enterprise economists have also discounted the role of the state. The apotheosis of Hong Kong into the world’s purest exemplar of capitalism is only the most ironic instance in this literature of disregard for the power of the state, Hong Kong being, of course, a colony. Far from vindicating the natural vigor and universal incidence of free markets, or the inseparability of

of State George Shultz hailed as “an extraordinary trend toward democracy” will last is another question (Paul E. Sigmund, “Rediscovering Democracy in Latin America,” Worldview, 26 [May 1983], p. 10). Nor is it clear to what extent liberalization is a necessary response to increasing socioeconomic complexity, in which case one might speculate that the impressive economic growth of most of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations could, by speeding internal differentiation, build up pressures toward greater political accountability. Consistent with this possibility is Africa’s experience of vicious-circular poverty, stagnation and autocracy. For Southeast Asia, however, this essay makes the contrary point that capitalism and authoritarianism can—and widely do—coexist.

capitalism and democracy, Hong Kong's experience suggests that the fullest implementation of "marketplace magic" may require a magician-state that is uniquely unaccountable to its subjects, and thus able to resist the temptation to improve their welfare directly. Just as Marxists and liberal-pluralist political scientists have reified classes and groups, respectively, so have free-enterprise economists overfocused on the market, underestimating the extent to which some kinds of state guidance and even intervention in some circumstances may actually enhance "free-market values" such as innovation, competitiveness, and efficiency. (On authoritarian capitalism in East Asia, see Chalmers Johnson's chapter in Asian Economic Development—Present and Future, the first volume to come out of this conference.)

HUNTINGTON REDISCOVERS THE STATE

What, then, is it about the state, that it should prove so elusive to Marxists, liberal-pluralists, and free-enterprisers alike?13

The answer is: nothing at all. It was not the state that discouraged scholarly encounters with itself. Rather it was, by and large, the Western-industrial social context in which those encounters took place, whether they involved Karl Marx, writing in London in the mid-nineteenth century, or Robert Dahl and Milton Friedman, writing in private universities in New Haven and Silicon Valley roughly a century later. The complex, polystructural societies of the First-World offered not only classes, groups, and markets, but whole realms of differentiated private life that could be studied without major recourse to the state. Insofar as these three concepts could also be used prescriptively, to promote revolution, democracy, or capitalism, they encouraged wishful thinking—an unwarranted faith in the expendability of the state.

In sum, the state's relatively low profile and many competitors for attention in most First-World countries—Nazi Germany notably excepted—discouraged its being taken seriously. Conversely, those who rediscovered the state tended to do so in Second- or Third-World countries. In Soviet-bloc nations, observers could less readily minimize the presence of public authority, so obviously elephinate, or retain their revolutionary idealism, meliorist pluralism, or free-market optimism in the face of bureaucratic power, so obviously repressive and centralized; while in less developed societies lack of discipline and instability underscored the need to strengthen "soft states" for the sake of "political order," even at the expense of democracy. Too much of a bad thing in the Second World, not enough of a good thing in the Third, the state was in both locations unavoidable.

In American political science, Samuel Huntington, writing about the Third World, led the rediscovery of formal-legal political institutions—including the state, although he avoided the term. In his view, in many Third-World societies, political organizations were uninstitutionalized, and political order consequently was absent or

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fragile. Huntington defined institutionalization as “the process by which organizations and procedures acquire value and stability,” and argued that different political systems could be compared according to how institutionalized they were, that is, how adaptable (or rigid), how complex (or simple), how autonomous (or subordinate), and how coherent (or disunited) were their organizations and procedures.¹⁴

Huntington not only encouraged his colleagues to refocus on an old-fashioned subject: formal, legal, public institutions. By recommending terms in which one might (for this essay’s purpose) estimate the relative institutionalization of the ten independent nation-states of Southeast Asia—Brunei, Burma, Indonesia, Kampuchea, Laos, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam—he challenged students of comparative politics (as opposed to comparative classes, groups, markets, or functions) to do what their subfield in political science was supposed to be about.

INSTITUTIONALIZATION AS COMPLEXITY, AUTONOMY, AND COHERENCE

How much Huntington’s formulation helps to meet that challenge is another matter. Of his four variables, three do not consistently indicate institutionalization even as he defined it, or potentially contradict one another, or both. Consider his assertion that a complex state, with a great number and variety of units and subunits, will be ipso facto more valued or more stable, that is, more institutionalized, than a simple state.¹⁵ At the extremes, rule by a single individual equipped with a minimal or no administrative apparatus is not obviously less valued or stable than rule by an assemblage of offices so redundantly labyrinthine, with so many entrenched and competing bureaucratic interests, each elaborating its own empire, that little or nothing is accomplished. Overcomplexity in the latter sense is an invitation to a usurper to overthrow and “modernize,” that is, to simplify, the regime—witness the fate of Indonesian President Sukarno’s hundred-member cabinet in 1965–66. By subverting Huntington’s criterion of coherence, overcomplexity can encourage the deinstitutionalization of a given regime. At the same time, the more complex a bureaucracy is, the harder it is to prevent its being captured or corrupted by social forces that would undermine its autonomy to their own particularistic ends.

The criterion of autonomy too is ambiguous. If the state is not to some degree autonomous from specific interests, it cannot rise above them to represent the “public interest,” yet that very autonomy enables the state to interpret the “public interest” without consulting the public. When Huntington defines the public interest as “whatever strengthens governmental institutions,”¹⁶ he ignores the “tipping point” beyond which governmental institutions become so strong, so exclusively the source of punishment and rewards, that they are free to construe the “public interest” as

¹⁵ Ibid., pp. 17–18.
¹⁶ Ibid., p. 25.
whatever continues to strengthen their own repressive rule. The organization (Can Lao) of the Ngo brothers’ South Vietnam in the early 1960s and, on a vastly harsher scale, the organization (angka) of Pol Pot’s Kampuchea in the mid-1970s illustrate this point. Regarding the forced collectivization of agriculture in North Vietnam in the 1950s, not to mention more recent experiments in unified Vietnam, one might even turn Huntington’s aphorism against itself to define the public interest in such cases as whatever weakens governmental institutions.

Recall Gabriel Almond’s Indonesian “anomaly”: a bureaucracy that not only implements rules but takes part in the articulation of the interests in response to which those rules are supposedly made. If this condition illustrates the subordination of society to the state, then the subordination of the state to society feared by Huntington is merely a reversed instance of the “poor boundary maintenance” lamented by Almond.

But “poor maintenance” and “subordination” in the eyes of whom? Depending on the history and political culture of the society in question, the autonomy of the state from social forces may be illegitimate. In that they purported to fuse or bridge what Westerners commonly distinguish as nature and supernatural, the sacral states of classical Southeast Asia—Hinduized or Islamicized—were patently multifunctional. Such states were not particularly stable, but they left a tradition of legitimately blurred boundaries that may have encouraged the nationalist rejection of colonial administration as overautonomous, and that still inclines many Southeast Asians not to value clearly demarcated or specialized institutions, but rather to want to open them up and bend them to particular interests. It is not entirely facetious in this context to say that corruption in Southeast Asia is a way of making bureaucratic machines user-friendly.

Finally, apart from cultural precedents and personal expectations, the availability of extrabureaucratic interest groups conditions the relationship between autonomy and value. In a society with few successful voluntary organizations to manage the input side of politics, the state can actually increase its legitimacy, and to that extent its institutionalization, by refusing to limit itself to the making of output alone.

Although it is partly a way of rationalizing military autocracy on the one hand, and entrenching preferred military access to the spoils of a growing economy on the other, the Indonesian armed forces’ self-conferred “dual function” (dwifungsi) is also a sincere strategy of institutionalization in this sense. By the same logic, however, military-cum-political authorities who discourage the formation of independent demand-articulating organizations potentially undercut the military’s own stability and value, by appearing to have to shore up the organizational vacuum without which Indonesia’s multifunctional military might lose one of its excuses to rule. Depending on what else the army does to warrant its influence, this kind of self-requisite or “bootstrap legitimacy” could prove to be an oxymoron in the long run. Worth watching in this regard is the prospect, still highly constrained in 1984, that Indonesia’s Functional Groups (Golkar) could become more input-sensitive and more independent of their military mentors, not to mention the more limited possibility of greater latitude for opposition parties, labor unions, business and professional organizations, religious and educational establishments, the media, and so on. Again, however, as
Huntington argued, democratization and institutionalization are not the same thing. As for coherence, contrary to Huntington’s usage, it is not an antonym for disunity; unity is. But unity, too, can be super- as well as suboptimal. While “unity, esprit, morale, and discipline are needed in governments as well as in regiments,”¹⁷ the two types of organization have different tasks to perform. If internal disunity reduces stability and value, it begins to do so at a higher threshold in a government than in a regiment, because a government is necessarily and legitimately the more multifunctional body, subject to evaluation in terms not only of output-efficiency but also of input-sensitivity. And if the society is diverse, as is so widely true in Southeast Asia, that input-sensitivity may import into the state a constructive kind of disunity, as different agencies articulate and defend the interests of differing classes or groups, or of producers, middlemen, and consumers (to recapitulate the favored actors of Marxists, pluralists, and marketeers). “Limited bureaucratic pluralism,” far from debilitating the state, can improve its ability to respond to various segments of the public in whose name the state supposedly rules, and thus to become more stable and valued.¹⁸ Such a variation on Almond’s “Indonesian condition” should in Huntington’s terms be considered more exemplary than anomalous. Conversely, and contrary to Huntington, “discipline and development” do not necessarily “go hand in hand,”¹⁹ at least not all the way down the road to the fanatic superdiscipline of, say, the People’s Church in Jonestown or, in Southeast Asia, the Khmer Rouge in Phnom Penh.

INSTITUTIONALIZATION AS ADAPTABILITY

Among the hallmarks of Huntington’s institutionalized state—that it be adaptable, complex, autonomous, and coherent—Huntington discussed adaptability first and at greatest length, and with good reason, for it remains the most convincing and the richest of his four recommended dimensions. Unlike complexity and coherence, which describe the state without reference to its environment, adaptability is thoroughly contextual; unlike autonomy, it is interactive with that context. By implying original initiative, adaptability also better fits the activist record of modern institutionalized states, and more overtly corrects for previous conceptions of the state as passive, dependent, peripheral, or governing best by intervening least, to cite images in writings reviewed earlier in this essay.

Huntington proposed to measure an organization’s adaptability in three ways: by its chronological age; its success in surmounting the problem of succession from one generation of leaders to another; and its demonstrated ability to reduce, augment, and alter, as necessary, the repertoire of things that it does to meet the challenges of an environment that the organization itself helps to change.²⁰ One might call these achievements survival, renewal, and reprogramming.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 23.
¹⁹ Huntington, Political Order, p. 24.
²⁰ Ibid., pp. 13–17.
In such terms, the more institutionalized a state is, other things being equal, the longer it has lasted; the more often it has successfully refreshed its leadership; and the more readily it has been able to reorient itself to handle problems of rising importance by augmenting its organizational capacities and agenda, while letting go of problems of declining importance by pruning its organizational capacities and agenda. (An added or subtracted capacity is of course not coterminous with an office or department created or dismantled, since the same agency in principle can be reprogrammed to fit new tasks; adaptability in this sense involves quality more than quantity.)

ADAPTABILITY REDEFINED

Consonant with this revised-Huntingtonian definition, but placing more emphasis on the legal aspect of the state, is Robert Scalapino’s understanding of political institutionalization as

the process whereby a political structure is made operational in accordance with stipulated rules and procedures, enabling more regularized, hence predictable patterns of political behavior, minimal trauma in power transfer, and a foundation for the effective development as well as the application of justice. Ideally, political institutionalization enables a movement away from the erratic practices and arbitrary decisions stemming from a high dependence upon personalized rule. In its success, it also reduces the likelihood of abrupt, drastic change in basic structure, including revolution, since change is made possible in a legal, evolutionary manner by established procedures.

In this formulation, evolution suggests longevity and regularized leadership change implies renewability, while the picture of political structures successfully enacting and executing policy over time connotes what could be called—in elegantly—their reprogrammability. Adaptability, then, can be defined in these three terms.

Implicit in the past-to-future reach of these variables is an extrapolation from historical evidence: that a state that has managed to endure, to renew itself, and to keep abreast of environmental changes will continue to do so. But it is risky to infer stability and value—institutionalization—from any one of these conditions alone.

Take longevity. One could argue that in the absence of a demonstrated capacity to replace its leaders and repattern its activities in a stable and valued manner, the older a state becomes, the more its bureaucratic arteries harden, the dimmer the memory of the founding experience that once legitimated it—an anticolonial revolution, for example—and the more widespread and persuasive the opinion that “it’s time for a change.” Consider how wrong an observer could have been to infer from mere years-in-power the institutionalization of Mao’s China in 1949–1966, the Shah’s Iran in 1953–1979, and Thieu’s South Vietnam in 1967–1975, on the eve of, respectively, the Cultural Revolution, Khomeini’s return, and the fall of Saigon. Such instances

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21 Robert A. Scalapino’s essay in this volume, “Legitimacy and Institutionalization in Asian Socialist Societies.”
underscore the need not only to examine state characteristics other than age but to consider how the state has interacted with society. Just as a state that has simply endured may be unable in a regularized manner to replace whomever leads it, so a state with a record of peaceful-legal succession may nevertheless be unable, in the face of new challenges, to revise what it does.

Institutionalization, in other words, is not a single-stranded certainty, but a composite likelihood. And because the environments in which problems arise to challenge the state differ as much if not more than the states that occupy those environments, a comparison of “more” with “less” institutionalized states necessarily violates the condition that other things be equal.

**LONGEVITY APPLIED**

Enough caveats—what about application? To explore even superficially the relative institutionalization of Southeast Asian states would require another essay. But it should still be possible in this one to illustrate how one might begin to apply to the region these modified-Huntingtonian notions of institutionalization as adaptability and of adaptability as *longevity, renewability,* and *reprogrammability.* (In principle, of course, this understanding of institutionalization could be pursued elsewhere in Asia and beyond.)

To begin with *longevity:* Chronological age varies according to the unit and time period used, making this variable harder to measure than it looks. While in its formal-legal meaning the state is a more tangible unit of analysis than the political system, the state is hardly unambiguous, for depending on usage it can refer to an empire (Majapahit), a colony (Cochinchina), a nation (Thailand), a regime (Suharto’s New Order), or even a subfederal unit (Sarawak); and depending on the choice of a unit, the dates of its beginning and ending will vary as well.

First, and most comprehensively, one could estimate the age of the state in the sense of an empire, colony, nation, or regime (omitting the subfederal state as too unique and local) by asking how long the population in a given area can be said to have been subject to any supralocal political structure, from the present through colonial and classical to prehistoric times. Such an approach could yield—in archaeology, has yielded—insights into the ways in which different “protostates” may have arisen at different times in different places, and might, for example, underpin the claim of Vietnamese leaders to have inherited one of the oldest state traditions in Southeast Asia.

But even if one could in any but the vaguest way distinguish “the origin of the state” on the pieces of land or land-and-sea now known as “Thailand,” “Philippines,” and so on—against mounting evidence for the contrary or “parallelist” view that elements and semblances of the state were more or less simultaneously innovated in various parts of what is now called Southeast Asia—it would take an inferential leap across millennia to conclude that chronological differences in prehistoric state formation should be preserved as grounds for rank-ordering twentieth-century states. For the
most part—Vietnam and Thailand could be exceptions—the modern nation-states of Southeast Asia are only metaphorically related to whatever went on prehistorically in their vicinity.

Second, and preferably, one could estimate the “sovereign-spatial” age of Southeast Asian nation-states, dated from the years in which they became independent from colonial rule, as in the left-hand columns of Table 1. “Sovereign-spatial” denotes generally acknowledged jurisdiction over a defined area. This notion of the state focuses not on empires or colonies but on nations that are either postcolonial or (in Thailand’s case) noncolonial, on the not unchallengeable but still reasonable assumption that recent experiences are more likely to influence the future, and also in order to reduce the topic to more manageably contemporary proportions.

Third, one could compare the longevity of different states-as-regimes. In keeping with Scalapino’s emphasis on legality, the state could be considered a constitutional regime, in the sense that when the constitution is replaced, so in a legal sense is the state, and the longer a given state has operated on the basis of its unique constitutional rules, the greater its longevity. The right-hand columns in Table 1 are based on these assumptions.

One difficulty with this usage is that significant changes of regime in a more ordinary sense do not always coincide with the replacement of one constitution by another—witness the transition from the Old to the New Order in Indonesia. On the other hand, by focusing on the rules and procedures that legalize state power, its transfer and its use, the notion of “constitutional” age usefully transcends the life chances of a given state leader, avoiding the fallacy of defining the Indonesian state as Suharto’s, dating its life from the year (1968) that he became full president, and requiring that it cease to exist when he leaves office. To cut off in this way the life expectancy of the state would mutilate the idea of institutionalization as a state’s capacity to escape, in Scalapino’s previously quoted phrase, “a high dependence upon personalized rule,” that is, to survive its incumbents.

As can be seen in Table 1, the decision to use “sovereign-spatial” versus “constitutional” age yields dramatically different results. De jure independence poorly accommodates noncolonial Thailand, whose modern factionalism and instability—as in the famous Octobers of 1973 and 1976, not to mention routine coups—is ill reflected in its first-ranked position by “sovereign-spatial” age. Kampuchea and Laos also seem overoptimistically placed along the more historical dimension, while the converse applies to young-but-relatively-stable Malaysia and even more so to young-but-extraordinarily-stable Singapore. This is not to say that “sovereign-spatial” age yields incorrect results, but that it is too removed, conceptually and chronologically, from institutionalization in the sense of enduring rules, to be useful. Unlike a nation-state’s birth year, the birth year of a constitutional regime-state is subject to change, and is thus a more sensitive candidate for inclusion in political institutionalization as a variable that varies.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Year of de jure independence</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Year of present constitution</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>1782</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>1957</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>1946</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>1959</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burma</td>
<td>1948</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Singapore</td>
<td>1965</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kampuchea</td>
<td>1953</td>
<td>5½</td>
<td>Burma</td>
<td>1974</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laos</td>
<td>1953</td>
<td>5½</td>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>1978</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>1957 (1963, 1965)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Kampuchea</td>
<td>1981</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singapore</td>
<td>1965</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Brunei</td>
<td>1984</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brunei</td>
<td>1984</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Laos</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTES: The year of "independence" of never-formally-colonized Thailand dates from the establishment of the still-reigning Chakri dynasty in Bangkok; colonially- and World War II-related border changes are ignored. The year listed for Indonesian independence ignores the conditional and transitional negotiation of sovereignty from the Dutch in December 1949. Also omitted are all constitutional amendments, and the suspension of constitutional guarantees in Malaysia in 1969–1971. Years in parentheses refer to major border changes.

Also ignored are the colonial antecedents of constitutions that have been in effect since independence, on the grounds that independence perforce implies a "new" constitution. This decision discriminates in particular against the sultanate of Brunei, whose present constitution was adopted in 1959, nearly a quarter of a century before independence. By substituting 1959 for 1984, and thus elevating Brunei from ninth place to second in constitutional age, one could showcase the apparent procedural stability of former British compared to former French colonies. But without a postindependence track record to examine, who is to say that Southeast Asia's sole remaining outright monarchy will last?

REMAINING DIMENSIONS CHARTED

That leaves renewability and reprogrammability. Rather than pursuing these complicated topics in analytic or empirical detail, it may be helpful, and in keeping with the alternative-trying purpose of this essay, to shift in the pages that remain to a different style of analysis than that used in Table 1. Although the results shown on the right side of the table do not exactly contradict a commonsense ranking of Southeast Asian states according to procedural stability, to limit oneself to constitutionally
defined age is methodologically timid. Depending on the availability of data, scholars will wish to venture beyond the merely actuarial state to take into account its patterns of interaction with society. The richness of the notions of renewability and, even more, reprogrammability call for a supplemental approach—one more synthetic and synoptic than the enumeration of precise but artificial and question-begging thresholds of formal-legal change. If for present purposes Easton was wrong to abandon the narrowly juridical state, he did so for understandable reasons.

Accordingly, Table 2 is an intentionally sweeping, impressionistic, and summarized answer to eight broad questions about the state’s ability to refresh its leadership while influencing and responding to the national society in which it must operate. The state in Table 2 is not “sovereign-spatial,” nor “constitutional,” but “modern-national” in a less clearly delimited sense that directs attention to the relative stability and value of regimes now in power and considers their and their predecessors’ success or failure in “resolving” certain “problems.” The greater the number of such “problems” that a state has encountered and handled “well,” the stronger its ability to learn and relearn in future—that is, the more renewable and reprogrammable it probably is.

In Table 2, renewability corresponds to the problem of “succession”: how to routinize the transfer of power within a state. The other seven problems, although collectively incomplete, partly overlapping, and not necessarily equivalent in difficulty or importance, are used to estimate crudely the reprogrammability of each of Southeast Asia’s (or, in principle, any other region’s) states. The problem of “penetration” is how to create and maintain the state’s presence in society; that of “distribution,” how to ensure an acceptably proportional sharing of socioeconomic benefits; that of “growth,” how to expand the economy; that of “identity,” how to foster or maintain in the populace a sense of belonging to the nation; that of “unity,” how to preserve the integrity of the nation against attempted secession and civil war; that of “legitimacy,” how to ensure popular support; and that of “participation,” how to involve citizens in their own governance, to some extent and in some appropriate way, if only to inhibit their disaffection.

As the proliferation of quotation marks suggests, Table 2 is a tentative effort to raise important questions directly and subjectively, without first narrowing their scope and connotation and without first reconstructing analytic units to enable more exact comparisons. Although its referents are real, the table has been designed not to prove but to provoke. Nor are its simplifying signs and sums (+ = 1 = relative success; − = − 1 = relative failure) meant to suggest precision. Each sign simplifies matters still further by combining two potentially different estimates of a state’s success in handling that particular problem, first, relative to its success in handling other problems, and second, relative to the success of other states in handling that same

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22 Excluded for convenience here, how the institutionalization of the state is affected by its foreign affairs also deserves scrutiny.

Table 2

Crude Estimates of the Relative Problem-Resolving Success of Southeast Asian States

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problem</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Summary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Penetration</td>
<td>Singapore +</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth</td>
<td>Malaysia +</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distribution</td>
<td>Thailand +</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identity</td>
<td>Brunei +</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unity</td>
<td>Indonesia +</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legitimacy</td>
<td>Vietnam +</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>Philippines +</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Succession</td>
<td>Laos -</td>
<td>-7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>Burma -</td>
<td>-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kampuchea -</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
problem—enabling the signs to be compared (and summed) across both problems and states. (Critics may wish to explore the epistemological and methodological thickets into which such double comparisons admittedly lead.)

In other words, if Table 2 is about problems, it is itself problematic: Because the notion of what constitutes a problem varies from one observer to another, how can the dimensions of a problem, not to mention its resolution, be objectively measured and compared across time and space? How much of Singapore’s apparent problem-handling success is attributable not to the skills of its prime minister, Lee Kuan Yew, but to his good fortune in presiding over a city-state whose small size makes everything more manageable? Does the history-collapsing character of Table 2 render it too vague to be useful? And aren’t the comparisons patronizing and invidious, as if states like pupils could be graded on their performances?

These are constructive objections. Any single observer who uses his or her own subjective impressions to rank-order states risks the charge of hubris. Table 2 would certainly carry more weight if it presented a consensus of experts—reached, say, by the Delphi method. But if only to have something to improve on, one has to start somewhere, and comparisons will always be readable as criticisms, regardless of why or by whom they are made.

The historical details of how a particular state has come to grips with a specific problem, or failed to do so, are vital, and would lend needed and possibly corrective depth to the summary judgments in Table 2. In this way, history could be used to improve the study of how effectively different states have addressed similar problems and how different problems have been addressed by the same state.

Disaggregation would certainly help: The two kinds of comparisons—across states per problem and across problems per state—could then be separated. The fallacy of anthropomorphism—that states consciously try to solve problems—could be overcome by comparing the different ways in which problems are defined and addressed by different agencies, groups, and leading individuals within the same regime, and these contrasting agendas could be compared with their unofficial counterparts in society at large. Attention could also fruitfully be paid to the ceteris paribus assumption, because some “other things”—the sizes of Brunei and Indonesia, for instance—are strikingly unequal.

Finally, the comparability and measurability of problems and problem-resolving performances could be investigated. Of the eight problems listed in Table 2, for example, “legitimacy” may be the hardest to operationalize: Is it purely a psychological phenomenon? What source gives or denies legitimacy to a state—the people as a whole, an influential stratum such as a middle class or an intelligentsia, the civil service in whole or in part (e.g., the army), the leader of the regime (l’état, c’est moi), or perhaps even some nonhuman sanctioning force such as a Javanese concept of
power or a Sino-Vietnamese mandate of heaven? To what extent and in what manner are states able to determine the criteria whereby their legitimacy is judged? Approached in this elite-focused manner, the problem of legitimacy need not be ruled out of one's analysis simply because many ordinary Southeast Asians want little or nothing from government but to leave them alone.

Table 2, in short, invites further research, and the invitation is not weakened but strengthened by the likelihood that different observers will come up with somewhat different scores. For this reason it makes little sense to defend the table cell by cell. Instead, a few summary inferences should bring out the usefulness of the exercise as a stimulus to further, more overtly empirical, and less densely symbolized thinking about political institutionalization in Southeast Asia.

**PATTERNS OF INSTITUTIONALIZATION**

Imagine, for purposes of illustration, that the rankings in Table 2 are approximately correct. If so, these nontrivial "conclusions" logically follow:

1. Singapore and Kampuchea are the most and least institutionalized (renewable, reprogrammable) states in the region, respectively, a conclusion reinforced by their longevity (constitutional age in Table 1).

2. With the significant exception of Vietnam, the avowedly socialist states of Southeast Asia are less fully institutionalized than their ostensibly capitalist counterparts.

3. Consonant with the emphasis in this essay on the salience of the state, the problem of penetration in Southeast Asia has been resolved more successfully than other problems.

4. In the region as a whole, distribution and growth have been addressed with relative success, and about equally so, with the socialist and capitalist states comparatively advantaged, as one might expect, in distribution and growth, respectively.

5. Only in Singapore and Brunei does the same state do relatively well at both distribution and growth, and in both states the small size of the population discounts the achievement and impedes the derivation of transferable lessons from it.

6. Their greater success in handling problems of penetration, distribution, and growth shows the bureaucratic-activist profile of most Southeast Asian states, but raises the prospect that instability and devaluation (loss of political support) could (re)occur in the future if more basic issues of identity, unity, and legitimacy, as well as participation, which may have been addressed earlier in a decolonizing context, are taken for granted.

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7. The hardest problem to resolve in Southeast Asia generally has been the problem of succession. Some first-generation leaders still hold positions they show few signs of relinquishing voluntarily. As aging or ailing incumbents weaken or die, and contenders are emboldened to maneuver, the problem of succession could pose the greatest near-term obstacle to the institutionalization of the region’s states.

Most Southeast Asian states, and especially the six members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations,²⁵ have managed to reprogram themselves from an earlier concern with establishing political, cultural, and psychological justifications for state power to a subsequent priority on using and extending that power economically and socially. But so long as the leadership-renewing dimension of institutionalization remains problematic, future crises of succession could reopen those prior items on the states’ agendas.

The problems a state faces, after all, are not necessarily ever fully resolved. The permanently successful state does not exist, in Southeast Asia or anywhere else. Institutionalization is a reversible process. Perhaps it is this erratic behavior by the state, its perverse contingency, which accounts for the neglect it has suffered at the hands of theorists of revolution and modernization alike— theorists who, in class or group conflict, system-functional autonomy, or market supply and demand, sought above all the consistent and the predictable.

In politics, such aspirations guarantee disappointment, and that is no less true of those who now focus on the state. For all its heuristic value, the reintroduction of the state into political science holds no certain promise of uncovering stable regularities in the process of institutionalization.

Nevertheless, the effort to study the composition and adaptations of the state in Southeast Asia is worth pursuing, because whatever happens to the region, the state is there to stay—to improve, to worsen, or to ignore human lives. On practical and moral grounds alone, whatever the payoff for theory, the rediscovery of the state is une.

²⁵ Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand.
The military in Thailand, Burma, and Indonesia

Takashi Shiraishi

The military is the coercive arm of the state for defense and internal security. Without the military, the state can hardly survive. But the arm sometimes commands the head, and this has been the case in Thailand, Burma, and Indonesia. The Thai army took over the state in 1932, the Burmese army in 1962, and the Indonesian army in 1966. Since then, and in Indonesia even before its final takeover, military officers in these countries expanded their roles beyond national security to include politics, government, and economy.

The military that becomes the master of the state is commonly called praetorian, and different from that which remains subordinate to civilian control. The Thai, Burmese, and Indonesian militaries are praetorian. In this essay I will discuss the changing nature of the political roles of the military in Thailand, Burma, and Indonesia in comparative historical perspective; my purpose is not to search for a general theory of the political roles of the military.

Before discussing the political roles of the military in these countries, however, I will identify the points of reference by which we can compare these roles. The concept of professionalism first formulated by Huntington, though much criticized and indeed fundamentally wrong, will provide a starting point. According to Huntington, modern military officers are the professional managers of force and violence. In his view, there are three dimensions to their professionalism: expertise, social responsibility, and corporateness. The military officers' expertise is the management of violence, that is, the application of organized coercive power cultivated by training. Military professionals constitute an autonomous, exclusive corporate body, infringement of which by outsiders is resented by the officers. As professionals, the military officers have their clients, just as the medical professionals have patients as their clients. Huntington's thesis in formulating the concept of professionalism is that maximization of military professionalism neutralizes the military politically and thus minimizes the
propensity of the military to intervene in politics.¹ To put it another way, the military becomes praetorian because it is not professional or perhaps not sufficiently professional. Huntington thus argues that the Japanese military meddled in politics in the 1930s because it was never professional, even though army officers like Tojo Hideki, who formed the “Discipline” (Tosei) faction and led Japan into that disastrous war, were staff officers at the Ministry of the Army and the Army Central Command, graduates of the Army College, and most professional.

The fallacy in Huntington's thesis lies in his formulation of the concept of professionalism. He assumes that the three dimensions of professionalism go together. Thus the military that is “irresponsible” is by definition not professional, even if the level of expertise achieved by the officers is sufficiently high. As a result, his proposition that maximization of military professionalism minimizes the propensity of the military to intervene in politics turns out to be the normative proposition that the military should remain politically neutral and not intervene in politics in order to maintain its professionalism.

This, however, is not to say that the concept of professionalism itself is useless. In fact, three dimensions of military professionalism provide a clue to understanding politics in the military and the military in politics.

The first dimension is the officers' expertise in the management of force and violence. The officer corps is not a simple collection of military professionals but a hierarchically and rigidly organized professional bureaucracy. If the military bureaucracy is rationally organized, the recruitment, promotion, and placement of officers will be based on achievement criteria and the ranks and positions of the officers will be in accordance with their military expertise. But this state of affairs is rarely achieved. The promotion and placement, especially of senior officers, are sensitive matters and their political and personal loyalties to the military leadership are always taken into account, sometimes at the expense of their military expertise. Since the promotion and placement are of prime importance to career officers, those who are professionally competent but sidelined by political, personal, and other “irrational” reasons may develop strong emotional feelings against the military leadership and sometimes get politicized. This is what happened to the Japanese army in the 1920s when professionally competent non-Choshu middle-ranking officers such as Nagata and Tojo hated the army leadership dominated by the Choshu clique and systematically blocked junior officers of Choshu origin from entering the Army College, the major gate to army leadership.

Conversely, in the countries that are communally divided along religious, racial, ethnic, and other lines, the “rational” achievement criteria become problematic, because promotion and placement based on achievement criteria tend to be read in communal terms, such as Luckham demonstrated with reference to the Nigerian army.² And as we will see, in the armies that are transformed from guerrilla forces into

modern conventional armies, promotion and placement tend to be read in political terms.

The second dimension is the military as a corporate body with its own corporate interests. The military's corporate interests refer to adequate budgetary support, autonomy in managing its own internal affairs, the preservation of its responsibilities in the face of encroachments from rival institutions, and the continuity of the institution. Thus, when its corporate interests are threatened by outsiders—for instance, by the interference of civilian politicians in promotions and placements of officers or by the creation of a strong militia under the command of civilian politicians—the military tends to react and intervene in politics to defend and further expand its corporate interests. This element of defense and expansion of the military's corporate interests is important in understanding the political role of the military. The personal interests of officers are often entwined with the military's corporate interests; similarly, military officers often identify the military's corporate interests with national interests.

The third dimension, the social responsibility of the officer corps, is also important in understanding the political roles of the military. The question here is who is the client of the military professionals. On the surface, the answer appears simple: the nation. But the nation is essentially an image and there is no such thing as a unitary national interest. This means two things. First, that the officers themselves decide who their client is. This decision is partly dependent on the officers' ideology as formed by their experiences and training; generally military officers tend to equate the nation with the state and the state with the military and thus identify the military's corporate interests with the national interests. Second, the military officers' choice of their clients depends on the legitimacy that civilian political institutions enjoy. As Finer rightly notes, it is always an ominous sign of military praetorianism when military officers differentiate the incumbent government from the nation or the constitution.

This question of the legitimacy of civilian political institutions leads us to external factors that condition the political roles of the military. Two of these are the level of legitimacy that civilian political institutions enjoy and the level of mobilization of social forces in the political process. If the level of legitimacy of civilian political institutions is sufficiently high relative to the level of mobilization of social forces, the situation is "civic" in Huntington's terminology, and the political order is essentially legitimate and stable. In this situation, the military is less likely to intervene in politics unless outsiders seriously infringe on its corporate interests. On the other hand, if the level of legitimacy of civilian political institutions is low while

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the level of mobilization of social forces is high, the political order is essentially unstable and the situation is praetorian.6

It is in this situation that military officers, whether they like it or not, are forced to decide on their client. Here, however, we need to distinguish their client. If there is no strong state, anarchy prevails. In this situation, the military cannot be a hierarchically organized corporate bureaucracy but represents a collection of warlords. Without the centralized civil and military bureaucracy, the central government cannot govern the country and the military central command cannot command its forces. This was the situation in the warlord era of China in the early 1920s when large and small warlords infested the country and the central government could not govern.

There are two ways out of this situation. One is the revolutionary path followed, say, by the Chinese Communist Party: A revolutionary party, intent on revolutionary transformation of the social and political order from below, builds up and expands its power and authority bases in the society and, after taking over power, embarks on the “completion” of its revolutionary mission. The other is “state building”: The revolutionary path starts from above, as it were, to fashion the strong state by creating an autonomous, centralized, and hierarchically organized civilian and military bureaucratic apparatus, initiating social and political transformations from above, and building up and expanding the power and authority bases of the state. In these courses lie the important, though often brutal and costly, roles the military can play in national politics. In this age of technological progress, the military, having achieved a degree of centralization, has enough capability to crush poorly armed social forces or to demobilize them by force or the threat of force. Once the military succeeds in this task, the governing elite, whether military or civilian, can buy time to initiate policies to fashion state building from above.

Besides, in this age of superpower rivalry and multinational corporations, resources for state building can partly become available from abroad in the form of foreign military and economic aid and foreign capital investment. The policies the governing elite pursue concerning security and economic development are crucial in conditioning the success or failure of state building, the kind of state the elite create, and the social bases of the state. Once a strong state is established, anarchy no longer prevails, even if civilian political institutions enjoy little legitimacy and the level of mobilization of social forces is high. The state is like an automobile. Anyone can drive it as long as he knows how to drive, keeps it in good condition, has gas, and the road is not too rough. In this era of the United Nations, a state can derive its legitimacy from the “imagined” nation, from the sense of the people that it is their country. If civilian political institutions—above all, political parties—that can domesticate the state are weak, the military and civilian bureaucratic elites sit in the driver’s seat. In this case, the kind of regime that emerges is the Beamtenstaat, as the Dutch officials called the Indies, or the bureaucratic polity, the polity of the bureaucrats, by the bureaucrats, and for the bureaucrats, if we use the term currently in fashion.

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We can see in the Thai, Burmese, and Indonesian histories of the past thirty-five years (and in the case of Thailand, of the past fifty-five years) this state-building effort and, in most instances, the eventual domination of state over society: in Thailand and Indonesia the emergence of the bureaucratic state followed different paths and thus contained different features, but in Burma an ineffectual and unsuccessful “socialist” state, trapped in political and economic stagnation, has been stalemated in seeking domination over Burmese society.

THAILAND

Thailand is the only country in Southeast Asia that escaped the fate of colonization by European powers, mainly because of its geographically strategic location as a buffer between French Indochina and British Malaya and Burma. This conditioned its political development in three respects. First, colonization of Burma, Vietnam, and Cambodia constituted pacification of Thailand’s traditional enemies; in their place, however, Thailand faced the militarily far superior French and British. Military means to defend its independence was now out of the question, and thus Thailand sought and successfully managed to maintain its independence by diplomatic means. The modern Thai military force, created in the early 1900s, never fought a war before 1940 and its function from the beginning was solely to maintain internal security.

Second, because Thailand was not colonized, anticolonial nationalist mobilization of social forces did not take place. Whereas Burma and Indonesia experienced a large-scale nationalist mobilization, the level of mobilization of social forces in Thailand remained low for a long time, and consequently traditional sources of legitimacy, above all the monarchy, remained strong without being seriously challenged.

Third, under these conditions, Thailand was transformed from a decentralized “feudal” state to a centralized absolutist state during the Chakri Reformation, with the newly created civilian bureaucracy and the military as the arms of the absolutist rule. Thai society thus experienced “internal colonization” by the state in the first thirty years of this century and the arms of the state (the civil bureaucracy and the military) were staffed by professionally trained, career-oriented salaried officials and officers. The highest positions of the civil bureaucracy and the military were monopolized by royal princes and favorites appointed for reasons of birth rather than competence, and thus civil bureaucrats and military officers who were professionally competent but of commoner birth were blocked from ascending the promotional ladder.

The 1932 coup marked the end of this Thai absolutist state. Two factors combined to produce this situation. First, in the Great Depression, the bottom fell out of the international rice market, and the state whose major source of income was the export tax on rice experienced serious financial difficulties. The king cut down both salary and staffing of the civil and military bureaucracy and thus threatened their corporate and personal interests. Second, in this situation middle-ranking military officers and civilian bureaucrats, who had already been alienated by their subordination to royal princes because of their birth and despite their professional expertise,
became politicized and formed a group calling themselves the People's Party. They were not really a political party, however, but a tiny group of conspirators whose sole power base was in the military and civilian bureaucracy.

The 1932 coup and the following consolidating coup of 1933 strengthened the grip of the coup leaders, especially Phibun Songkram, over the state apparatus, but these moves were not accompanied by extensive mobilization of social forces. Nor for that matter were the coup leaders committed to the transformation of the Thai state and society by mobilizing social forces from above. They simply inherited the centralized state created by Chakri kings and consolidated their control over the state by extensive patron-client networks without trying to mobilize extrabureaucratic forces and to create a new legitimacy base for their regime.  

What emerged from the 1932 coup was thus a bureaucratic polity, in whose driver's seat sat army leaders in coalition with the civilian bureaucratic elite. From 1932 to 1973, though the drivers changed from Phibun to Sarit Thanarat to Thanom Kittikachorn and Praphat Charusathien, state domination over Thai society was perpetuated under the bureaucratic polity, with a brief interlude in 1944–1947 when army leaders were in trouble because of their wartime collaboration with the Japanese. Except for that interlude, army leaders who controlled the most powerful coercive arm of the state dominated the scene, threatened only by internal factionalism but not by the emergence of powerful competing groups. There are significant differences between the bureaucratic polity of the Phibun era and that of his successors, but we may still note four general features of the Thai bureaucratic polity.  

First, the level of mobilization of extrabureaucratic social forces remained low. Peasants were never mobilized and trade unions were controlled by civilian bureaucrats and military leaders. Business elites, largely Chinese and vulnerable to bureaucratic harassments, bought protection by becoming lesser partners of military and civilian bureaucratic leaders. Political parties, if allowed to exist, were dominated by military and civilian bureaucrats and had no strong social base or legitimacy. The legislature and political parties were put out of their existence whenever they became a nuisance to army leaders.  

Second, the political process was dominated by military and bureaucratic elites, culturally and ideologically homogeneous, with their power base in the military and civilian bureaucracy, who were fighting with each other for more lucrative, powerful, and prestigious positions. Positions generated money for military and bureaucratic elites not only because their positions provided them with chances of corruption but also because those who controlled powerful positions were invited by business leaders to sit on the corporate boards of enterprises in exchange for protection. Politics was essentially a clique affair without any significant ideological difference, or mobiliza-

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tion of social forces. Each clique was generally headed by high military officers and cut across institutional boundaries among the military, the civilian bureaucracy, and business.

Third, politics oscillated between stability and instability: stable when there was a dominant clique that controlled important positions within the army, and unstable when there was no such dominant clique and the army was fragmented by competing factions. The coup became a part of this power game. A successful coup group dominated other cliques by controlling key positions in the army—such as the ministry of defense, the commander-in-chief of the army, and the commander of the First Army garrisoned in and around Bangkok. In turn, army officers ascended the promotional ladder by joining a successful coup group; their classic route to power was from commander of the First Army to commander-in-chief of the army. A typical example is Sarit’s group. It first emerged as a powerful faction by joining the 1947 coup led by General Phin Chunhawan and became the ruling clique by staging the 1957 coup. Sarit and his leading proteges—Thanom, Praphat, and Krit Sivara—rose to power in the classic manner, from commander of the First Army to commander-in-chief of the army to the minister of defense to the prime minister. But a clique was not bound by strong ideological commitment; leading members of a clique in time built up their own cliques, and then the cycle started again.

Fourth, in these clique politics, the monarchy played the role of legitimizer, especially in the Sarit and Thanom-Praphat eras. The king played this role by remaining above clique politics and bestowing legitimacy on any successful coup group. But the monarchy is a strange institution. Once on the throne, the king stays there for life. By staying on the throne since 1950, by the early 1970s the king had outlived all other institutional and personal elements and had become the most powerful figure in Thai politics.

Lastly, the Thai bureaucratic polity was buttressed by American strategic interests as a forward base of the war in Vietnam. American military and economic aid strengthened the Thai state and enabled it further to penetrate and dominate Thai society.

If the Thai bureaucratic polity changed little in this period, however, Thai society underwent profound socioeconomic transformations, especially from the 1960s onward. The machinery of change was economic development, which became the primary national goal with the onset of the first National Economic Development Plan in 1961. Measures were taken and a favorable climate was created to induce foreign investment, first from American and then from Japanese corporations. The Thai economy developed rapidly. The GDP index rose from 100 to 169 between 1962 and 1974. Economic development gave the bureaucratic elites access to new sources of wealth and made further penetration of the state into the society possible. Professionally trained civilian bureaucratic technocrats were coopted into the regime,

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9 See Chai-Anan Samudavanija’s contribution in this volume.
because the military elites permitted civilian bureaucrats a wide range of freedom to carry out economic development programs and budget, fiscal, and foreign exchange reforms.

But rapid industrial expansion also generated new social forces. From 1960 to 1970, the nonagricultural labor force increased from 2.12 million to 3.19 million. The number of university students increased from 15,000 in 1961 to 100,000 in 1972. From 1964 to 1969, the number of high school students rose from 310,000 to 450,000, and that of vocational students from 45,000 to 80,000. Business and professional sectors also expanded. In the countryside, further penetration of the state into the society exacerbated tensions between those better off who had access and connections to the lower bureaucracy and the tenant and landless peasants “cheated” by those of higher economic status and intimidated by the police.10

The 1973 “student uprising” and the collapse of the Thanom-Praphat government took place against the background of these enormous socioeconomic changes. Essentially three factors brought about the demise of the government. First, by the early 1970s, the 1957 coup group headed by Sarit had already broken up into rival cliques headed by Thanom, Praphat, Krit Sivara, and others. The military cliques and the noncommitted “professional” soldiers were upset by the dynastic marriage of Thanom’s son, Colonel Narong Kittikachorn, to Praphat’s daughter; Narong’s rapid promotion; and the prospect of an eventual dynastic succession of the Thanom and Praphat cliques by Narong. Second, when students took to the streets to protest the government and Praphat ordered the army to crush the demonstrations, Krit, then commander-in-chief of the army, refused. Third, at this critical moment, the king persuaded Thanom and Praphat to resign and to leave the country with their heir-apparent, Narong. The government fell because the students struck at the right moment, when the ruling cliques headed by Thanom and Praphat had alienated other cliques, noncommitted soldiers, and the king.

The collapse of the Thanom-Praphat government ushered in a brief period of “open politics.” The military officers were temporarily in a state of shock; officers who did not join cliques were hostile to corrupt military leaders, whom they regarded as having tainted the military as an institution. Though General Krit controlled the army and tried to strengthen his position by placing his allies in strategic positions, he was a suspect not only because he had double-crossed Thanom and Praphat, whose proteges were still in the army, but also because he was essentially no different from Thanom and Praphat in the eyes of many officers.

religion, and nation,” struck back, especially after communist victories in South Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos in 1975. Seeing the leftist movements as playing into the hands of the communists, army officers in charge of counterinsurgency and the police directed rightist movements, which recruited lower officials, local toughs, vocational students, and the Village Scouts. In this growing political polarization, political parties of the center and the center-right dominated the parliament and for the first time tried to build their constituency among the people at large. Now one factor that had conditioned the Thai bureaucratic polity—the low level of mobilization of social forces—no longer existed, not only because new social forces had emerged but also because the once amorphous legitimacy symbols of king, Buddhism, and nation became ideologically charged and narrowly defined.11

In October 1976, the “open politics” era was closed by a coup in the wake of the bloody suppression of the student movement by the police and right-wing forces. Since then, the government has been successively headed by Thanin Kraivichien, General Kriangsak Chomanan, and General Prem Tinsulanon. The leftist movements have been largely crushed and the rightist forces demobilized. The military as an institution has reemerged as the most powerful single force, and the defense budget has increased by 25 percent each year. The legislature has been reconstituted with an elected House of Representatives and an appointed Senate, whose members are mostly military officers.

But these facts do not mean that the post-1976 military leaders are guiding Thai politics back to the old comfortable bureaucratic polity. Though the military is the most powerful institution, military officers, especially army officers, are deeply divided. Neither General Kriangsak nor General Prem have risen to power following the classic route and their rise was partly due to the support of the “Young Turks.” The “Young Turks” were those middle-ranking officers who commanded troops and who, from their combat experiences in Vietnam and their sense that the military was tainted by “corrupt” officers, refused to be coopted into established patron-client networks, choosing rather to act independently in their collegiate style to regenerate the military, the state, and the nation. The “Young Turks” were defeated in the coup they staged in April 1982.12 But the military still appears divided, though General Arthit has recently appeared to be following the classic route in his effort to become the next political chief.

In addition to changes within the military, the king’s political role has changed. Already in the period of “open politics,” the king, bestowing royal blessings on the Village Scouts, had descended from “above politics” to involvement in the ultranationalist antileftist crusade. At that time, however, he was still above clique and party politics. But the April 1981 coup unambiguously demonstrated that the king’s

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12 For an informative study of the “Young Turks,” see Chai-Anan Samudavanija, The Thai Young Turks (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1982).
support of Prem was the single most important factor in the defeat of the “Young Turks.” As Chai-Anan writes, in the past it was said: “He who controls the First Army Division controls Bangkok, he who controls Bangkok controls Thailand.” But this was now changed: “He who is with the king, although not being able to control Bangkok, emerges the winner in every coup.” And with this change, the king is no longer above politics but in the middle of them. Future coup leaders will now have to consider what to do with the king.

Finally, though the leftist movements of students, workers, and peasants were crushed, parties in the center and the right have retained their social bases of support, and the expanded groups of businessmen, professionals, and middle-class people can no longer be disregarded by military and bureaucratic elites.

All these things do not mean that the Thai civilian and military bureaucracy is now in difficulties. The state—the military establishment, the police, and the civilian bureaucracy—will dominate the society for years to come. But even if the powerful military leadership remains dominant, the changing role of the monarchy, the expansion of the middle class, and the existence of political parties with substantial social bases will mean that military and bureaucratic elites will have to work out institutional mechanisms of power sharing. Given the disintegration of the revolutionary left, the bureaucratic elites can more comfortably accept the idea of power sharing with right and center extrabureaucratic forces, as the Kriangsak and Prem governments have shown thus far. Indeed, now that the king has committed himself to this course, the stake is high for the monarchy itself and for the Thai state as a whole.

BURMA

Different from Thailand, Burma was colonized by the British in the nineteenth century and achieved independence in 1948. In Burma the same generation of political leaders who led the country to independence still rules it, even though the regime has changed from parliamentary democracy to a military regime.¹⁴

The two most important political institutions in postindependence Burma—the Burma Army and the Anti-Fascist People’s Freedom League (AFPFL)—were created during the Japanese occupation. The Burma Independence Army was organized with a nucleus of thirty Thakin nationalists led by Aung San and trained by the Japanese army as military officers; these men served as the core of the officer corps. Thakin Shu Maung—the present General Ne Win—was one of the Japanese-trained Thakin

¹³ Ibid.

nationalist army officers. After the Japanese occupied Burma, the Burma Independence Army was reorganized into the Burma Defense Army and then again into the Burma National Army headed by Aung San as army commander; he was minister of defense when Japan granted independence to Burma. Though trained by the Japanese army, the Burma National Army was not a colonial but a national army led by Burmese nationalists. In March 1945, after army leaders established contact with Allied forces in India, the Burmese National Army revolted against the Japanese when the Allies were advancing into Burma. After the war, forces of the Burma National Army constituted a major component of the Burma Army newly organized by the British, together with Burmese minority members, especially Christian Karens (from the British Burma colonial forces).

The AFPFL was organized in 1944 as a secret resistance organization by Burmese army and civilian nationalist leaders and emerged as the united front of nationalist forces for Burmese independence after the war. The AFPFL was headed by Aung San and composed of prewar Thakin nationalists; the People’s Volunteer Organization (PVO), a paramilitary organization loyal to Aung San and joined by members of the wartime Burma National Army not absorbed in the new army; ethnic minority affiliates; mass organizations; and the Socialist Party. Under Aung San’s leadership, the AFPFL led Burma to independence through negotiations with the British. But before final independence in January 1948, Aung San, who commanded the AFPFL and the loyalty of the former Burma National Army component of the army, was assassinated. U Nu inherited the AFPFL and became the first prime minister of independent Burma, while the Burma army was placed under the command of Ne Win, another protege of Aung San, who was appointed supreme commander of the armed forces, minister of defense, and deputy prime minister in 1949. The division of labor was thus worked out between Nu and Ne Win in the absence of Aung San.

From the beginning of independence, Burma was beset by rebellion, insurrection, and disorder. Both White Flag and Red Flag communists staged insurrections and were joined by dissidents of the PVO and units of the army. The unification of the frontier areas with Burma proper and the participation of ethnic minorities in the Union of Burma were problematic from the beginning. Though the constitutional provisions allowed some minorities statehood within the federation and even a theoretical right of secession, the Karen National Defense Organization rebelled, and this was soon followed by insurrections by other ethnic minorities. The army could control Burma proper but could not pacify insurgents in the frontier areas, and thus became engaged in continuous pacification campaigns that affected its character. First, the Burmanization of the army proceeded. The army was reorganized after the war with forces of the largely Burman Burma National Army and units of the British Burma colonial army (which were strongly Christian Karen) as two major components. But because Karen and other minority officers and soldiers deserted the army and joined insurgent ethnic minorities, the remaining army became increasingly Burman. Second, Ne Win’s leadership was firmly established in the army, because he improved the military organization and the officers’ expertise, and also because the few Thakin nationalist officers who could rival him joined the insurrection. Third, the
engagement of the army in the continuous pacification campaigns created a sense among army officers that it was through their sacrifices that the integrity and unity of Burma was being maintained. Thus the army officers soon came to see moves of civilian politicians to make concessions to insurrection movements as betrayal of the army, the state, and the nation.

In the 1950s, however, the army avoided direct intervention in politics. This circumstance was basically due to the existence of the AFPFL. In the 1947 elections, the AFPFL captured 172 out of the 182 noncommunal seats, while its affiliate, the Karen Youth Organization, took all 24 Karen-reserved seats. In the 1952 and 1956 elections, the AFPFL took 200 and 172 respectively, out of the 239 seats and continued to dominate the parliament. In this AFPFL-dominated parliamentary democracy, however, it was not the elections and the parliamentary form of democracy that accorded legitimacy on the AFPFL government, but the AFPFL as "the party of the nation" that made the elections and the parliamentary form of democracy "norms." Thus the single most important condition for the survival of parliamentary democracy was that the AFPFL remain "the party of the nation." This in turn made it imperative that the AFPFL not split and that it demonstrate its role as the "party of the nation" by winning landslide victories in each election. The collapse of parliamentary democracy thus came with the collapse of the AFPFL. The 1956 election triggered the event.

In the 1956 election, though the AFPFL captured the majority of the seats, the National Unity Front obtained 37 percent of the votes and received 48 seats. Besides, by that time, the AFPFL, once the united front of Burmese nationalist forces for independence, had been transformed into a collection of patronage networks, each controlled by a faction, bestowing jobs, positions, and favors on its clients, and functioning as an electoral machine. The poor performance of the AFPFL in the election presaged its breakdown. U Nu called for the "cleansing" of the party, yet the AFPFL continued to be plagued by factional fighting. In 1958, the AFPFL finally split into two factions, the "clean" AFPFL led by U Nu and the "stable" AFPFL led by Ba Swe and Kyaw Nyein. The split in the central leadership quickly spread along the lines of patronage networks, and each faction tried to mobilize mass support at the expense of the other. The political order collapsed and the country was on the verge of civil war. At this moment U Nu called on General Ne Win to organize a caretaker government to restore order and oversee a fair and free election.

The army under Ne Win thus took over state power as a guardian above party politics. Ne Win ran the government by assigning senior officers to leading governmental positions together with a few professional civilian bureaucrats who had no previous connections with the political parties. A national election was then held in 1960 and the "clean" AFPFL won the majority. The new parliament was convened, U Nu was elected prime minister, and the army returned to the barracks. By that time, however, the U Nu government as well as the parliamentary form of government was already doomed because, to win the election, U Nu on the one hand promised to make Buddhism the state religion to obtain Buddhist Burman votes and on the other called for the creation of new "states" within the Union for the Mons and the Arakans. His promise to make Buddhism the state religion alarmed and antagonized the non-
Buddhist minorities. At the same time, his leniency toward ethnic minorities encouraged secessionist movements, which became more vocal in their demands. This angered army officers, who saw U Nu's move as an act of betrayal. In addition, the AFPFL was no longer the "party of the nation." Though U Nu's "clean" AFPFL, whose name was soon changed to Burma Union Party, won the majority of parliamentary seats, it was a party representing only a part of the nation, qualitatively different from the AFPFL, the "party of the nation." If the AFPFL no longer existed, the army of the nation, the army led by Thakin nationalists-turned-army-officers fighting for the unification of Burma, was still there as the only remaining institution with sufficient nationalist credentials. In March 1962, the army under Ne Win thus took over state power "to defend the nation." The constitution was suspended and the Revolutionary Council, headed by Ne Win and consisting entirely of military officers, took command of the state.

If the 1932 coup group in Thailand took power out of their frustration with and hostility toward the "irrational" monopoly of the military leadership by royal princes and the 1957 coup group out of outright personal interest, the 1962 coup group in Burma took over out of their consciousness—or false consciousness—of guardianship, a sense sustained and reinforced by the fact that Ne Win and other coup leaders were nationalists who happened to follow careers as military officers. To them, the integrity and unity of Burma had been maintained by the sacrifices made by army officers and soldiers. The 1962 coup leaders in Burma were therefore a breed different from the Thai coup leaders. While Thai coup makers were career officers who had climbed up the promotional ladder to the highest positions by joining and staging coups d'etat, the Burmese officers were filled with a sense of self-righteous historical mission to inherit Aung San's will to lead Burma to socialism, a will "irresponsibly sabotaged" by civilian politicians. Thus the Revolutionary Council justified its rule and formulated its task in "The Burmese Way to Socialism," a program that embodied the principles propounded by Aung San for building socialism. What informed their ideology, however, were events of the past. It was a deliberate attempt to recreate the now highly mythologized historical condition when "the people were united as one" in the unique period of General Aung San's leadership as the antifascist movement reached its final phase. The Revolutionary Council was thus from the beginning a captive of the past, and Burma was placed and remains under the command of this "reactionary" national-socialist group.15

On taking over state power, the Revolutionary Council, calling for the completion of the unfinished revolution, set for itself as objectives the socialization of the Burmese economy and the unification of Burma. The performance of the Revolutionary Council (1962–1974) and the Revolutionary Council reincarnated (1974–present) in achieving these goals, however, remains unimpressive.

In the first place, socialization of the economy (read: nationalization of private businesses) began in 1963 with the takeover of the banks and was followed by the

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socialization of imports and exports, production, and distribution. Socialization of the Burmese economy, however, did not lead to economic development but to stagnation. From 1962 to 1974, when the Thai GDP index increased from 100 to 169, the Burma GDP index (the 1962 GDP set as 100) fluctuated between 97 and 111. Malaise was most apparent in the production of rice. Here the state took on the entire purchasing as well as the milling of rice. The abolition of private purchasing and milling had disastrous effects. The effective price for paddy (unhulled rice) fell, and the incentive to produce consequently declined. Further, the increased gap between paddy and rice prices encouraged many peasants to mill their own paddy for the black market.

Socialization of the economy thus led to economic stagnation under state control and to a flourishing of the black market and illegal smuggling across the Thai-Burmese border. Being rice producers, peasants were not hit seriously and the countryside remained calm, especially where law and order was reestablished by the military pacification campaign. The hardest hit were the urban workers. They periodically struck and rioted, and were suppressed by the army. By the late 1970s, the economic malaise had become so serious that the Revolutionary Council reincarnated adopted a new economic policy in the name of the state party, the Burma Socialist Program Party, which sought modest foreign assistance and allowed some room for the economic private sector to operate. Since then, the Burmese economy has shown some improvement.

In the second place, the unification of Burma under the rule of the Revolutionary Council has been no more successful than the socialization of the economy. In the late 1960s and 1970s, the army succeeded in crushing several insurrections and placed Burma proper firmly under its control. But insurrection movements are continuing in the frontier areas, and the unitary structure of the state as defined by the 1974 constitution, which ended ethnic “states” and the right of secession, left little room for compromise between the state and the insurgents.

If the 1962 coup leaders have not been very successful in the socialization of the economy and the unification of Burma, they were highly successful in perpetuating themselves in power and placing the people in Burma proper, if not in the frontier areas, under their firm control. Two related measures contributed to their success. First, the civilian state apparatus shattered in the 1940s and left weak in the 1950s by the penetration of AFPFL loyalists was for the first time strengthened in the 1960s. Different from their Thai and Indonesian counterparts, the Burmese “civil service,” above all its middle and higher echelons, was largely filled by British and Indian personnel in the British era. Under the Japanese occupation, those British and Indian bureaucrats left the country and the vacated posts were filled by lower-ranking Burmese officials.

After independence, the AFPFL further weakened the civil service by discouraging some of the best-trained administrators from staying in office and filling the vacated posts with inexperienced party loyalists. The Revolutionary Council inherited this weak civilian bureaucracy and tried to strengthen it with an infusion of military officers in key positions while purging many party loyalists. One of the most telling attempts to strengthen the civilian state apparatus was the creation of the Security and
Administrative Councils (SACs). These councils were constituted by the military, police, and civil service heads at divisional, district, and township levels, most often with a military officer as the chairman, thus restoring and streamlining a single line of command in the administrative apparatus.

In a second measure contributing to the success of the 1962 coup leaders, the Revolutionary Council arrested many “old” politicians after its takeover and either disbanded or forced out of existence political parties and their affiliated mass organizations. The Revolutionary Council then created its own party, the Burma Socialist Program Party (BSPP), to mobilize social forces in an orderly fashion from above, while banning all other political parties for the reason that “parties reflect divisions and there can be no further divisions in Burma’s socialism.” In the late 1960s, the People’s Workers Council and the People’s Peasants Council were created as BSPP’s mass organizations. And in the new 1974 constitution, the Socialist Republic of the Union of Burma was formally established as a one-party state with the BSPP as the single state party. The Revolutionary Council was abolished, and all power was transferred to the People’s Assembly, whose members are BSPP members. All these institutional trappings, however, are a thin veil that can hardly conceal the fact that the 1962 coup leaders are still in power and that their power base is the military.

To be sure, the BSPP has the facade of a mass party. As of 1981, the membership of the BSPP was 1.5 million, and the military with 144,000 members represented only 9 percent of the total. But the majority of the Central Committee and the Executive Committee members are military officers, both retired and on active duty, and Ne Win is the chairman. Therefore the Party-military relationship in Burma is a mirror image of that in communist states in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. There the Party controls the military, and the fusion of the Party and the military is attained on the Party’s terms. In Burma, the military controls the Party and the fusion between the two is attained on the military’s terms.

The 1962 coup leaders’ power base thus remains the military, even though General Ne Win and his associates who formed the original Revolutionary Council have retired from active duty. The expansion of the military’s corporate interests as well as the officers’ personal interests, coupled with the ideological indoctrination and surveillance of the officer corps and promotion and placement of loyalist officers, guaranteed their hold on the military. But these same measures sometimes caused tensions because the mythologized past that informs the ideology of Burmese socialism is irrelevant to younger officers; officers well versed in ideological matters are not necessarily competent officers; and promotions and placements of loyalist officers warp the “rational” system of promotion and placement. Besides, the economic malaise demoralizes soldiers, and their demoralization is often seen as a threat to the military by middle-ranking officers who command troops and are in daily contact with soldiers.

The 1976 coup can be understood in this perspective. The plotters were captains and majors who planned to kill General Ne Win, General San Yu (then secretary general of the BSPP and the State Council), and Colonel Tin Oo (then head of the National Intelligence Board), "out of their disaffection with the government one-party system and the failures of the economic policies." After the plot was uncovered, Brigadier Tin U, who had just been ousted from the positions of defense minister and chief-of-staff of the armed forces, was also arrested on the charge that he had not taken any action despite his knowledge of the plot. Brigadier Tin U was outside the original 1962 coup group and seen as a "hero" by the young officers.17

If the threat of Burmese "Young Turk" officers to the coup group is real if only remote, extra-state forces pose little threat to the present regime, because political parties and the mass organizations allied with them have been thoroughly destroyed and the key social forces are well domesticated in the framework of the BSPP. Besides, the stagnation of the Burmese economy has precluded any chance of the emergence of an autonomous middle class such as Thailand has recently experienced.

The outcome is a stagnation not only in economy but also in politics. The coup leaders are getting old; Ne Win resigned the presidency in 1981 at the age of seventy, though he retains his position of chairman of the BSPP. Given the weakness of the extrastate social forces and the penetration of the military in the state apparatus and the party, the power base of any successor will be the military. This means that those who will emerge as Ne Win's successors may not be Ne Win's proteges (such as General San Yu and Aye Ko) but those who are still on active duty and can command the loyalty of officers who command troops.

INDONESIA

Indonesia was colonized by the Dutch and, after an interlude of Japanese occupation during the war, achieved independence in 1949, though not, like Burma, through negotiations but by a combination of diplomacy and armed struggle. To understand the military and politics in postindependence Indonesia, it is important to note three developments that took place in these years of occupation and revolution.

The Beamtenstaat created by the Dutch since the late nineteenth century collapsed in the 1940s.18 The former Dutch Indies was divided administratively under the Japanese occupation, and the resource basis of the state, the export economy, was shattered during this period. Besides, ruthless exploitation of human and material resources by the Japanese occupation forces generated deep popular hatred against the officials, which culminated in many "social revolutions" in the early revolutionary period.

17 Ibid., 17 (1977).
During the revolutionary period, the troubled new state was further weakened. The republican government was not strong enough to protect the state against popular forces who were often armed. Indonesia was divided between the expanding Dutch-occupied territory and the shrinking republican territory. Thus, when Indonesia achieved independence and was transformed into a unitary state shortly thereafter, the state apparatus inherited by the republican government was poverty stricken, shattered, demoralized, and weak.

Further, in the revolution no political parties emerged, as the AFPFL had in Burma, that could claim legitimacy as “the party of the nation” that led Indonesia to independence. Rather, the revolution was fought as myriads of revolutions by the youth, who joined numerous locally rooted organizations. Soekarno, a long-time nationalist from the prewar days, emerged as the leader of Indonesia without any strong organizational base, because he successfully made himself a focal point of these numerous revolutions and became the symbol of revolutionary experiences, hopes, and excitements shared by these youths, now called the “1945 generation.”

Finally, the Indonesian army was born in this revolutionary era along with numerous irregular fighting organizations. The Japanese 16th and 25th armies created the Peta (Fatherland Defense Force) and the Giyu-gun (Voluntary Army) in Java and Sumatra, but these were essentially local guerrilla forces without a central command, thus qualitatively different from the Burma National Army led by Aung San. They were quickly disbanded after the Japanese surrender. The Indonesian army was thus assembled from relatively well equipped local fighting organizations, often led by Japanese-trained former Peta and Giyu-gun officers and a tiny group of Dutch-trained officers. The center of gravity of the military leadership therefore lay in the fighting units, as the fact that army commander General Sudirman was elected by divisional commanders shows. The central command had little authority and military muscle to enforce its will on its forces, even though General Sudirman was increasingly seen as a charismatic figure by his subordinates.¹⁹

In the immediate postindependence period (1950–1959), Indonesia had a parliamentary form of government because no other form of government was possible, given the absence of a strong centralized state apparatus. Insurgencies and rebellions in West Java, South Sulawesi, and Aceh were illustrative of the inability of the center to command allegiance. Army leadership was also extremely decentralized. The central command did not have troops at its direct disposal. Territorial divisions were locally rooted and regional commanders acted in warlord style, especially in the Outer Islands. The state was so poor and conventional sources of revenue for the army so inadequate that regional commanders developed irregular local sources of revenue to maintain their forces.

The central command led by Nasution planned to transform the guerrilla armies into a modern professional army, but this plan did not proceed well. It was resisted by officers unqualified for professionalization, and Nasution was suspended for more than two years after the October 17 affair, when Soekarno ousted him and other officers in the central command, mobilizing the support of regional commanders against the central command. Moreover, given the fact that most officers were in their late twenties and early thirties, it was an almost impossible task to create a “rational” and professional promotional and placement system in a few years.\(^{20}\)

The army, then, was divided between locally entrenched regional commanders and the powerless central command and was susceptible to outside manipulation and intervention. But to make matters worse, the political parties and the parliamentary form of democracy were devoid of legitimacy, and governments were toppled one after another by shifting coalitions of parties. Besides, in the early 1950s, the parliament was not elected by general election but was a carryover from the brief federalist era. Thus ironically, but understandably, the parliamentary form of democracy started to crumble after the first general elections were held in 1955. In those elections, four parties, the nationalist PNI, the modernist Islam Masjumi, the conservative Islam NU, and the communist PKI emerged as major parties.

The elections starkly exposed the distributional imbalance between resources and population. Import-consuming Java, richly endowed with population, was represented by the PNI, the NU, and the PKI, and dominated the parliament, while the export-earning Outer Islands, endowed with natural resources, were represented by the Masjumi. Further, the PKI emerged as one of the four major parties largely by obtaining votes in Java, especially from “statistical” Muslim Javanese. This aggravated the tensions generated by the exposé of the distributional imbalance between natural resources and population, because Masjumi now saw Java as the stronghold of communism.

From 1956 onward, intraarmy politics and party politics were increasingly interrelated. Nasution, rehabilitated to the army high command, tried to strengthen the position of the central command by reshuffling local territorial commanders. In response, some army commanders in the Outer Islands declared martial law, cut their ties with the central government in 1956, and in early 1958 formed the PRRI-Permesta, which was joined by Masjumi and PSI politicians. This rebellion marked the demise of parliamentary democracy. In March 1957, President Soekarno declared a state of siege, and in 1959 decreed the return to the 1945 constitution and introduced “Guided Democracy.”

Imposition of martial law and the inauguration of Guided Democracy vastly expanded the army’s role in politics. Nasution was appointed defense minister for the first time as a military officer; many officers of the army and the other services were

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appointed to the parliament. But unlike Burma, where the collapse of the AFPFL was followed by military takeover, in Indonesia the army did not immediately assume state power, but, as Nasution formulated it, chose to follow "the middle way," neither being "the dead hand" of the civilian government nor taking over power outright, but playing a dual function in national security and in social, political, and economic affairs together with civilians.

The reason for this more gradual encroachment was that Soekarno, a symbol of revolutionary experiences shared by the 1945 generation, was still present as the charismatic "leader of the nation," untainted because he had kept himself above party politics. Though Guided Democracy was inaugurated as a coalition of Soekarno and the army led by Nasution, its base was soon expanded and increasingly it became a coalition of Soekarno and the 1945 generation. The PNI, the NU, and the PKI with all affiliated mass organizations were still formidable political forces. Relationships between the army and the other services were not cordial. The army under Nasution was itself still divided and susceptible to outside manipulation, especially by Soekarno, "the leader of the nation." Since imposition of martial law and the inauguration of Guided Democracy vastly expanded the army's role in civilian affairs, "the middle way" was indeed reasonable.

From 1957, however, not only was the army's role in politics expanded, but it also underwent a profound transformation. The central command had finally started to have its own muscle to enforce its will on territorial commanders; paratroops broke the rebellions by mid-1959 and in the early 1960s the elite Army Strategic Reserve (Kostrad) became available at the direct disposal of the central command. Besides, when the West Irian campaign led to the seizure of Dutch corporations that had dominated the Indonesian economy, the army took control of most of these corporations with martial-law powers. Suddenly, the army had obtained corporate economic interests, which gave the central command the financial means to attach the officer corps to itself and to "rationalize" the hierarchy by placing many senior officers in lucrative jobs outside the mainstream army establishment. At this moment of significant transformation, the army in 1958 started to accept the new generation of cadets at the Academy who were to form the Young Generation (Generasi Muda).

For Soekarno, the expanded army role in politics and its centralization and rationalization were a necessary cost to fight the threat of national dismemberment posed by the rebellions. But when the threat was gone and West Irian had been returned to Indonesia, he sought to counter the growing power of the army. He mobilized under his patronage the PNI, the NU, and the PKI with all their mass organizations, because the consolidation of the army offered for the first time the real possibility of a successful coup. In the late Guided Democracy period, the political influence of the PKI grew rapidly under Soekarno's patronage and so grew the fear on the part of anticommunist forces. The result was a growing polarization between the PKI and the anticommunist forces—the latter looking to the army for protection.

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Guided Democracy, in any case, was essentially transitory, because Soekarno was at the apex, and Soekarno as a mortal would die while the army and the PKI as institutions would continue.

The abortive coup on September 30, 1965, marked the beginning of the demise of Guided Democracy. Whether or not masterminded by the PKI, the coup was disastrous for the PKI and for Soekarno. The rebels assassinated six top generals and announced the abolition of all ranks above lieutenant colonel in a protest against "corruption" among generals. The coup was thus a mutiny as well. The quick suppression of the coup by General Suharto, commander of the Army Strategic Reserve, thus made possible the reassertion of the military hierarchy and guaranteed widespread support among senior officers. Supported by anticommunist forces such as Islamic groups, Catholic and Protestant minorities, the small indigenous entrepreneurial, professional, and bureaucratic middle class, and intellectuals and students, the army physically wiped out the PKI and its mass organizational bases. Liquidation of the left both politically and psychologically cleared the road for the army's domination. In March 1966, Suharto virtually took over power from Soekarno and a year later was formally sworn in as acting president. Dissociating itself from Soekarno's "Old Order," Suharto's regime is called the New Order, and its watchword "development" replaced the old slogan "revolution."

Under the new order, Indonesia has undergone profound changes both in state and society. The military has been centralized and rationalized. After Suharto took the army leadership into his hands, he first consolidated his control by purging many leftist and Soekarnoist officers and installing still others in lucrative but powerless positions. Then, in the late 1960s and in the mid-1970s, major institutional changes of the whole military establishment were carried out. If a basic strategy of Soekarno had been to divide the four services and to patronize the junior services as counterweights to the army, the stress was now on integration and the clear organizational ascendancy of the army over the other services. Thus the four ministries serving the individual services were absorbed into the Department of Defense and Security, the independence of the service chiefs was sharply curtailed, and their functions were confined to staff functions with their authority over military operations virtually abolished. Regional commands were also created to ensure service integration and greater subordination to the center. The Army Strategic Reserve was further expanded. The Kopkamtib (Command for the Restoration of Security and Order) was retained as the internal security apparatus, and a new branch was created in the Defense Department to supervise the political and social staff, those thousands of military men assigned to civilian affairs. The effect was the strengthening of the

23 For an excellent discussion of the pembangunan (development) ideology of the New Order, see Kenji Tsuchiya, "Indonesia no Kaihatsu to Seijiteki Antei" [Development of Indonesia and its Political Stability], ASEAN wo meguru Sogo Anzen Hosho: Takushoku Daigaku Kokusai Symposium '82 [Total Security Policy for ASEAN Countries: Takushoku University International Symposium '82] (Tokyo: Takushoku University, 1982).
central command in which the Defense Minister/Commander of the Armed Forces and the Deputy Commander of the Armed Forces/Commander of Kopkamtib occupied the most powerful positions. This consolidation guaranteed the control of the military by Suharto.24

The civilian bureaucracies of the state were also centralized and rationalized under the New Order. Many officials were purged after Suharto came to power, and officials were required either to relinquish their party membership or to quit their jobs in the name of “monoloyalty.” Besides, many officers were assigned to positions within civilian bureaucracies as “backbone.” The overall effect was again that of strengthening the control of the apparatus by the center and—what Emmerson has aptly called “departization”—a sealing off of the state from the political parties.25

If the state apparatus, both military and civilian, centralized and streamlined, has become the main base of the New Order regime, its social bases have also changed in the course of the 1970s. The anticommunist coalition, which supported Suharto in his rise to power, collapsed by the early 1970s. But this collapse hardly weakened the regime, not only because the state apparatus was strengthened, but also because of the emasculation of the political parties and the creation of Golkar as the state party; and the policies of economic development generated new social groups essentially dependent upon the regime as well.

From the late 1960s, the New Order regime embarked on a new course of “development,” summoning technocrats, asking for foreign assistance, and instituting new regulations for foreign investment that brought a host of multinational corporations into Indonesia in the 1970s. As Anderson persuasively argues, the economic policies steered by the technocrats and made possible by foreign economic assistance, foreign investment, and huge oil revenues have strengthened the position of the state vis-à-vis society and of the center vis-à-vis the regions.26

But these economic policies also generated new social groups. Indeed, the partnership of generals, cukong (Chinese tycoons), and multinational corporations brought enormous wealth to the military elite, and rampant corruption alienated professionals, intellectuals, and students. But in urban centers, sizable “new urban middle classes” emerged as a direct product of the regime’s economic policies, consisting of such people as subcontractors, consultants, professionals, real estate dealers, fashion designers, brokers, clerks, and typists. In the countryside, a new rural middle class emerged whose members have come to dominate the local economy with their interests partly in land, partly in small business, and partly in the lower bureaucracy. (We may visualize as a typical member of this new rural middle class a minor official—say, at a kecamatan [subdistrict] office—working also as a pemborong [contractor] and investing part of his earnings in land, part in his business, and part in the education of his sons often at the university level.)27

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26 Anderson, “Last Days” and “Old State, New Society.”
These new urban and rural middle classes now form the social basis of the New Order regime. They are essentially dependent on the state and the economic policies pursued under the New Order, because the new urban middle class is created by capital and structurally dependent on a large and rich foreign presence while the new rural middle class depends on its strategic position astride the commercial and bureaucratic networks of the countryside.

What has emerged under the New Order is a Beamtenstaat or, if we use General Alamsjah’s words, negara pejabat (“bureaucrats’ state”). Its mainstay is the military and civilian bureaucracies with the new urban and rural middle classes as junior partners and beneficiaries. Students may demonstrate and the urban poor may riot; after the long reign of Suharto, even members of the new urban and rural middle classes may wish to have a new president out of boredom. But these conditions hardly threaten the regime as long as Suharto is in control of the military, as he has been thus far. This is not to say that there has been no tension in that sector; in fact, there have been institutional and generational tensions within the military. There are generational differences between the officers of the 1945 generation and those of the young generation who started their professional career from the early 1960s. If the officers of the 1945 generation have revolutionary prestige, those of the young generation are more professional and may be more concerned with the present state of the military, all the more so because the material, equipment, and training of the military declined in the 1970s, as was disastrously demonstrated by the poor military performance in East Timor. But as the rise of General Benny Murdani, the rising star of the interstitial generation, shows, the days of the 1945-generation officers have almost passed and the days of the young generation officers are soon to come.

Two types of institutional rivalries within the military establishment still remain. One is a well-known rivalry between three territorial divisions in Java, though with the passing of the 1945 generation this rivalry may disappear. The other is the rivalry between the mainstream military establishment in the Ministry of Defense and Security and the political generals of Suharto’s personal clique. Those political generals are mainly from the Diponegoro division and, since they are not specialized in the field operations but in intelligence, supply, finance, and military police, they are ultimately dependent on the president’s political survival for their power and prestige. The political struggles that surfaced in the 1970s essentially represented the rivalry between the military establishment and the political generals (Sumitro v. Ali Murtopo; Surono v. Ali Murtopo).

All these problems, however, are not necessarily fatal to the President’s survival. Nor, for that matter, is a drastic change in the regime’s structure likely in the near future, given the liquidation of the left, the fragmented Islamic forces, the emergence of the new urban and rural middle classes, and above all the strong, centralized state.

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29 Anderson, “Last Days.”
Even anti-Chinese riots reveal regime stability. Those most active in recent anti-Chinese riots were youths, especially high school pupils and some university students. But they were apolitical and, destroying, not stealing, Chinese properties, the youths seemed to be saying that there could be only one legitimate way to climb the social ladder—by becoming a *pejabat* through education.

**CONCLUSION**

The state is a complex institution with its own interests, its own organizational structures and distribution of functions, its own personnel, and its own institutional memory in the form of files and dossiers. In the age of nation-states, the state derives its legitimacy from the nation, and the military, the coercive arm of the state, defends the state in the name of the defense of the nation. If the state is weak and the military incapable of maintaining internal security, society is in disorder and the nation is in jeopardy. Strengthening the military is thus a necessary cost to create a strong state and to safeguard the national community. But since the nation is essentially imagined, military officers tend to equate the military's corporate interests with state interests, especially if civilian political institutions are absent or weak or if the military's corporate interests are threatened by outsiders. The result is military takeover of power and domination of society by the state in the name of the nation.

In Thailand, the military took power in 1932 and inherited the centralized state apparatus created by Chakri kings. Since then, the military's domination of state and state domination of society were hardly threatened by extrastate forces until the early 1970s.

In Indonesia and Burma, neither the state nor the military were strong in the years immediately after independence. Despite only partial success of pacification campaigns, the nation survived in the face of insurgencies because a sense of nationalism was embodied in "the party of the nation"—the AFPFL, in Burma's case—and "the leader of the nation"—Soekarno, in the case of Indonesia. During the 1950s, however, both the Burmese and the Indonesian armies were gradually strengthened and consolidated. Thus in Burma, the army under Ne Win took over state power in the wake of the collapse of the AFPFL and embarked on the consolidation of the state in the name of "the Burmese Way to Socialism." The problem with the Burmese Way to Socialism was that it was not a good strategy to consolidate the state; in opting for self-reliance, the coup group lost its chance to use foreign assistance, resources available only to the center, in order to strengthen the state. The socialization of the Burmese economy led Burma only to stagnation while destroying any possibility for autonomous social forces to emerge as a threat to the regime. In Indonesia, in contrast, the officer corps expanded its political roles well before the military's takeover of state power, and under the New Order regime the *Beamtenstaat*, once shattered in the years of occupation and revolution, has been reconstructed as *negara pejabat*.

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30 Anderson, "Old State, New Society."
Thus, as I have suggested earlier, bureaucratic polities have emerged in Thailand and Indonesia, while in Burma the “socialist” state is trapped in political and economic stagnation. The difference between the Thai bureaucratic polity and the Indonesian *negara pejabat* can be understood in terms of their different paths to the present regime. In Thailand, the military inherited the state from an absolutist monarchy without creating a new basis of legitimacy. Thus when the state came to face challenges from extrastate forces, the military had to fall back on the monarchy to obtain legitimacy while searching for a formula for “power sharing” with new social forces. In Indonesia, however, it was the military that reconstructed the *Beamtenstaat* as the Indonesian nation-state. Thus the Indonesian state derives legitimacy from the nation without the medium of any traditional institutions, and the military plays a far more expanded role in the civilian bureaucracies as well as state corporations than its counterpart in Thailand. Given the dependency of the urban and rural middle classes on the state for their existence, the military in Indonesia will remain as the mainstay of the regime for a long time.
8. Sociopolitical Development and Institution Building in Indonesia

Jusuf Wanandi

INTRODUCTION

Since the 1970s, remarkable progress has been achieved by the ASEAN countries in economic, social, political, and security terms. Seen from within each of the ASEAN countries, the achievements have been significant. They are all the more pronounced if viewed in comparison with other developing regions in the world—the Middle East, Africa, and Latin America.

A number of factors explain the favorable developments in the ASEAN region. Two stand out as most important. First, the ability of the national leaderships to assess the internal social and political threats to the states and assign priority to national development; to recognize the threats is to be credited not only to the leaders but also to the established social and political institutions including the bureaucracy. Second, equally important has been the stable regional environment, which helps support national development. In fact, it is not only the Southeast Asian region that has become more conducive to national development in the ASEAN countries; the stability of the Asia Pacific region as a whole has been enhanced by favorable developments in both the Northeast Asian and Southeast Asian regions, which mutually influence each other.

These two factors are interrelated. In accordance with the ASEAN Concord, adopted at the ASEAN Summit in Bali in 1976 and still valid, the main preoccupation of the ASEAN leaders must be to cope with the rising demands by the population, both in quantitative and qualitative terms. These include more food, adequate clothing, and better housing, and also better education and health services, greater participation in political processes, greater freedom in the pursuit of social justice, the rule of law, and the development of democratic practices. The ASEAN leaders understand these to be their priority tasks if they are to deal effectively with the principal threats to their nations, since these threats are internal in nature.
Compared to the situation of about a decade ago, the primary internal threat to the ASEAN countries no longer takes the form of insurgencies and subversion or infiltration in support of internal rebellions (separatist, religious, or communist movements). These irritations are still present, but they are of secondary importance. They can create frustrations for national governments in causing the reallocation of scarce resources away from national development programs, but they are not likely to destabilize these countries to the point where the governments are forced to step down.

The main challenge to the ASEAN countries has become more complicated and more difficult to overcome. Insurgencies, subversion, or infiltration take concrete forms and are thereby easier to deal with. But the challenges of development are more wide ranging and encompass the entire spectrum of life—economic, political, social, and cultural.

In the initial stages of national development priority has been given to economics as a prerequisite to further development. Economic growth is equally an important task to legitimize national governments, especially in societies that have suffered from a colonial past. In vigorously pursuing economic development, it has been deemed acceptable to postpone efforts in other fields as a temporary sacrifice to obtaining longer-term objectives.

Economic growth in the ASEAN countries since the 1970s has been successful, and prospects remain bright although the ASEAN economies have recently been under immense pressures, largely because of the protracted global recession.

Progress in economic development, however, brings with it complexities: Traditional values need to adapt to new challenges and to international influences. The rising middle class is no longer content with physical and material progress alone and demands a higher quality of life, which among other things entails greater political rights, greater participation in deciding the future, and legal guarantees.

Economic development, moreover, cannot satisfy the entire population because some parts of the society will gain more than other parts, and still others may even be deprived by the process. Thus, sooner or later, social and political measures are called for to rectify the side-effects of economic growth. Social development should be able to provide minimal basic needs of each member of the society, in terms of health, education, and the like, but political development is also important for various reasons.

First, it is vital in the establishment of a political system that can accommodate national values and international influences. The system that evolves from such a process will not be liberal and democratic in the precise Western model, but one in which individual interests can be harmonized with the interests of the community. However, the system will have to evolve as a result of better education, more intensive international relations and communication, and the growth of the middle class. Trials and errors cannot be avoided, but a proper management of the process will guarantee the necessary support by the majority of the population, both for the process itself and its outcome.
Second, it is needed in the development of political institutions: the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of government as well as political parties and other mass organizations.

The establishment of such government institutions constitutes the most important part in the development of a national political system. A strong executive branch is necessary in building up a firm foundation for national development. However, it is also necessary to balance a strong executive branch with a legislative branch responsive to the aspirations of the populace. Short of this, the system will become too rigid and repressive.

For the legislative branch to play its proper role, political parties and other mass organizations must be given room to develop. The judiciary branch should play an important role as a respected arbiter for the conflicting interests in the society as well as between the government and the people. The development of a political system so conceived should be able to mobilize popular support and thereby stand the test of changes in national leadership (succession) without turmoil.

The ASEAN countries, with the exception of the Philippines, have fared well in their political development, measured in terms of the responsiveness of the political system to the demands of the people. Without popular support, the political systems could not have survived the past twenty years; this includes Indonesia, notwithstanding the role of the armed forces. Moreover, while there are still a number of medium- and longer-term political problems in each ASEAN country, the prevailing systems are likely to survive.

As in the case of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) in Japan, the system of one dominant political party—in Indonesia (GOLKAR), Malaysia (UMNO), and Singapore (PAP)—is likely to continue. Similarly, the political role of the armed forces in Indonesia and Thailand is likely to be sustained. The recurring question raised by Western scholars—when will the armed forces cease to play a political role—is not relevant so long as they perform a useful role in the maintenance of internal political stability. Even the Philippines may rely more on its armed forces in the future for the simple reason that they have become the principal remaining factor for the maintenance of internal stability.

Of the many tasks facing governments of developing societies, sociocultural development may be the most difficult one. The preservation of a coherent value system in an era of rapid changes resulting from economic development, technological revolution, advancement in transportation, and telecommunication is an enormous task. In this realm, one can still be optimistic if one takes into account the acculturation processes by Southeast Asian nations and cultures over the past centuries whereby they were able to absorb influences from Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam, as well as from Chinese and Western cultures.

Overall, the ASEAN countries—with the exception of the Philippines—have been successful in dealing with their central challenge—namely, to develop the state and nation in a more or less balanced and comprehensive way to satisfy the rising demands of their people.
Despite many shortcomings, recent achievements in the ASEAN countries have been remarkable compared with the failures and recurrent crises of the past. The abortive coup by the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) in 1965 was the culmination of the government's mismanagement in almost all respects. Examples from other ASEAN countries, perhaps less traumatic than the 1965 abortive coup in Indonesia, might have led to national crises with disastrous implications had they not been overcome. These include the May 13, 1969, racial conflict in Malaysia and the 1973 students' rebellion in Thailand.

At present, there are no serious mismanagement problems in the ASEAN countries (except for the Philippines) that may lead to a national crisis in the immediate future. The present economic difficulties faced by the ASEAN countries are manageable, and their future prospects remain bright. Similarly, the few prevailing political problems are equally manageable. These include the problems of relations between the armed forces and the political parties in Thailand; the relations between the government and the sultanates in Malaysia; the revitalization and reorganization of GOLKAR, the political parties and mass organizations in Indonesia; and the so-called succession problem in Singapore.

The focus of this paper is on sociopolitical development in Indonesia during the past fifteen years. A major challenge to Indonesia and other ASEAN countries is to develop a political system that is supported, and can be executed, by the majority of their people. In describing the Indonesian experience, occasionally reference will be made to political systems and concepts originating in the West, but in making judgments, the Indonesian system will be viewed on its own merits.

SOCIOPOLITICAL DEVELOPMENT

The term "sociopolitical development" is used here to emphasize the interrelationship between the social and political fields. It is possible to distinguish between them analytically, but in practice these two conceptual categories are only separable aspects of a single phenomenon. Developments in the political field must be implemented within a fixed social environment and societal framework, which both influences and is influenced by those developments. In this regard, any discussion of sociopolitical developments in Indonesia must take into consideration two factors: (1) the distinctive character of Indonesian cultural values, which contribute their own meaning to Indonesian sociopolitical development, while at the same time setting limits of interpretation on such commonly used terms as democracy, basic human rights, political rights, constitutional state, rule of law, and so on; and (2) the history of Indonesia's struggle for self-determination, which continues to influence the present-day course of political development.

It is within the context of these factors that present efforts at Indonesian sociopolitical development must be seen and evaluated. No claims are made here as to whether these cultural values are intrinsically good or bad, but they must be taken into consideration if Indonesian development is to be achieved. Whether such values will
contribute to development is more dependent on the manner in which development is attempted than on the quality of the specific values in themselves.

In this regard, Harry Benda seems to be correct in stating that both President Soekarno and his group of Indonesian military officers, while appearing superficially modern, in essence seek ways of solving problems in the traditional Javanese way. Those traditions, however, may be changed in the course of development. No matter what form it takes, any process of development that brings about modernization will also bring about fundamental changes in social structure and in the cultural values contained therein.

Progress in economic development will bring about a growing middle class that will have greater economic and sociopolitical demands. Western values, as manifested in the practice of democracy, rule of law, and basic human and political rights, will have a greater influence in the development of society because of a more extensive education system and widening mass communications. Therefore, a more open political process becomes inevitable.

The problem is how these new values—as introduced by the younger generation and the middle class—can be integrated into a system with its roots in Indonesian traditional values. In Asia, Japan has succeeded most in harmonizing traditional with modern values to achieve a stable political system, although Japan went through a difficult period in the 1930s and 1940s. Political development involves trial and error as well as risks.

The history of Indonesia's struggle for independence gave the armed forces (ABRI), as freedom fighters, a right to participate in the nation's state affairs equal to that enjoyed by other groups. At the same time, the revolution caused a severe deterioration in the economy and in other aspects of life, such as splits in the body politic, changes in values, and social disharmony, problems that could not be overcome in the early years of the republic and that served to gradually reduce the capability and role of political parties. Let us first, however, focus on certain cultural characteristics that have influenced current Indonesian sociopolitical developments:

1. The world is viewed as an essential balance of the totality of forces, including the conflicting currents between the macro- and microcosmos. The desirability of maintaining balance and order underlies the system of consultation aimed at achieving a mutual consensus—a system governing the decision-making process. Here the maintenance of a balanced order is achieved by emphasizing that the participation of all social elements results in the mutual acceptability of the outcome.

2. The interests of the society as a whole are emphasized over those of the individual member. Thus, basic rights including political rights are accompanied by

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social responsibilities, which are weighted equally. It is expected that each individual will exercise self-restraint and will be willing to make sacrifices for the sake of serving the interests of society in the course of safeguarding his personal rights.

3. The process of development, including sociopolitical development, must follow an evolutionary path in a spirit of togetherness. The laws and practices already established dictate that the path of sociopolitical development should be the constitutional path.

4. A single ultimate source of power is recognized from which all power holders derive their authority. Under current law, that ultimate source is the Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat or MPR (the People’s Consultative Assembly), situated at the apex of a system based on the harmonious separation of powers among Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat or DPR (the People’s Representative Council), the presidency, the Dewan Pertimbangan Agung or DPA (the Supreme Advisory Council), the Supreme Court, and the State Comptrolling Body. This system manifests itself in a strong executive office headed by a president who acts as mandatory of the People’s Consultative Assembly. He is flanked and controlled by the People’s Representative Council, which does not have the power to remove the president but cannot be disbanded by him.

5. Indonesian cultural values dictate that criticism leveled against office holders or other social groups should not be destructive. Extreme attacks undermine the balance and harmony that are so highly valued in Indonesian society; therefore, they are not accepted.

All these values form the basis of the 1945 constitution. In essence, they are primarily Javanese values, now expressed as Pancasila (Five Principles), which has become the state ideology. The principles are: Belief in god, humanity, nationalism, democracy, and social justice. They constitute the fundamental law of the Indonesian nation as well as its official ideology and way of life prescribed for the people. While Pancasila was originally derived from Javanese history and culture, its values have evolved into national values in the course of the development of the Indonesian state, and not merely because of the important role of the Javanese majority in the government, including the armed forces and the bureaucracy. Other local cultures have many basic elements similar to, albeit less developed and systematized than, those of the Javanese. This can be seen in the customary laws existing throughout Indonesia, which have in common the practice of musyawarah mupakat (“consensus building”), gotong royong (“mutual help”), and the understanding of the preeminence of the totality (society of a whole) vis-à-vis each individual member. Deliberations in forming a consensus (musyawarah untuk mupakat) are to include all members of a particular group (a village, an ethnic group) in the process, while the role of authority (village head) is still fully recognized. These practices have worked well within small

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3 See, for example, Soedjono Hoemardani, Renungan Tentang Pembangunan [Reflections on Development] (Jakarta: Centre for Strategic and International Studies, 1981), ch. 1; and Ali Moertopo, Some Basic Thoughts on the Acceleration and Modernization of 25 Years Development (Jakarta: Centre for Strategic and International Studies, 1972), ch. 1, 2.
and homogeneous groups, but to apply them to the national level has required the nation to undergo various adjustments. Yet this challenge has been successfully met. Further changes and modifications, however, are likely to be required as a result of a more wide-spread educational system, progress in technological development, as well as more extensive communication and transportation networks.

International influences have had an equally profound effect on the evolution of Indonesian society's values, mainly introduced through the rising middle class, comprising the bureaucracy, the armed forces, professional groups, intellectuals, and business circles, which have become more influential in the process of development. The middle class in Indonesia has become the main supporter of the government. At the same time, since these groups are more vocal, they also have been in the forefront in demanding a more open political system and a gradual, but systematic, effort toward political development. These demands are well understood by many at this point, in light of the country's experiences since independence and the process of political institution building under the New Order.

As a background to these developments, Indonesia's sociopolitical history may be divided into four phases:^[For a discussion in detail on these developments, see Ali Moertopo, Strategi Politik Nasional [National Political Strategy] (Jakarta: Centre for Strategic and International Studies, 1974), pp. 3–12.]

**Phase I (1945–1950)** covers the period of revolution, in which armed conflict created conditions not conducive to the orderly development of a healthy sociopolitical system. During this period, the 1945 constitution was formally recognized, but during these early years deviations were allowed to occur as a tactic to gain the support of world public opinion for the republic's struggle. The essence of these deviations was a liberal democratic edifice with a multi-party system and a prime minister supported by a coalition of parties sitting in a provisional legislative body. Under the impact of the "Second Dutch Attack" and the revolt of the Indonesian Communist Party at Madiun, the presidential system was reestablished in 1948–1949 under Vice President Mohammed Hatta.

**Phase II (1950–1959),** commonly referred to as the period of liberal democracy, represents Indonesia's attempt to apply the principles and practices associated with the operation of the Western governmental model. The failure of that system is generally attributed to weaknesses in the structure of the political party system at the time. The replacement of the dynamic strength once found in the parties by a reactionary preoccupation with the advancement of the vested interests of some elements within those parties and their emphasis on ideological considerations over programmatic concerns created a situation of conflict. Cabinets fell at a rate reminiscent of the Fourth Republic in France, and the integrity of the state was challenged by both the right-wing attempt of the House of Islam movement (DI/TII) to declare Indonesia an Islamic state and by the separatist movement (PRRI/Permesta), which flared up in parts of Sumatra and Sulawesi. This pattern of increasing political instability culminated in a deadlock between the forces favoring a theocratic state based on Islam and those favoring the
existing secular state based on the five *Pancasila* principles. The fact that this deadlock occurred in the Constitutional Convention, which had been convened several years earlier to draw up a new constitution that would decide this point and other salient points of conflict, added to the severity of the situation.

*Phase III (1959–1966)* covers the period of "Guided Democracy," which was both designed and implemented by President Soekarno as a response to the preceding period of instability. Convinced that only strong leadership could resolve the existing problems, the system he created was designed to place the reins of power in his hands. Sources of power that he could not directly control he sought to neutralize by playing off against their opponents within the constantly changing array of councils, fronts, and movements that he created for that purpose. However, the mutually conflicting ideological forces that he attempted to contain within a "united front" of nationalism, religion, and communism (NASAKOM) proved to be beyond Soekarno's capabilities. The unsuccessful coup attempt of the Indonesian Communist Party on September 30, 1965, marked the beginning of the end for both President Soekarno and his "Guided Democracy."

*Phase IV (1967-present)* marks the introduction of the present period of the "New Order," characterized by its attempt to implement the 1945 Constitution. Although the present constitution has been in effect since 1959, its provisions were frequently violated under President Soekarno. The record of the New Order in this regard stands in sharp contrast to that of its predecessor and it is that record to which I would like to direct the remainder of my analysis.

The New Order's record of accomplishments in the sociopolitical field is remarkable, but basically those accomplishments may be reduced to two fundamental principles: the reinstatement of the principle of constitutionalism and the simplification and reorganization of the entire system of political institutions in an attempt to strengthen them and to replace previous ideological influences with a commitment to modernization and development.

Among the efforts undertaken to return Indonesian sociopolitical life to the principles set forth in the 1945 Constitution, two are particularly worthy of mention. First are those efforts aimed at returning major state institutions—that is, the People's Consultative Assembly, the People's Representative Council, the presidency, the Supreme Advisory Council, the Supreme Court, and the State Comptrolling Body—to their proper positions and to reestablish interrelationships among them which are in accordance with the 1945 Constitution. Some details of those efforts with respect to specific institutions are outlined later.  

A second initiative carried out in an attempt to return Indonesian sociopolitical life to the path of constitutionalism and the rule of law was the successful conduct of three general elections for 360 of the 460 seats in the People's Representative Council in 1971, 1977, and 1982. The 1971 elections marked the second time in more than twenty-five years of independence that Indonesians had the opportunity to register

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5 Ibid., pp. 29–47.
their political preferences. The results of the elections may be taken as a barometer of the people’s view of the existing political institutions. As a new sociopolitical force that offered a development program to which the government of President Soeharto was already committed, GOLKAR offered the voters an alternative to the established record of the parties. Bearing in mind Indonesia’s limited experience with elections as a mechanism of democratic control, the recent attempts to establish an electoral tradition should be seen not only as an expression of the people’s sovereignty but also as part of an ongoing process of democratic education for the population.

Among the efforts toward the reorganization of the political system are a number of long-range initiatives that have been undertaken simultaneously. Some of the more prominent of these are outlined here.

Attempts to achieve a final resolution of past conflicts in connection with the Indonesian public philosophy of Pancasila have centered on efforts to redirect the basic orientation of the political parties away from their past preoccupation with ideological concerns toward a more pragmatic orientation. Since 1968 this has been attempted by way of persuasion and was accomplished only in the People’s Consultative Assembly in its 1983 sessions. The Pancasila as an explicit guiding principle has been accepted by the political parties, including the United Development Party (PPP), which is based on Islam. Some mass organizations, particularly Islamic organizations, still oppose the adoption of Pancasila as the governing national ideology. Its recent adoption by Nahdlratul Ulama (NU), the largest Islamic social organization, however, although conditional and with its own interpretation, is likely to reverse the situation in the near future. At present, two strategies have been adopted by Islamic organizations. One is to concentrate on activities in the political field, the course adopted by PPP; the other is to confine activities to nonpolitical areas, such as education. The latter strategy has been followed by Muhammadiyah for many years and is now being adopted again by Nahdlratul Ulama, which in fact was established for that purpose.6

A genuine national acceptance of Pancasila could bring an end to ideological conflicts, which have been a main feature of the Indonesian political scene since the early days of nationalism at the beginning of this century.

In the past, the process of political decision making has been confused by the fragmentation among a large number of political institutions. In line with efforts to define more precisely the role of state institutions elaborated previously, simultaneous efforts have been made to reduce the number of political organizations. The consolidation of previously existing organizations into two political parties and the GOLKAR—which was completed with the legislative passage of Law No. 3/1975—is designed to channel the people’s aspirations more effectively and to increase the clarity and openness of the political decision-making process.

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6 Muhammadiyah is an Islamic socioeducational organization founded in 1912 in response to the Nahdlratul Ulama. Its basic objective has been to purge the Islamic teachings in Indonesia from Javanese influence. For a discussion on the process of the adoption of Pancasila by the NU, see, for example, Susumu Awanahora, “A Nod to the State,” Far Eastern Economic Review, January 5, 1984, pp. 12–13; and Tempo, 24 (December 1983), pp. 12–17.
The GOLKAR, as a sociopolitical organization based on the articulation of the interests of functionally defined social groups and a commitment to program-oriented development, plays the role of catalyst in sociopolitical development. Its influence is intended to pressure the two political parties to formulate their specific programs more clearly so that they can better compete with GOLKAR both in the elections and in the representative assemblies at the center and at the lower levels. In this way the sharp distinction between them evident since the formation of GOLKAR can gradually be overcome. Thus, the ideological nature of the United Development Party via its link with Islam and the identification of the Indonesian Democratic Party with a broad appeal to socionationalism will become muted by the need to grapple with concrete policies and with the routine matters of government. They will thus both be in a better position to compete with GOLKAR on the basis of providing choices among development programs for the electorate.

The creation of organizations on the basis of categorically defined common interests—e.g., workers, farmers, fishermen, youth, women, teachers, scholars in various fields, and religious leaders—provides a basis for the formulation and articulation of the interests of those groups. Through such organizations, the participation of the various groups in development will be facilitated and the groups themselves gain spokesmen capable of presenting their viewpoints to both government and other social groups, as well as exercising a social-control function in their fields of expertise. Through the institutionalization of these organizational forms categorical social-group interests will be strengthened and the groups will be guaranteed direct expression free of their former dependence on either the parties or GOLKAR.

The role of the press, institutions of higher education, research institutions, and intellectuals is recognized and their freedom is guaranteed within the limits of those cultural values referred to earlier. The press especially is expected to show self-restraint and implement its own code of ethics. Aside from its freedom, which is guaranteed, a sense of responsibility toward the success of national development in all fields is called for. In order to maintain a two-way flow of information, periodic meetings are conducted between leaders of the press and government officials covering politics, economics, and security.

As for universities, research institutions, intellectuals, and students, it is hoped that their participation in development can be realized in the form of research projects, as well as by way of alternative proposals and criticism of development tactics and strategies being employed. An example of one such project designed to involve university students in the development process is the "Learn by Practical Work" (Kuliah Kerja Nyata or KKN) program, which is aimed at strengthening the bonds of mutual understanding between the students and the village population and channeling student dynamism in a constructive direction.

Efforts to guarantee basic rights and to implement the rule of law may be seen in the settlement of the case of the Indonesian Communist Party detainees and in the acceptance of a new Law on Criminal Procedure, which incorporates the habeus
corpus existing in common law. Security considerations arising from Indonesia’s geopolitical situation as an archipelago, however, pose problems that are not easily overcome. Although the apparatus involved in the implementation of the law has already been upgraded, it is still minimal. Legal consciousness in Indonesian society is only gradually able to be increased through education and information as well as through good leadership by social leaders and the government.

This discussion would not be complete without mentioning the role of the armed forces, which remain the dominant force in Indonesian sociopolitical life. The justification for their role as a political force is their recognition as one of the functional groups, which guarantees that their voice will be heard in affairs of state, and in the established tradition of their continuous involvement in politics arising from their origins as freedom fighters in the independence movement.

But the primary reason for the dominance of the military is that they remain the only well-organized group willing and able to unite the whole of the Republic of Indonesia in carrying out national development, a task left unfinished after twenty years of attempts by civilian sociopolitical forces. With the unification of the various armed branches under a single command structure in 1969, the capability of the armed forces has been further heightened. Nevertheless, the total people’s defense system, which they themselves have created, dictates that the entire society become a defense force and that the professional armed forces form only the core of that system. It is believed that the main threat comes from insurgencies aided by subversion and infiltration from outside. The nation as a whole should thus get involved in the efforts to avert these threats. One consequence of the adoption of that system is that between 1966 and 1969 the full strength of the Indonesian armed forces has declined from 650,000 to about 300,000 men. It is also expected that a system of obligatory service in a militia will supplement the professional nucleus in the future; only 5–7 percent of the total development budget is earmarked for the armed forces.

From the information presented so far—namely, the armed forces’ doctrine of “total people’s defense,” their number, and their budget—it would seem warranted to draw the conclusion that the Indonesian armed forces will gradually and consciously withdraw themselves from the implementation of their sociopolitical tasks. However, such withdrawal will not affect the armed forces’ commitment to the principle of a dual role, which is accepted by the Indonesian people. Besides, withdrawal from sociopolitics is premised on the assumption that the civilian group will continue to display a sense of responsibility, so that political stability and the commitment to national development, which forms the essence of the New Order, is continued.

The expectation that the armed forces will withdraw from the sociopolitical sphere is based on observations by members of the generation of 1945 within the armed forces that a new generation of military leaders is now rising to take their place. This new generation of leaders differs from the generation of 1945 in that they do not originate from all levels of society. And, although their formal military training in the service academies has equipped them with modern specialized skills which are much
needed for security and defense, they are less prepared to assume responsibility for the whole range of social activities. A further consideration, already touched upon, is lack of sufficient manpower to make performance of both roles possible.  

AN EVALUATION

So far we have stressed the structural aspects of political development and provided an outline of the sociopolitical system that the New Order is trying to create. In the present section we will analyze the more dynamic aspects of current attempts at development; including the obstacles and difficulties, the successes and the failures, the criticisms that have been leveled at its shortcomings, and the view of the future, which are all parts of Indonesia's present sociopolitical development efforts.

The success of economic rehabilitation and development in the years 1966–1973 was followed by a growing awareness of the importance of sociopolitical development. This awareness is based on the recognition that economic development does not benefit all members of the society equally and that the gap between high and low income groups is growing. In spite of increasing economic productivity, some social groups continue to derive no benefit from those increases, while other groups, which formerly played an active role, now find themselves left out of recent advances. Also, all developing nations experience a “revolution of rising expectations,” which for Indonesia means a time lag between the attainment of increased income and the earlier increase in perceived needs.

Efforts to compensate for these unintended consequences of economic development and to provide for a wider distribution of welfare benefits through a more equitable distribution of income among the various levels of society constitute the major tasks for social and political development. Here it is possible to distinguish between social development, which aims at increasing the welfare and standard of living of the entire society, and political development, which is intended to involve increasingly larger segments of the society in the political process. Increased political participation is also directly related to the previous discussion of structural change. Greater involvement in the process of decision making in important matters of state and society requires channels for such participation. Appropriate participatory channels now exist in the form of sociopolitical organizations (e.g., GOLKAR and the two political parties), the professional organizations, and the other institutions discussed earlier—such as the press, the legislative bodies, social analyses by the universities, and others.

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These efforts at sociopolitical development, however, face obstacles that are not only encountered in politics, but that also arise from conditions in the social and economic areas. They are:

1. Lack of employment opportunities is caused by the concentration of population on the islands of Java and Bali. Although economic growth has averaged about 7 to 8 percent annually during the past ten years, this rate can provide employment for only about 1 million people each year out of a work force that increases annually by about 1.5 million. The continuing maintenance of a village-level social system based on family and corporate principles helps to offset the impact of this factor, but the level of observable underemployment remains high. Due to financial constraints, the economy is targeted to grow only by about 5 percent per annum average for the next Five Year Development Plan (1984–1989). This means that the problem of generating employment will become much more acute unless the economy undergoes structural changes to emphasize agricultural and labor-intensive industrial development in which the role of the nonoil sector can be greatly enhanced. This should imply greater participation by the private sector and drastic elimination of government regulations and bureaucratic red tape.

It can be expected that in the years immediately ahead, the attention of the government and the public will be focused on economic matters. The present economic difficulties are considered manageable, but the uncertainties of the international oil market warrant careful management and allocation of the country’s resources, because oil earnings constitute the largest source of foreign exchange earnings and government receipts.

President Soeharto, who assigns highest priority to economic development, has made the necessary—even if painful—decisions during critical times. A series of such measures have been taken since early 1983: devaluation of the rupiah, increase of the domestic prices of petroleum products and energy, a postponement of capital-intensive government projects, encouragement of greater participation of the private sector in national development, partial liberalization of the banking sector and deregulation of the economy, reform of the tax system, and introduction of new measures to promote nonoil exports. These measures promise a strengthening of the economy.

2. The pressure of population densities in excess of that which can be accommodated by the available supply of agricultural land is also the cause of high rates of urbanization, resulting in the rapid growth of a large urban proletariat. Political problems associated with these newly urbanized elements arise from their inability to find gainful employment in an industrial labor market that is too limited to accommodate them together with the problems of adjustment to a different social environment. The result is an even greater widening of the gap between the bottom and top layers of urban society.

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3. Similarly, insufficient attention is paid to the participation of the national private sector, which is one of the most dynamic groups in the society. Neglect of these groups engenders negative consequences for the creation of a middle class, essential for the growth of an open and healthy Indonesian democracy as well as for the support of economic development. During the past years the efforts of the Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) have been successful in stimulating interest in this problem, but much remains to be done.

The attitude of the government and the public toward the private sector is still ambiguous, largely because of political considerations. As stipulated in the 1945 Constitution (Article 33), the economy should be run on the basis of kekeluargaan (the principle of family life) in which three elements—the state sector, the private sector, and cooperatives—mutually support each other. The private sector, however, has been neglected. Some would assert that the private sector has been accommodated mainly to attract capital and technology from abroad. In view of the economic progress achieved thus far and the challenges that lie ahead, it has been suggested that Article 33 of the constitution and the role of the private sector therein be further clarified.

An additional complication to enhancing the role of the private sector arises from the alleged dominant role of the Indonesian Chinese in the economy as seen in trade and distribution. This politically sensitive issue dates back to the nation’s independence, but the need to resolve it is currently recognized. The key to its resolution lies in the political will of the government to promote the role of the private sector in general, and to formulate policies that encourage “indigenous” entrepreneurs while recognizing the positive role of “nonindigenous” entrepreneurs.

4. Separatism in Indonesia has been largely overcome at this point. The bitter experience of the PRRI and Permesta rebellion in the late 1950s warned separatist movements of the high cost and low chances of success. In addition, the New Order government regions outside Java, particularly Sumatra, Kalimantan, and Sulawesi, have seen rapid development. The other regions and the small islands in the eastern part of the country remain relatively underdeveloped, but greater attention is now being given to their development. One factor that helps to overcome separatism and to strengthen the unity of the country is the extensive development of transportation and communication networks throughout the country as well as the better established administrative capabilities of local governments and of the central governments in the various regions. Finally, the armed forces and national administration have been the most important uniting factor.

5. Corruption is another area of concern, both to the public and to the government. While drastic measures have been taken by the government to deal with it,

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9 On this issue, see, for example, “A Struggle for Identity,” Asiaweek, June 3, 1983, pp. 27–37; and Kwok Kian Gie, "Masih Adakah Masalah Pembauran Pri dan Non-Pri?" [Is There Still a Problem of Integration Between Pri and Non-Pri?], Kompas, December 5, 1983.


11 This was shown, for example, in a public poll conducted for Tempo magazine; see Tempo, August 20, 1983, pp. 20–23.
this problem remains. Different value systems, a weak bureaucracy, the low salaries of civil servants, as well as rapid economic growth have all contributed to such practices. Corruption by petty bureaucrats to a large extent is being tolerated, but that practiced at the higher levels of the bureaucracy has harmful effects on the credibility of the government.

6. A further obstacle to sociopolitical development is the still unfinished search for a new political tradition that will be capable of giving expression to the public philosophy of Pancasila. This search is made difficult by the often conflicting requirements that Pancasila must not only be capable of expressing the enduring aspects of Indonesia's rich cultural tradition, but must also take into consideration new value resulting from the increasing receptiveness of Indonesian society to values from outside.

The government is aware of these obstacles. This fact and the self-restraint of social leaders opens up the opportunity for their removal to proceed at an accelerated rate. It is also recognized that sociopolitical progress cannot be accomplished in sudden spurts. It requires mutual cooperation and the recognition of shared responsibility by both the government and social leaders. Especially, the development of new political institutions such as professional organizations cannot be expected to take place in a short time. It may take two more generations before these organizations are rooted in society and can truly perform their functions. The same is true of the political parties and GOLKAR. Although the parties have already been in existence for about forty years, the decline in their position brought on by their inability to adjust themselves to changing political circumstances has only recently shown signs of improvement. Further improvement can only result from internal adjustments, such as their willingness to accept new ideas and concepts as well as their ability to attract new workers by way of a sound cadre system. At present, the lack of such indications of health within both the United Development Party and the Indonesian Democratic Party have caused large numbers of young people to leave their ranks. On the other hand, the twenty-year-old GOLKAR organization must be careful to guard against being stricken by the same illness by guaranteeing a constant flow of new blood into its body. The limited capabilities of the two internally weak political parties to develop relative to GOLKAR pose another obstacle.

In the future, the burden GOLKAR will be expected to shoulder will consist of two heavy responsibilities that must be carried simultaneously. First, the majority support that it now enjoys will have to be safeguarded as a condition for the continuation of the legacy of the New Order and the continued implementation of national development for which it stands. Second, as a continuation of the transfer of the armed forces' sociopolitical role and the gradual transition of political power to a civilian political institution like GOLKAR, GOLKAR will integrate a part of the 1945 generation from the armed forces into the organization. This planned transfer of power must be implemented slowly in order to provide the armed forces with guarantees that the state philosophy of Pancasila and national development will be continued without
disturbance and with full responsibility. Regarding this transfer of power, GOLKAR has set for itself two major tasks: the gradual transfer of sociopolitical power from the armed forces to a civilian political organization such as GOLKAR and the transfer of executive power in an orderly manner to a new leadership and to coming generations.

Already, political decisions are made within GOLKAR and no longer rest with the Department of Defense and Security. GOLKAR itself no longer has active members of the armed forces, apart from retired servicemen, although their support remains important for GOLKAR during the next few years.

The overseeing body of GOLKAR—the Dewan Pembina—chaired by President Soeharto with the aid of former members of the armed forces, technocrats, and social leaders, will prepare for the country’s next national leadership. In this way, it is hoped that the transition in 1988 or 1993 will not cause grave political disturbances.

The consolidation of GOLKAR is important for the implementation of GOLKAR’s described main tasks. The third GOLKAR Congress in November 1983 overcame two major problems of organization: integrating the various factions based upon each initial organization and resolving the dualism between Dewan Pimpinan Pusat of DPP (the governing council) and Dewan Pembina (the overseeing council). In addition, some of the best people among GOLKAR’s younger generation have been elected as new members of the DPP. This trend has been followed by the regional branches in electing the regional governing councils for the period 1984–1989.

GOLKAR’s new governing council, headed by Sudharmono, a close aid of President Soeharto, in essence means that GOLKAR will be supervised by the President himself. This is regarded as a way to speed up GOLKAR’s consolidation process. A main issue that needs to be clarified during this consolidation process is the relationship between GOLKAR (proper) and the armed forces, as well as between GOLKAR and the bureaucracy (KORPRI).

As has been said, the armed forces are no longer represented in GOLKAR by active servicemen. Their political interests are channeled through the organization of retired servicemen (PEPABRI) and further deliberated upon within GOLKAR. This does not mean that the armed forces no longer are taking part in political decisions. GOLKAR upholds the principle of the armed forces’ dual function, but their involvement becomes less direct and no longer plays the leading political role of earlier days. Western scholars often regard the transfer of political power from the armed forces to civilians as an indicator of progress toward a more democratic system. This may not be valid in the Indonesian case because the armed forces are seen as part of the national political system.

Two additional remarks on the armed forces’ future political role need to be made. First, their role in the general elections: The armed forces were prominent in the 1971 general elections because they assumed the role of GOLKAR’s “main cadres.” GOLKAR won 62 percent of the votes in that election. The bureaucracy could not play

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a major role in the 1971 elections, largely because they were themselves still polarized between the political parties until the creation of KORPRI, the only organization for civil servants, in 1974.

KORPRI took a more active part in the 1977 general elections, whereas the organization and cadres of GOLKAR (proper) were in a better shape than in the previous elections. This allowed the armed forces to reduce their level of involvement. In the 1982 general elections, the role of the armed forces was further reduced, in part as a matter of policy but largely due to increased capabilities of GOLKAR and KORPRI themselves. It is hoped that in the coming 1987 general elections GOLKAR (proper) will be in a position to play the leading role by itself, albeit with the full support of both the armed forces and KORPRI in the background.

Second, the younger generation of armed forces officers, the so-called generation of the 1960s—namely, those graduating from the military academy in Magelang who have assumed important positions within the armed forces—has shown understanding and support of the evolving political processes and their role therein. Apart from military operations, the armed forces’ involvement in civilian matters, which include social and political problems, has enabled them to keep up with sociopolitical affairs in the tradition of their predecessors. A number of reasons, however, limit their direct participation in nonmilitary affairs of the country. For one thing, armed forces personnel has been reduced in numbers while development in military technology requires greater specialization, as earlier noted. For another, the stability of the country has much improved, and political institutions have begun to function satisfactorily.

Most civil servants opted to join KORPRI and have chosen GOLKAR as their political channel. Thus, GOLKAR and KORPRI work closely together in support of both GOLKAR and government programs. This relationship is similar to that between the Democratic Party and the AFL-CIO in the United States.

Since GOLKAR has become the focal point of political decisions, both at the national and regional levels, it is within GOLKAR that the future national leadership will emerge jointly with the armed forces and KORPRI. In a way, a mechanism for succession of the country’s national leadership has been created. Therefore the next national leadership will also be supported by the coalition that currently supports President Soeharto—namely, GOLKAR, the armed forces, KORPRI, and other middle-class groupings, such as professional groups, business circles, and some intellectuals.

President Soeharto, who chairs GOLKAR’s supervisory council, will play an important role in choosing his successor. The consolidation of GOLKAR is also necessary to balance the heavy-handed role of the bureaucracy, especially in the regions, which, unless checked, can become a major source of instability.

Critics have pointed out that thus far GOLKAR has functioned only as an instrument of the government, used to win the general elections once in five years, and that GOLKAR lacks an infrastructure of its own apart from relying on the armed forces
in the past and on KORPRI presently. It is asserted that GOLKAR has also failed to
perform the task of a political party in channeling information and aspirations from the
bottom up, instead of the other way around.\textsuperscript{13}

The Third GOLKAR Congress has sought to rectify those deficiencies with the
election of younger members into the central governing council and the regional
councils as well as the adoption of a program for cadre training at the village level (100
persons per village for the next five to ten years). Suggestions in this direction had
been made already in the First GOLKAR Congress in 1973 but were not im-
plemented.\textsuperscript{14} A view by Liddle, suggesting that the GOLKAR congress has little
effect on the power configuration in Indonesia because it continues to rest solely with
President Soeharto, is premature.\textsuperscript{15} In addition, the mechanism of political decision
making has shifted since about 1978 from centering on President Soeharto with the
Department of Defense, to President Soeharto with GOLKAR’s governing body and
its overseeing body, in which important ministers and social and professional leaders
are involved. Although deliberations for political decision consume more time be-
cause the president consults many advisers, the decisions are to a large extent
acceptable to most people. This also explains the acceptability of President Soeharto,
who has governed for more than fifteen years, a period twice that of President
Soekarno (since the 1959 decree).\textsuperscript{16}

Consolidation of the political parties and other functional or professional orga-
nizations is equally important for the development of the national political system.
Consolidation is not merely a concern of political parties and organizations but is
essentially a national problem.

Two other matters are worthy of our attention because of their connection with
the success of national development. These are the upgrading of the government
administrative apparatus and the increased popular desire to take part in development
efforts in all fields. In all developing countries the government apparatus holds the key
to the success of development. In addition to the importance of the role of that
apparatus as the most active supporter of development, government officials are a
major source of leadership for the people. For these reasons government integrity,
efficiency, and effectiveness become conditions for the exercise of good leadership
and the success of national development. In this regard Indonesia has not been so
fortunate as the former British colonies, which at the time of their independence had an
administrative structure with well-established traditions. Not only did the Indonesian
administration have to be recreated anew after the Declaration of Independence in

\textsuperscript{13} See Julian M. Boileau, \textit{Golkar: Functional Group Politics in Indonesia} (Jakarta: Centre for Strategic and
International Studies, 1983).

\textsuperscript{14} For a discussion on this subject, see Susumu Awanohara, “A Grip on the Grassroots,” \textit{Far Eastern
Economic Review}, December 1, 1983, pp. 40–43, and the other two of his articles in the same issue.

\textsuperscript{15} See R. William Liddle, “Golkar’s Authority Is Overestimated,” \textit{The Asian Wall Street Journal},

\textsuperscript{16} See Donald K. Emmerson, “Regime Survival in Indonesia: Questions for an Old New Order,” a paper
prepared for a Conference on Indonesia, cosponsored by the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy of
Tuft University; the Centre for Strategic and International Studies, Jakarta; and the Asia Society at the
Fletcher School in Medford, Massachusetts, October 6–8, 1983.
1945, but it subsequently experienced the arbitrary controls of a political-party-dominated spoils system, which resulted in internal divisions and lack of horizontal coordination among government sectors.

In view of the crucial role of the bureaucracy in the development process, it is necessary to maintain a balanced system of sociopolitical counterforces such as GOLKAR, the political parties, professional organizations, and the other democratic institutions, which are capable of exercising social control and correcting administrative excesses. Those same sociopolitical institutions are alone capable of generating among the public at large the desire to play an active role in national development. Sole dependence on the agencies of government is insufficient to produce the maximum effort necessary to overcome Indonesia’s enormous problems. Only a truly maximal effort by the entire society can guarantee the success of such efforts. It follows, then, that sociopolitical development is vital in inducing social participation and the accompanying feelings of responsibility.

A discussion of sociopolitical development would be incomplete without at least some reference to the security factors that influence it. To date, it has appeared that the threats which Indonesia faces are primarily internal, with only the possibility of external aid in the form of subversion or infiltration. After the fall in Indochina there is still no indication of any increased threat to Indonesia in the form of increased subversion or infiltration. Among the reasons are the Indonesian Communist Party’s orientation toward Beijing and the continued preoccupation of the countries of Indochina with their own huge domestic problems. Domestically the Central Committee of the Indonesian Communist Party has found it impossible to establish itself inside the country since 1966.

The problem of dissidence on the part of opposition groups should be viewed in the context of political development in Indonesia. The Indonesian political system essentially does not recognize the role of the opposition in the Western sense, because all political elements are to be included in arriving at a consensus. On a number of occasions, the government or GOLKAR will have to be assertive in its views and on other occasions it will have to compromise. In a country as large and diverse as Indonesia no single group can have everything its own way. Dissidence of an extreme and radical nature is not accepted in the political process and therefore will be excluded, by force if necessary.

CONCLUSIONS

Since 1973, sociopolitical development in Indonesia has received the full attention of the government and of the country’s well-known thinkers and leaders. In recognition of the fact that national development cannot succeed by economic development alone, sociopolitical development is now considered to play an important role in producing a balanced development.
Efforts in that direction have emphasized the strengthening of constitutionalism and political institutions. The aim is to place the institutions of the state on the course assigned to them by the 1945 Constitution and periodically to register the will of the people through general elections once every five years. It is also hoped that these efforts will result in the creation of a political infrastructure that will provide political parties, GOLKAR, and professional organizations with the opportunity to perform their functions by acting as spokesmen for the interests of the people and by fostering their education in democracy.

These efforts will take time, however. Present estimates are that only after several more general elections will such political institutions be fully capable of performing their functions. These estimates are based on a consideration of ongoing efforts at internal consolidation and projections of the level of development and the educational attainments of the population that will enable them to support the performance of those functions; they should not be interpreted, however, as meaning that those institutions are now considered to be unimportant. Since the beginning of the New Order, political institutions have consistently increased their ability to provide the government with feedback concerning the aspirations of the people, to exercise their social-control function, and to encourage the people's participation in national development. This progress has been made possible by continued adherence to Indonesian cultural values of kekeluargaan (togetherness) and musyawarah-mupakat (consultation aimed at producing mutual agreement) in all matters of general concern. The results may be seen in various products of legislative action and in the implementation of government programs where the participation of all social groups is guaranteed.

During this period of transition, the position and role of the armed forces continues to be of vital importance because of their influence as an integrating factor for the nation and their ability to implement the long hoped-for development. In the sociopolitical field the armed forces' own plans call for a step-by-step transfer of their tasks over to the existing political institutions. In this latter case GOLKAR's role will be important in implementing those tasks; but the willingness of all political forces to assume responsibility for safeguarding political stability and development will be a major determinant.

With the success of present development efforts and the resulting growth of societal complexity, it is expected that the resulting growth of other democratic institutions such as the press, institutions of higher learning, and scientific and research institutes will also grow.

Provided that all segments of society can achieve consensus on the public philosophy or ideology of the nation and on the accomplishment of their goals by evolutionary means, and provided that all sides exercise social control in addition to guaranteeing that all people receive a share of the proceeds of development as growth programs are effectively advanced, Indonesian sociopolitical development will achieve stability. Indonesia will then proceed toward the realization of a more
democratic, more open, and modern society. Meanwhile, governmental openness is an unqualified condition for the achievement of this goal because the role of the government will continue to be dominant for the next two decades.

Political power rested totally with President Soekarno under the Guided Democracy of the Old Order. The national political system under President Soeharto has gradually moved toward greater institutionalization. President Soeharto himself has not been in favor of a government based on power despite pressures in the mid-1960s by the students, intellectuals, party leaders of the Pancasila Front, and the army, to take over the national leadership by force. Instead, he opted for and designed a strategy for the transfer of the national leadership by constitutional means, even though the process will consume much time.

Since then, President Soeharto has laid the foundation for an orderly process of political development and institutionalization. The first step was the efforts aimed at returning state institutions to their proper positions. The next steps were to reorganize the political parties and GOLKAR to end the ideological conflicts in the Indonesian political scene. This process took more than ten years, but it prevented instabilities.

This evolutionary development toward a more established political system is likely to continue. Soeharto's major achievement has been in the evolutionary nature of political development achieved, which reflects his personality. With more established political institutions and political leaders who have become more technocratic and bureaucratic, the future political scene in Indonesia may not include another upheaval such as that experienced under the leadership of President Soekarno.
In 1984, Singapore’s ruling People’s Action Party (PAP) celebrated two important anniversaries. The events were the thirtieth anniversary of its founding on November 21, 1954, and the twenty-fifth anniversary of its accession to power on May 30, 1959. These two dates provide convenient benchmarks for assessing the development of political institutionalization in Singapore. By “political institutionalization,” following the definition proposed by Robert A. Scalapino, we understand the process whereby a political structure is made operational in accordance with stipulated rules and procedures, making possible regularized, hence predictable performance in such key functions as the selection of leadership, the making and implementation of policies, and the execution of justice. From the viewpoint of decision making and leadership selection, our perspective emphasizes modern achievement criteria and discourages the traditional ascriptive and personalized approach.

SURVIVAL AND ACHIEVEMENT

Political, social, and economic life in Singapore have been influenced by two dominant themes: the PAP government’s political ideology of survival and the concept of achievement. These often contradictory themes have been fused in Singapore to produce a unique style of politics and economic life. The historical roots of Singapore’s political ideology of survival lie in the events following the country’s ejection from Malaysia in 1965. For newly independent Singapore, survival in both political and economic terms was a real issue for the PAP government. From 1965 to 1967, the government was engaged in an intense, often violent struggle for power against an

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opposition party, the Barisan Sosialis, and the communists, which was eventually resolved in favor of the government. Again, survival meant the task of inculcating new values in a population that was often loyal to their countries of origin and that had little sense of national identity. Thus after 1965, the PAP government felt that it was important for the population to acquire nonideological pragmatic values related to the concepts of multiracialism and multilingualism.\(^3\)

In terms of economic policy, the survival ideology is linked with the concept of a "global city" first proposed in 1972 by Singapore's second deputy prime minister, S. Rajaratnam.\(^4\) This concept suggests that if Singapore is to survive, it must establish a relationship of interdependence in the rapidly expanding global economic system. This interdependence implies an economic policy that emphasizes a world market for Singapore's products rather than a policy that relates to regional trade. In recent years, however, the global city concept has been modified to allow for greater economic and political cooperation with the ASEAN countries. In 1965, economic survival meant that the economy would have to shift from an import-substitution policy to an outward-looking, export-oriented policy of industrialization. The successes of the Singapore government in transforming the economy to these desired objectives have been extensively documented elsewhere.\(^5\)

The political strategy of survival has taken many forms on the domestic level, with the PAP government attempting to mold the nature and style of politics, economic growth, and social life into clearly defined channels to achieve desired results. An important objective has been the achievement of political stability in the island state. Political stability together with industrial peace would give investors from abroad confidence that all would be well with their investments in Singapore.\(^6\) Political stability was thus equated with industrial peace.

Chan Heng Chee suggests three elements in the survival ideology. First, the PAP's unshaken belief that Singapore's survival depends on the "willingness and ability to adopt a new set of attitudes, a new set of values, a new set of perspectives; in short, on the creation of a new man."\(^7\) Second, the PAP government's insistence on producing a tightly organized society; the government believed that the best chance for Singapore's survival lay in its ability to mobilize its potential to the maximum. Third, the nation-building task, which was an important objective in the early days of the young nation.

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6 Pang Eng Fong and Thelma Kay, "Change and Continuity in Singapore's Industrial Relations System," Sociology Department University of Singapore, Working Paper no. 35.
This political theme of survival has been developed and used by the Singapore government to legitimize and justify its domestic policies and its stance toward the outside world. Survival ideology is often combined in Singapore with the themes of achievement, excellence, and merit at all levels of society, implying a commitment to achievement rather than ascriptive criteria in assessing individuals for promotion in society.

There has been a gradual shift from a society tied to traditional ways to one influenced strongly by modern attitudes and values. Thus, in Singapore a somewhat pessimistic and present-oriented survival tactic has been fused with achievement and transformed into an optimistic and future-oriented ethic. These themes, nevertheless, have been constantly refined and updated in Singapore. Moreover, the analysis in this contribution will show some inherent tensions between the survival and achievement concepts that have frequently arisen in the Singapore context. A number of these tensions remain unresolved and are potential pressure points in the body politic.

THE PAP AS A NATIONAL INSTITUTION

The distinction is often made between the role of political parties and interest groups in some Western and non-Western countries. For example, in the Anglo-American political system the functions of political parties and interest groups are sharply differentiated, bureaucratized, and autonomous. Political parties in such systems tend to be free of ideological rigidity and seek to be aggressive in their function. They attempt to form the largest possible interest group coalitions by offering acceptable choices of political personnel and public policy. In these countries, furthermore, the party system stands between the interest group systems and the authoritative public policy-making agencies. It aggregates interests and transforms them into a relatively small number of alternate general policies. The relationships between the party system and the interest group system allows for choice among general policies in the legislature. Thus elections legitimize the role of a certain party or parties to rule the country through the bureaucratic agencies.

Another model focusing on the political system is found in Asia, the Middle East, and Latin America. Generally speaking, parties and interest groups are not always fully differentiated in such systems, although associational interest groups such as trade unions and business associations may exist in the urban Westernized parts of society. Parties in such systems are often ad hoc coalitions without permanent bureaucracies and without grassroot organizations. They exist primarily in election periods and cease to exist in the intervals between. In many of these political systems, significant political groups are neither the parties nor the associational interest groups. Instead they can be elements or cliques within the bureaucracy and the army, or they can be elements among the landowners and business community.

We need to take a closer look at Singapore’s PAP, particularly its historical development and structural features, to ascertain whether either of the mentioned models fits the Singapore case. On paper, the PAP’s record is impressive. The party was formed in 1954 and has been in power since 1959, when it won 43 of the 51 seats in the Legislative Assembly. In the four general elections since 1968, the PAP won all seats in Parliament each time with total votes cast ranging from 69 percent to 84.43 percent. In the Anson by-election of October 1981, however, an opposition party member, J. B. Jeyaretnam, was elected into Parliament for the first time in fifteen years.

But such bare figures do not tell much about the qualitative aspects of the PAP’s development and the institutionalization of its power in Singapore. Internal party historians of the PAP divide its history into five periods. The first period has been described as “the years of opposition and the United Front,” or what Toh Chin Chye (a former party chairman) describes as the “push-pull years.” The PAP’s founders decided that their policies would try to make a broad appeal to nationalists and those with radical political views. The aim of the party was to be anticolonial. It was also tacitly understood that communists and fellow travelers would be admitted into the ranks of the party in a united front. It was agreed that the pro-communists on the party’s Central Executive Committee (CEC) should not number more than three or four and should not be office bearers in the CEC. This linkage by the party’s more moderate elements with the extreme left-wing elements was to become a major problem in future years.

The PAP faced external and internal pressures during this first period. Externally, there was the fight against colonialism and the right-wing groups within the arena of the David Marshall and Lim Yew Hock governments. More interesting, from the viewpoint of our analysis, was the internal dissension within the PAP between the moderate and left-wing elements. The groups were divided into those who believed in creating a democratic mass organization and those who were prepared to employ violent and reckless tactics, using nonconstitutional methods. Control of the CEC was lost by the moderate elements to the more radical groups, but, fortunately for the former, five CEC members together with thirty-five others were detained for their communist activities in October 1956, under the Preservation of Public Security Ordinance (PPSO). After this experience, the party leadership amended the party constitution to prevent a similar seizure of control in the future by undesirable elements. A system was introduced where election to the CEC would be by cadres members, not by ordinary members. Thus a party which had initially believed in mass-based participation by its members in the internal electoral process was forced

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12 Chan, “Political Parties.”
by reasons of political survival to change to a more elitist and less democratic method of election.

The second and third periods of the PAP's history were between 1959–1961 and 1961–1963 respectively. At the beginning of the first period the PAP had received an overwhelming majority of the seats in the 1959 general election. Left-wing elements inside and outside the party made attempts to topple it, however, and it was obvious that eventually there would be a "parting of ways." The third period was one of instability in which right-wing and left-wing forces in the country combined to topple the PAP from power. In fact, in April and July 1961, the PAP lost in two vital by-elections and even contemplated dissolving the government. In this period also, the PAP began to campaign and negotiate for merger with the proposed state of Malaysia. In a referendum on September 1, 1962, Singapore residents overwhelmingly supported the proposal for merger. In February 1963, Operation Cold Store, carried out by orders of the Internal Security Council, detained more than one hundred pro-communist, political, trade union, and student leaders. This move effectively crippled the communist movement. It was during this difficult period for the party that the PAP finally broke away from its pro-communist supporters and began to cultivate its own broad base of supporters. Interestingly, this period is described by Toh Chin Chye as "schizophrenia resolved and PAP discovered its own mass base."

In the fourth period (1963–1965), Singapore was part of the Malaysian Federation. Toh Chin Chye has characterized this period of "unfulfilled hopes and declarations: Singapore grafted and rejected." The factors contributing to Singapore leaving Malaysia in 1965 do not concern us here and have been discussed comprehensively elsewhere. The PAP continued to consolidate its hold on Singapore politics by winning thirty-seven of the fifty-one seats in the September 1963 state elections, with the Barisan Sosialis obtaining thirteen seats.

The final period of the PAP's history is from Singapore's independence in August 1965 to the present. From the beginning of this period, the PAP government began to consolidate its hold on all aspects of Singapore life. The government's nation-building objectives were achieved through a well-developed civil bureaucracy, government-owned enterprises, and a number of grassroots organizations. In fact, it has been argued that, after 1965, internal party developments have been uneventful, while all energies have been concentrated to build the island economy. Nevertheless, it is possible to discern a number of significant developments and trends within the PAP that have had an impact on political life in Singapore.

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16 Ibid., p. 27.
17 For an official view, see Separation (Singapore: Ministry of Culture, 1965).
18 Chan, "Political Parties."
Scholars have characterized Singapore as a one-party dominant system. In such a political system, one party dominates the legislature and much of political life. The existence of other political parties is tolerated, but they tend to be weak and ineffectual, often becoming (barely) visible just before elections. In Singapore, the PAP dominates all aspects of political life, including the legislature, where until October 1981 the party occupied all seventy-five parliamentary seats.

The relative weakness of the opposition parties in Singapore is also cited as another reason for the PAP’s dominance. But for a party that is highly differentiated and visible like the Western model of a political party, the PAP is not highly bureaucratized from the organizational viewpoint. The PAP maintains a small secretariat and also has a branch headquarters in each of the country’s seventy-five constituencies. There are, in addition, seven District Committees that coordinate activities within the various groups of constituencies. But the large bureaucracy that often exists in powerful political parties in other parts of the world to perform research, mobilization, and interest-aggregate functions is not obvious in the PAP’s case. The answer is, of course, that the civil bureaucracy and a number of parapolitical organizations outside the party perform a substantial number of these functions. In fact, it is often observed that the PAP, like many non-Western systems, appears to become highly visible only before a general election or a by-election.

Again, from the organizational viewpoint the PAP has continued to stress the distinction between cadre and ordinary members first introduced into the party’s constitution in 1958. In 1971, PAP membership was estimated at about 9,000 ordinary members; a former party member has stated that there is an average of four or five cadres for each of Singapore’s 75 constituencies. This makes a cadre membership of 300 to 400. The basis for these figures is a 1971 estimate, however, and since that year periodic exercises have promoted ordinary members to cadre members, although the number is not publicly known. In fact, the relatively small number of members for a population of 2.4 million indicates that the PAP is not a mass party. It has been suggested, therefore, that the term “mass party” can be defined in another way: in terms of its structure, which may demonstrate a concern with the political education of the party’s members, financing, and membership control of the leadership. Thus the PAP has been described as a cadre party disguised as a mass party.

During the 1960s and 1970s, there was little contact between CEC members and the bulk of the party membership. In fact, the low level of party life demoralized party members, who complained of the lack of participation in the party’s organizational activities. To some extent, this was due to the government’s reliance on the bureaucratic structure to provide the feedback function and to deliver the economic

22 Chan, “Political Parties.”
23 Ibid.
goods. It was felt that the government rather than the party was directing the course of politics and providing leadership in all spheres of social and political life. For the man in the street, the distinction between the party and the state did not seem to be important in either theoretical or practical terms. For him the party had always been identified with good and efficient government, and the two structures appeared to be synonymous.

After 1976, the PAP leadership focused its attention on tightening the party organization. A task force of eight members of parliament was delegated to strengthen the links between party headquarters and the branch. The task force was also to provide more guidance to the branches and to step up political education programs. It was also responsible for the day-to-day activities of the party. In 1983, a branch liaison committee was established to coordinate activities between the PAP branches. Plans were implemented for PAP leaders to visit various party branches in the middle of 1983. The idea for visits to the branches stemmed from the successful constituency tours or “walkabouts” by cabinet ministers in the preceding months. In the walkabouts the ministers had met residents to explain government policies and to receive feedback. The visits to the party branches were to intensify feelings of solidarity among PAP activists at the branch level.

A move was also made to improve the party’s political recruitment program. Observers had noted that a substantial number of new PAP candidates at general elections were not party members, among them civil servants. There was, therefore, the formality of the candidate’s having to join the party before he could be nominated. Consequently, party workers who had worked in the branches for years were annoyed that they had been left out. This feeling was compounded by the fact that there appeared to be some “personalism” involved in the selection process, especially for the civil-servant candidates. An indication of the move toward a more systematic and regularized political recruitment program is a recent announcement that the party was asking branches for recommendations on candidates for the next general election.

The PAP’s total dominance until recently of the Singapore Parliament has played down the role of members of Parliament in the legislative process. This is especially true for the backbenchers who have no opposition MPs to act as a foil against. The most significant and practical consequence of J. B. Jeyaretnam’s election to Parliament in 1981 as an opposition MP has been to make more important and active the role of the PAP backbencher in parliamentary debates. Generally speaking, the MPs’ role outside Parliament, especially at the constituency level, has been important to the party. The major activity of the party branches has been weekly “Meet the People” sessions where the MP receives feedback from his constituents on various matters. The MP also acts as channel of communication between government agencies and the public. For example, representations by MPs to government ministers, in 1983, meant

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24 Ibid.
26 Ibid. (December 1983).
28 Ibid.
that concessions were given to tenants of the Housing and Development Board (HDB) commercial properties after a proposed rent increase. In January 1983, the PAP responded to the National Trades Union Congress (NTUC) call to make available classes for workers to upgrade themselves in basic education for skills training (BEST), by opening classes in fourteen branches. In these examples one sees an institutionalizing of extraparliamentary channels of communication, interest articulation, and some patterns of cooperation. The MP and the PAP facilitate an interlocking relationship among the government, Civil Service, Parliament, and trade unions.

Two developments originating from the PAP's biennial party conference on November 15, 1982, have given added significance to the role of the party in Singapore politics. First, the meeting of party cadres approved a number of changes to the party constitution that would basically centralize power within the PAP's upper echelons and reduce further the power of the ordinary members. An argument put forward was that this consolidation of party among the cadres was "a further attempt to guard against the emergence of a dissident movement within the ruling party." Second, another amendment to the party constitution updated and redefined party objectives. The preamble to the new objectives stated that the PAP "shall be a national movement dedicated to the service of the nation and to the advancement of the well-being of our people." The party justified the changes by arguing that it was more than a registered political association and was concerned with the business of running a nation and looking after 2.4 million Singaporeans. It stressed that the "PAP is the vital nerve centre of the entire nation." Consistent with our previous argument that Singaporeans tend to identify the PAP with the government, a Petir editorial quoted Lee Kuan Yew as stating, "I make no apologies that the PAP is the Government and the Government is the PAP." An article in the Petir Supplement waxed eloquent by saying, "A national movement. As phrases go, it is a rather good one. In an articulate stroke, the PAP has consigned the opposition parties to some far lower reaches of politics. In the beginning there were political parties. Now, there is a national movement, and the rest are registered political associations merely."

Independent observers pointed out some of the broader implications of this redefinition of the PAP's objectives. One view was that it took Singapore closer to the concept of a one-party state. Tony Tan, the PAP's first assistant secretary, responded that the PAP believed in democratic government and that the government of the country should go back periodically to the people in free, fair, and open elections in order to renew its mandate. Tan asked how Singapore could have such elections if

30 Ibid.
31 Smith, "Flying a One-Party Kite."
33 Editorial, ibid., p. 1.
34 Ibid.
there was a one-party state, adding that the notion was absurd. It was obvious, nevertheless, that the PAP felt that it had enough legitimacy in Singapore to be called a national movement. Thus a small political party (in terms of membership), which is not fully democratic in its election of leaders, could, without much problem, signify in its new objectives the impact it has on Singapore politics.

POLITICS AND THE ADMINISTRATIVE STATE

Political institutionalization suggests that regularized and predictable performance must be achieved in the making and implementation of policies within the political system. With respect to the policy implementation function, the PAP government has used three basic organizational types in Singapore. These are the traditional civil service structure, the statutory boards, and the government-owned companies. In this section we will examine these types, particularly the first two, and consider issues related to their development.

Some writers have proposed the concept of the administrative state as a major feature of modern government. The administrative state arises from the expansion of modern government as economy and technology become more complex. One characteristic of the administrative state is the increased power of the administrator and bureaucrat in relation to the politician. This shift arises from the complex organization and proliferation of developmental activities. It is argued that the politician's role is played down, while the technocrat holds a higher status since there is a deliberate attempt to eliminate politics. This depolitization process is carried out concomitantly with the process of what S. N. Eisenstadt has called "bureaucratization." The process occurs when the civil bureaucracy's functions go beyond the minimal role of regulation and control. Newly independent countries have realized that they must go beyond the law-and-order activities of the colonial masters to more complex activities of social development. Chan Heng Chee therefore suggests that Singapore displays the characteristics of the administrative state. She argues that the process of depolitization was evolved after Singapore's separation from Malaysia in 1965 as a conscious explicit policy. Bearing in mind these concepts of institutionalization and the administrative state, let us examine more closely the Singapore government's organizational structures, especially the role that politics plays in the administrative process.

The origins of the Singapore Civil Service can be traced to the founding of Singapore in 1819 by the East India Company. The historical development of the civil bureaucracy in colonial times need not concern us here, but some developments

36 Tan, "PAP's Objectives," p.21.
originating in Singapore’s colonial days had an impact on the present-day bureaucracy. Thus, the Trusted Commission’s classification of the Civil Service in 1948 into four divisions has provided the basis up to today for determining the various points of entry into the civil service, salary scales, and fringe benefits. Another development occurred in 1955, when Singapore’s constitutional status was changed from that of a crown colony to a ministerial form of government in which local citizens have representation and have some political power. In the public sector, the country’s new constitutional status generated structural and procedural changes in the civil service. These changes took three forms. First was the physical breakup of the Colonial Secretariat and its pattern of control, and the reallocation of the secretariat’s departments to the new ministries. This new administrative setup formed the basis of the civil service structure for the future.

Second, the new constitutional arrangements required a redefinition of the proper relationship between civil servants and ministers. This led to the creation of the position of permanent secretary to head each new ministry. The permanent secretary was to be responsible for the day-to-day administration of his particular ministry. He was also to formulate recommendations on policy for the minister’s consideration and for ensuring that the policy decisions of the minister and the Council of Ministers were put into effect. The creation of the permanent secretary position demarcated the division between the executive and administrative branches of government.

A third change arose from the need to define proper procedures of behavior between the civil servant and the minister. Before 1955, the top colonial civil servants (of British origin) had performed the administrative and executive functions of government, hence there was little need to determine the proper relationships between the two branches of government. In 1955, the General Orders of the Colony and the Ministerial Circulations were revised and reissued, and a Manual of Administrative Procedure was compiled as a guide for the new ministers and their civil servants. These administrative reforms helped to institutionalize bureaucratic behavior in the Civil Service and, with subsequent modifications, was the norm for future years.

In 1957, the new Public Service commission was established to appoint Malaysans to replace the expatriates as permanent secretaries to all ministries. The placing of more local persons into positions of responsibility in the civil service, coupled with their greater political consciousness, raised the question of civil service neutrality. Initially, the issue of neutrality focused on whether the local civil servants should devote their energies to an improvement of their conditions of service or, instead, take up political issues which were, in a sense, external to their job concerns. One group insisted that the civil service should be apolitical and prepared to carry out the instructions of whichever party was in power. The other group, led by K. M. Byrne and Goh Keng Swee (Singapore’s former first deputy prime minister) stressed that the civil service should not divorce itself from the environment and that it should be

40 Colony of Singapore, Report of the Public Services Salary Commission (Kuala Lumpur: G.P.O., 1947), para. 44.
willing to work for the attainment of full independence even though this might mean opposing the policies of government. The former group identified with the Labour Front coalition government, the latter with the PAP, which was then not in power.

As mentioned earlier, the PAP in 1959 won 43 of the 51 seats in the Legislative Assembly elections. In the political arena, the years 1959–1965 were a period of turmoil and uncertainty. In part, such unstable conditions were reflected in Singapore's civil service as the PAP government attempted to mold civil servants to perform some crucial political, economic, and social functions. Of central importance was the PAP government's insistence that civil servants be absolutely loyal to their new political masters. It was expected that civil servants would develop new attitudes to make them more aware of the environment in which they worked and of the public they served. The PAP government perceived that a number of civil servants of all ranks were openly hostile to the party's socialist ideology.

Accordingly, several measures were taken by the government to reorient the civil servants for the tasks ahead. First, for reasons of economy, their variable allowances were cut drastically. Second, some subtle psychological tactics and disciplinary measures were introduced. Of particular importance was the establishment of a Political Studies Centre that conducted courses to make civil servants more aware and sympathetic to developments in Singapore and the rest of Asia.41

The combined effect of these measures was the resignations of civil servants who could not tolerate the new conditions of service. The measures also removed from the civil service many right-wing elements and dissenters. This created job opportunities for the educated Chinese who had previously looked upon the civil service as a domain of the educated British. The first batch of Nanyang University graduates was recruited in 1960, which was regarded as a politically shrewd move to woo the political support of the educated Chinese in the country by improving their job opportunities.42

The resignations of the former civil servants meant, however, a loss in tradition and expertise for the civil service which was to affect its efficiency in future years. Not only were the higher echelons of the civil service decimated, but the middle and lower sections of the bureaucracy also saw resignations. The vacuum at the top, however, resulted in the promotion of talented young men on whom the PAP came to rely. Among them were future permanent secretaries such as George Bogaars, Pang Tee Pow, Sim Kee Boon (the present head of the civil service), and Howe Yoon Chong (the present minister of health). Thus despite the hostility generated by the reforms and pay cuts, the PAP could mobilize the civil service for the challenges of the future. Moreover, these newly promoted civil servants were important in helping the government meet immediate concerns, namely, the challenges by the Barisan Sosialis and the communists.

The analysis so far demonstrates that, at least in Singapore, the model of the politically neutral civil servant may not be valid in a situation where an incoming government’s political ideology is different from that of incumbent servants. No doubt, for some civil servants the major reason for their resignations was more monetary than political. For the senior civil servants the cut in allowances had a considerable impact on income. Besides, a newly independent country needs political socialization programs to reorient the values of civil servants so as to make them more consistent with those of the new government. It was also necessary to create a sense of political awareness in civil servants who had previously been isolated from the public they served.

In terms of numbers, the civil service has grown from 28,253 persons in 1959 to 68,677 in 1983; statutory board employees numbered approximately 56,000, making a total of 124,677 for the public bureaucracy. The growth and development of the civil bureaucracy have been examined comprehensively elsewhere, but it will be useful here to identify the main trends. The civil service ministries have grown from nine in 1959 to fourteen in 1983. The more impressive growth has been outside the formal civil service, where statutory boards have been established to perform a diversity of economic, social, and political functions. A recent analysis shows that statutory boards in Singapore grew from five during the colonial period to eighty-eight in 1977. The reasons for the establishment of these boards outside the formal civil service structure are greater financial and administrative autonomy. The most recent board was the Mass Rapid Transit Authority, established in 1983.

Outside the formal civil bureaucracy are the partly-owned or fully-owned government companies, which are important in generating growth in the Singapore economy. The government’s participation in business enterprises has been justified from two perspectives. First, participation has helped government restructure the economy from an entrepot center to one more dependent on industries, services, and other pioneering fields. Second, government involvement in business is a safeguard against massive foreign control and ownership. From the viewpoint of economic survival it is argued that because of Singapore’s small size the state cannot allow undue dominance of the economy by foreign companies, particularly the MNCs. Government, in fact, is the only indigenous body with enough resources to counter foreign investment and also to mobilize skills. In terms of size and numbers, therefore, Singapore life has been “bureaucratized.”

An interesting aspect of this bureaucratization process has been the participation of senior civil servants in government-owned enterprises. In wholly owned enterprises control is exercised by the government through the Board of Directors, which consists

45 See Seah, “Bureaucratic Evolution.”

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of civil servants or individuals who head statutory boards. Through a system of interlocking directorships it is not uncommon for a top civil servant to simultaneously occupy five to fifteen directorships or other posts in limited companies owned or partly owned by the government. In 1972–73, a list of the top ten government officials showed that among them, they held a total of 93 directorships in addition to the chairmanships of the major economic statutory boards. It could be argued that the rewarding of the bureaucratic elite with directorships represents an unequal distribution of wealth and contradicts the basic ideals of socialism. In response one could say, though, that it goes well with the PAP’s notion of merit and excellence together with the concept of political loyalty on the part of the civil servants.

The civil bureaucracy has been in many ways the testing and training ground for a number of second-echelon political leaders. Bureaucrats in the civil service, statutory boards, and government-owned companies have been identified early in their careers and carefully groomed to test their worth in a series of administrative tasks. After 1976 especially, a number of PAP candidates originated from the civil bureaucracy or government-owned companies. Among them was Goh Chok Tong, the defense minister and second health minister, formerly from the Administrative Service and Neptune Orient Lines, a government-owned company. Also, there was S. Dhanabalan, the present foreign minister, formerly from a statutory board and a government-owned company respectively—the Economic Development Board and the Development Bank of Singapore. There are, of course, advantages arising from this reliance on former civil servants as politicians in Singapore. The bureaucrats’ previous working relationship with senior politicians has made both groups familiar with each others’ personalities and operational styles. Presumably, also, there is a congruence in values and political ideology.

Nevertheless, there have been some reservations about this practice. In some cases, relatively young former civil servants in political positions caused unhappiness among senior civil servants who saw that their former subordinates were now their political superiors. Also, the PAP’s method of selecting younger men for grooming to fill top leadership positions may lead to a loss of morale in the party among those more senior but less meritorious. George Bogaars, a former head of the civil service, has made another observation: “If you pick a successful civil servant and make him a politician, fine. My only concern is that you must pick the right guy but not try to make an unsuccessful civil servant into a successful politician. And I am saying this because there are unsuccessful civil servants picked to become politicians.”

What concluding statements can be made about politics and the administrative state? From the viewpoint of institutionalization, the civil bureaucracy and government-owned companies have ensured regularized and predictable performance in the implementation of governmental policies. To some extent, this has been due to

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49 Straits Times (October 26, 1981).
the British “steel frame of administration” established in colonial times. The steel frame has expanded considerably since then and has been recast into a new entity, but with recognizable features from the past. Eisenstadt’s bureaucratization has no doubt occurred in Singapore given the extent of the country’s complex developmental activities, but the depolitization of the state has not occurred to as large an extent as originally described. Certainly promotion and rank within the civil bureaucracy reflect the elitist notions of Singapore society, but these are merged with notions such as political loyalty and ideological commitment. Chan’s original conception of the administrative state suggested that the role of the elected politician would be reduced in a noncompetitive political arena. She has since modified this thesis to point out that bureaucrats have not usurped power from the politicians, and argues that “in Singapore Parliament is supreme, with the Cabinet leadership very much supreme.”

Our previous discussion seems to substantiate this thesis. But it can also be argued that in Singapore the roles of Parliament and the senior bureaucrats slowly merged, and that their functions often overlap. This point, in addition, illustrates the difficulties faced by opposition parties in Singapore, which are unable to draw on the resources of a civil bureaucracy that has institutionalized its relationship with the ruling party over a long time. Moreover, the civil bureaucracy, particularly the senior civil servants, have a symbiotic relationship with the PAP leadership. This fact emphasizes that the bureaucracy is far from the classical concept of a “divorced” and apolitical institution. The point is made even clearer when at regular intervals the bureaucracy is seen as an important resource base for future political leaders.

POLITICAL SUCCESSION, SELF-RENEWAL, AND DEMOGRAPHY

An important component of the concept of political institutionalization is the political succession issue. In most developed political systems regularized and accepted procedures to meet this issue have been established through constitutional means and through custom. The successor to the political leader in such states is accepted by the majority of the population as the legitimate incumbent until his mandate to govern is taken away from him at a general election, by death, or for some other reason. In most developing countries and in most communist regimes, the institutionalization of political succession remains a problem. Although the subject of political succession may be spelled out explicitly in constitutions and procedures for electing a new leader may be outlined, the process of leadership selection remains unstable. New leaders may come to power through unconstitutional methods and often by force. They frequently do not have the support of the majority of the population and suffer from a legitimacy problem.

The question of political succession in Singapore is complex. Although the PAP received from the electorate overwhelming majorities in successive general elections

since 1959, and presumably clear and unambiguous mandates to govern, its leadership has considered political succession to be a topic worthy of public attention and debate. In fact, the party leadership has stressed the need for a self-renewal process in the higher echelons of the political elite to ensure that men of sufficient caliber succeed the "old guard."

By most standards, the present or recent top leaders of the PAP are not very old. Lee Kuan Yew turned sixty-one in September 1984 and Goh Keng Swee, the former first deputy prime minister, is sixty-six. However, S. Rajaratnam, the second deputy prime minister (foreign affairs) is sixty-nine and went through a major bypass heart operation. A senior minister of finance, Hon Sui Sen, died and some old-guard ministers have expressed a desire to retire. A major reason for this concern with political succession and the stress on the need to develop a second-echelon leadership is that many of the old-guard senior ministers, including the prime minister, have been in office since 1959. Thus in the search for successors to political leadership, the PAP has looked to men who are at least two generations younger than they—to candidates in their late thirties or early forties. There is an unspoken recognition that the older and less senior leaders may not meet some criteria for high leadership, partly because their background and training are not thought to be in line with the technocratic needs of Singapore society. Another aspect of political succession in Singapore is that since 1959 the process has not been implemented for the office of the prime minister. Lee Kuan Yew has remained the undisputed leader throughout the period, although during his absence from the country, the first deputy prime minister, Goh Keng Swee, has acted as prime minister.

From the early 1970s, the determination to promote self-renewal in the PAP government has been apparent. New MPs after the 1972, 1976, and 1980 general elections had predominantly technocratic backgrounds with a preference for engineering, science, and economics. It has been observed that "from the 1972 generation of nine new recruits two were elevated to senior ministers of state by 1976 and in the 1976 generation of 13 newcomers to politics, one was promoted to the senior minister of state for finance, another to minister of state for defence and a third to parliamentary secretary."\(^\text{51}\) Of the five promoted to higher positions in government, three had civil service backgrounds.

But the rejection rate has also been high even for those who attained the position of minister. A recent casualty was the minister without portfolio Lim Chee Onn, who was concurrently secretary-general of the National Trades Union Congress (NTUC). Lim, a former civil servant, publicly admitted that he had not related well to the grassroots and had a too reticent personality. Other second-echelon leaders have been removed from senior government positions in the past, often without any publicly stated reason. One must assume that it was for reasons of ineptitude, lack of political instinct, and also a certain degree of personalism. Most of the persons had relatively quickly risen to power and had equally rapidly fallen. This fact illustrates the lack of

\(^{51}\) Chan Heng Chee, "In Middle Passage: The PAP Faces the Eighties" (Department of Political Science, University of Singapore, Occasional Paper No. 36, 1979).
strong grassroots support for the leaders and also the high degree of personalism in the selection, promotion, and rejection process for leaders. In a sense, legitimacy of a transitory kind is conferred on the second-echelon leaders, and their positions in politics depend on the views of the senior old-guard leadership. Thus, it could be argued that the political succession process in Singapore is not as regularized and predictable as it is in many parliamentary countries. The criterion of predictability in the political succession process, therefore, may not be completely institutionalized in Singapore.

A speech by the PAP's first organizing secretary, Goh Chok Tong, provides an insight into the qualities the PAP requires of potential leaders. Goh said: "Ability is important, but the overriding factors are character and sincerity. However able one is, if there is a doubt about his sincerity and character, he is out." It would appear that Goh was merely identifying some of the prerequisites of PAP candidates. However, the criteria for eventual success in the PAP political arena were not mentioned, but presumably they would include the elusive factor of political acumen.

Political succession in Singapore has also been characterized in terms of national survival and the search for excellence. Lee Kuan Yew has described the slowness and difficulty the PAP experienced in the 1970s in finding successors worthy of the older leadership. He was puzzled by the dearth of the able, the dynamic, and the dedicated to become MPs, parliamentary secretaries, and ministers. Lee suggested that the answer was that the original group of leaders had come from a talent pool made up of persons from Singapore and the regional countries. Talent from the region had gathered in Singapore before the new political boundaries were demarcated in 1965. Besides, the present Singapore-born group were politically not as active as their predecessors. The able young, especially after independence, have found the professions and business more attractive. Lee argued that if Singapore left the problem of maintaining a talent pool to the "normal process of attrition and change, and to the vagaries of chance, we run the danger of leaving Singapore in the hands of mediocrities. To allow this would be criminal." Lee has therefore stressed the need to search outside Singapore for talent, so that Singapore can maintain its edge in high-technology industries and other areas of the economy. Accordingly, in recent years schemes such as the Committee for Attracting Talent to Singapore (CATS) have been introduced to attract talent from abroad.

Lee, however, recognized that the "Singapore-born must be the pillars on which we can place the cross beams and struts of foreign-born talent to raise us up to higher standards of achievement." In fact, the PAP has been thorough in its search for political talent. Goh Chok Tong has remarked: "It's a painstaking effort. We look at every important nook and cranny where potential political talent may be found—the business sector, the community organizations like the Citizen's Consultative Committees, the Residents' Committees and Management Committees of Community

54 Ibid.
The search for talent in Singapore's tightly knit society has recently become controversial. In a speech at the National Day rally in 1983, Lee Kuan Yew said he was disturbed at the demographic trends he had observed in the 1980 Singapore census. Two related findings gave him concern. He discovered that more university-educated than non-graduated women preferred to remain unmarried, often until the age of forty. Furthermore, he found, the better educated a Singaporean woman is, the fewer children she has. Thus women with no educational qualifications produced an average of 3.5 children and women with university degrees only 1.65. There was also the related problem that male graduates preferred to marry non-graduated women. Lee contended that the country's family planning program had been successful in reducing the birth rate, but the development had been lopsided, favoring the less able. Lee said that if this pattern of procreation continued, competence would decline, the economy falter, the administration suffer, and the society decline.

The controversial aspect of Lee's speech was his belief that nature (or what was inherited) is more important than nurture (meaning education and environment). Lee, quoting several studies, argued that the difference between nature and nurture was 80 percent to 20 percent. Lee proposed that steps be taken to improve Singapore's talent pool bearing in mind his arguments. In fact, the first of presumably a number of carrots was introduced in February 1984, when it was announced that graduate women will have preference for places at the best primary school for their third and subsequent children.

Some reactions to Lee's speech were highly critical. It was charged that Lee's speech had elitist implications, discriminated against minority races and the less able, and challenged basic rights of individuals to marry and have children. Many also questioned the validity of the research findings that placed such emphasis on the nature factor in determining bright offspring.

Lee's long-term grafting of the concerns of survival, excellence, and leadership succession to the entire demographic process of the country may perhaps be a unique theme within the field of nation building. If he should be able to institutionalize the whole complicated process that contains many imponderables and a number of controversial assumptions, the result would be an exceptional society and political system.

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CONCLUSION

This essay has been concerned with the concept of political institutionalization in Singapore. We have examined the concept in relation to two themes, survival and achievement, and have focused on three substantive concerns—the PAP, the civil bureaucracy, and political succession. The past thirty years has seen the PAP consolidate and institutionalize its hold on politics as well as on social and economic life in Singapore. It has moved from a narrow, sectarian political party to one all-encompassing in its political appeal. The party has evolved from one that encouraged mass participation by its members in the internal electoral process to one that subscribes to a more elitist and less democratic method of election for leadership positions. We have described how a relatively small political party has consolidated its hold on Singapore by developing and institutionalizing channels of influence over important sections in society such as the civil bureaucracy. Moreover, the recent redefinition of the PAP as a national movement emphasizes its legitimacy in Singapore.

We also examined the institutionalization process in relation to the formal civil service structure, the statutory boards, and the government-owned companies in Singapore. The topic was analyzed by means of such concepts as the administrative state, bureaucratization, and depolitization. From the viewpoint of institutionalization, the civil bureaucracy and government-owned companies have been instrumental in ensuring that there be regularized and predictable performances in the implementation of governmental policies. Also, Eisenstadt’s bureaucratization has no doubt occurred in Singapore if one bears in mind the country’s complex and complicated developmental activities. The depoliticization of Singapore life, however, has not occurred to as large an extent as originally described. Promotion and rank within the civil bureaucracy do reflect the elitist notions of Singapore society, but this is merged with notions such as political loyalty and ideological commitment.

The idea of the administrative state suggests that the politicians’ role would be reduced in a noncompetitive political arena. In Singapore, what has happened is a slow merging of the roles of Parliament and the senior bureaucrats, and there is often an overlap in the functions they perform. More significantly, the bureaucracy has been an important resource base for recruiting future politicians. Finally, we examined the political institutionalization concept in relation to the issue of political succession in Singapore. It was pointed out how Singapore leaders linked the succession issue to questions of excellence and survival. More recently, discussion has focused on certain demographic data and their linkages with the search for excellence in all walks of life.

The significance of anniversaries is that they provide a chance to look back at what has happened in the past, but more importantly they allow a look toward the future with renewed hope. In January 1984, the Singapore government announced
plans to celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of Singapore's internal self-government. Ong Teng Cheong, the minister in charge of the celebrations, appropriately said that the activities would evoke a sense of joy and pride at what Singapore has achieved as a nation. At the same time, however, Ong stressed that the celebrations would reflect a commitment to the nation and confidence in the future. Political institutionalization is a continuous process and the record of the past suggests that, in the future, the Singapore elite will continue to adjust, improvise, and innovate in the making of a nation.
10. Evolution and Development of the Political System in Malaysia

Zakaria Haji Ahmad

A leading Malaysian politician once commented that the style of democracy in Malaysia was "à la Malaysia" as if to justify the fact that the political norm as understood in the liberal West required a transformation to suit conditions of the country that adopted it. A leader and former prime minister of Malaysia is on record as stating: "The view we take is that democratic government is the best and most acceptable form of government. So long as the form is preserved, the substance can be changed to suit conditions of a particular country." Similarly, but going further in a revisionist direction, the late leader of Indonesia, Soekarno, described his country's style of governance after 1959 as "Guided Democracy," implying that nondemocratic practices were allowable.

Whatever the merits of such views, the issue that remains is to determine what structure of political governance is durable and able to perform economically, yet liberal enough to accommodate the needs of increasingly politically aware populations. The conditions in the post-1945 period do not even approximate the environment that would enhance democratic forms as now pursued in the West. Indeed, it would appear that the goals of economic modernization in many so-called developing societies would be better or more easily achieved through nondemocratic policies or through nonpluralistic political systems.

In the analysis of the politics of postindependence transitional societies, a recurrent theme has been the inability of the political system and process to achieve...
stability despite the increasing demands of newly emergent peoples with rising economic expectations. Generally, two schools of thought have sought to explain the political instability (usually concomitant with poor economic performance) that has occurred. One explains it as the lack of institutionalization of processes and demands as these societies undergo rapid change; in diverse instances, postcolonial societies either did not inherit an established public service and operating political institutions to begin with, or became unable to institutionalize a system that could cope with the new demands arising from socioeconomic and political change. The other explanation focuses on the inability of elites to tackle the challenges of modernization in both its economic and political dimensions; as these challenges become less manageable, leaders who had often been democratic in their initial inclinations often resorted to authoritarian or undemocratic modes of governance, exhibiting intolerant attitudes and repressive tendencies.

The central question, then, is: What political form best meets the needs and conditions of new countries, with at least some semblance of democratic or perhaps more appropriately polyarchical practices, and at the same time enhances the quality of life?

In attempting to answer this question, the peculiar socioeconomic circumstances, the ideological bent of a country's leaders, and the interdependence of economics and politics are primary factors for consideration. Political systems that emerged as dictatorships with state-controlled economies are not discussed here.

The question may be approached by exploring the Malaysian experiment in political problem solving, drawing on several facets of that experience, and analyzing future trends; in the process, the possibilities and limitations of the Malaysian form of political governance are suggested. Given the restricted space, the discussion necessarily highlights only the more salient points.

The Malaysian political system has been remarkably stable since independence in 1957. There is at least a semblance of democracy through a popularly elected government that has been tested through regular, reasonably frequent, and generally free elections; there is an explicit sense of the rule of law and a military subservient to civilian authority; there is a bureaucracy and there are political parties which enjoy a substantial degree of institutionalization; and there has been generally peaceful, orderly, and evolutionary political change. Concomitantly, the country has also enjoyed a comfortable standard of living and high growth rates (especially in the

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3 The foremost theorist of this school is Samuel P. Huntington. See his Political Order in Changing Societies (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1968).

4 Studies on elites and developmental politics are numerous in political science literature. As one example of elite inabilities to meet the challenges of modernization, see Lucian W. Pye, Politics, Personality and Nation-Building: Burma's Search for Identity (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1962).

5 The term "polyarchy" was coined by Robert Dahl to denote the elements of "contestation" and "inclusiveness," rather than refer to "democracy," which has multiple connotations. See Robert Dahl, Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1971).
1970s); according to an annual review for 1980 Malaysia's political economy demonstrated a process of development and consolidation.  

**SETTING AND POLITY GOALS**

It might be useful at this point to set forth the context in which Malaysia exists so that its travails in political conflict resolution may be better understood. We must evaluate both the setting and the goals of the polity. By "setting" we mean both the socioeconomic conditions of the polity and the existing issues. "Goals" may be interpreted as the underlying objectives as perceived by leadership.

The multiethnic setting is a serious problem. Tensions erupted on May 13, 1969, in racial riots, and race relations continue to be a simmering issue. Ethnicity, race, or communalism—all of which may be used interchangeably in the Malaysian context—set the tone for virtually every political issue and are likely to color all future issues as well. So predominant is the ethnic issue that class relations and cannot replace ethnic divisions as a paradigm. The ethnic distribution is not simply an issue of a majority versus a minority. The major ethnic group, the Malays, only comprise about 40 percent of the population but, coupled with other indigenous groups, they are considered the bumiputras (literally "sons of the soil," meaning indigenous races) with a total of 52.7 percent, whereas the non-bumiputra comprise the remaining half (Chinese, about 35.8 percent; Indians, 10.7 percent, and other "nonindigenous," the remainder). Thus, ethnic distribution may be seen as bimodal and complicates the "numbers game."

Political issues are often couched in "Malay" versus "non-Malay" (read usually "Chinese") terms although the rich ethnic distribution—which includes groups such as the Ibans and other tribes (as in Sarawak) and the Kadazans, Bajaus, and others (in Sabah), not to mention the Indians, Pakistanis, and Eurasians—renders such a dichotomy an oversimplification. In the main, political parties are organized along racial lines, and no political party without ethnic appeal has succeeded in winning electoral support. The ruling Barisan Nasional (National Front) is a coalition of ethnic parties but depends on the ethnic appeal of its component parts.

A second element of the setting is the geographical division between peninsular Malaysia (the former Federation of Malaya with its eleven states) and the states of Sabah and Sarawak on the island of Borneo. The latter two states are separated from

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7 For a seminal treatment of this theme, see the classic work of Malay(s)ian politics, K. J. Ratnam, *Communalism and the Political Process in Malaya* (Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Press, 1965).


the peninsula by the South China Sea, which constitutes a communications barrier. Integration is made difficult by geographical distance, by differing histories, and by certain state powers (for example, concerning immigration) of Sabah and Sarawak, which the other states do not have. National political issues are often seen as concerning only the peninsular portion, almost to the exclusion of the peculiarities of Sabah and Sarawak.

A third element is the “close administration” existing in Malaysia, a legacy of British colonial rule. The powers and coverage of the bureaucracy, as will be seen, are extensive and have made Malaysia a “closely administered” state, more than, say, Burma, which also was under British colonial tutelage. This close administration, to an extent, provides a political setting with advantages for the postcolonial governing elite.

As has been noted, however, beneath the stability there are problems. Apart from race, existing issues in Malaysian politics include inequities in the distribution of wealth, federal-state relationships in which the role of a strong, central government is questioned, unequal rates of institutionalization of the bureaucracy and political parties, the challenges of modernization, and the raising of the standard of living. The existing political order has been forced to be less complacent with previous solutions to problems; it has come as a surprise that rising expectations—and corresponding frustrations—have resulted in open demonstrations and in opposition by students recipients of government scholarships and subsidies and farmer-peasant alliances (hitherto considered politically docile).

Polity goals may be also considered a part of the Malaysian setting. The first goal might be stated as being a democratic system of government with the political mandate tested by the polls.

The second is an “integrative model” for national unity. This goal was made more explicit after the 1969 racial riots, the documents being the 1970 proclamation of the New Economic Policy or NEP (with its twin goals of poverty eradication and societal restructuring so that race is not identified with occupation and that by 1990 bumiputras would own 30 percent of the corporate wealth) along with the Rukunegara or national ideology.

The third is the tacit objective of a Malay-based if not Malay-dominant political system as the platform for Malaysian nation and statehood. In some sense, it connotes an assimilationist tendency, although the process of political bargaining seems to have evolved from an accommodationist to a hegemonistic style. Also, since 1981 increasing reference has been made to the goal of an “Islam-based” society, but this goal appears to be more rhetorical than seriously contemplated.

Fourth, to the extent that economic development has been accepted as a primary objective of national economic planning, in the 1980s it appears to be tied to the goal of a “newly industrializing country” as opposed to being merely a country producing primary commodities.10

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In comparative terms, Malaysia’s experience in state and nation building may be unique in that it has been able to sustain a high degree of stability despite political and economic change and despite its difficult setting. Why has Malaysia been able to retain an open political process and a working party system when other similar political systems or those with lesser problems have failed? How persistent are the patterns that have enabled a functioning, stable political system with democratic features? Given the goals and setting of the polity, can the political process sustain the ability to overcome political challenge in the future? To approach these questions, we first need to look at the patterns of political authority.

**AUTHORITY PATTERNS**

To the extent that Malaysia has enjoyed relative political stability and high economic performance, the structure that allows for effective political authority has been a contributing factor. It is tempting to accept the thesis by Esman\(^{11}\) that Malaysia is an “administrative state” in which administrators have not only been important as administrators but also as conflict managers. Parts of the Esman thesis are acceptable, but I would add the following features as part of the country’s authority pattern:

1. The primary role played by the ruling political elites; the style of this elite may be characterized as “moderating” through a process of “top down” leadership and “cooptation.” Elite turnover has been gradual and ongoing, and sections of the counterelite are aware that they cannot press their demands too hard.
2. A strong, central government in a federal setting.
3. A party system with a ruling political coalition that thrives on apparent consensus.
4. A cabinet system of government within a Westminster form of political representation.
5. The notion of the rule of law and civilian dominance.
6. A working form of constitutional monarchy allowing symbolic Malay political power in a Malay-based but multiethnic setting. It is this combination, then, that for nearly three decades has provided the foundation of Malaysian political stability.

The notion that Malaysia is an administrative state is predicated on the proposition that “the state is the dominant institution in society, guiding and controlling more than it responds to societal pressures; and administrative (bureaucratic) institutions, personnel, values, and styles are more important than political and participative organs in determining the behaviour of the state and thus the course of public affairs.”\(^{12}\) The bureaucracy in Malaysia—largely through the senior civil service presently known as the Perkhidmatan Tadbir dan Diplomatik (PTD, or its better-known appellation, the Malayan Civil Service or MCS)—has been a major factor in


\(^{12}\) Ibid., p. 62.
policymaking and implementation, much more than the United Malay National Organisation (UMNO), the dominant political party of the ruling coalition. Among other factors, political parties were recent creations in Malaysian institutional development and have lagged behind the established public bureaucracy.

Puthucheary has explained that, in large part, the men of the MCS must be regarded as part of the political elite. They played a primary role as advisors to the political leaders and for a considerable time held two topmost positions. According to Elyas Omar, a top Malaysian civil servant, “The dominance of the MCS in national political decision-making is such that the administrative elites share with the political leaders the responsibility for charting the course of Malaysia’s history through the formulation of long term policies.”

But although the bureaucracy provides the country with an extensive administrative infrastructure and thus contributes to law and order and, one might argue, even to the developmental process, its style may inhibit innovation in a fast-growing economy. Moreover, while the bureaucracy contributed to phenomenal public-sector growth in the 1970s, it did not contribute to the quasigovernment organization of economic growth. Even Esman admits that “despite strenuous efforts by national political leaders, the administration has not significantly improved its capacity to integrate specialized programmes, to adapt to new conditions, to innovate improved services, or to manage conflict. In ability to manage change processes, which is the core of development administration, it has been deficient and unable to respond to demands for more dynamic performance.”

It is less clear, then, whether the advantageous position of the Malayan civil service has resulted in what Fred Riggs has called “the heavy weight of bureaucratic power” in relation to the weight of UMNO. The MCS has played a significant role, but it is still acting under a government led by political parties dominated by UNMO. To overrate the role of the bureaucracy would be tantamount to accepting that politics has been insignificant, but it is difficult to deny the drama of politics in Malaysia.

Esman’s thesis should not be rejected, but, although politics has its place, the interplay of politics and the bureaucracy in Malaysia must be considered. Unlike many other postcolonial states rejoicing in independence and rejecting the bureaucracy as a colonial legacy, Malaysia continued to rely on the MCS as an institution of political governance. In large part, this acceptance was attributable to the fact that the first, second, and third prime ministers were former civil servants and were comfortable in working with other civil servants. For a while, indeed, the ruling political parties had coopted a number of talented civil servants into their ranks.

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But the essential factor was the elite style. Stability, gradualism, and regularized behavior and procedures were norms of this elite style. There was also an essential element of moderation in terms of the rate of economic progress and the multiethnic setting. In retrospect, one can credit the first prime minister, Tengku Abdul Rahman (commonly referred to as “the Tengku”) for this gradualism in political institution building. That the military, for example, was not allowed to expand and that the British were relied on for defense is attributable to the views of the Tengku. The emphasis on law and order on the government’s authority are also hallmarks of the Tengku’s astute style in political leadership. In terms of race relations, the Tengku’s role as the leader above communal political passions cemented the basis of a multi-ethnic setting in which conflicting communal demands could be settled by compromise. At least for the first decade of independence, such an elite style allowed for a steady evolution of the political process; there was no rush to introduce change merely for its own sake.

Other notions were also central to the style, such as the public services being insulated from political influence. A close nexus between politician and public service was established that blurred the distinction between the two, but the principle was nonetheless enunciated. It can well be argued that if the postindependence elite (especially the Tengku and his deputy and successor, Tun Abdul Razak) had not believed in such a principle, political institutions in Malaysia would be different today.

It may be significant that challenges from the counterelite or even from the second echelon were never serious enough to upset the stable pattern the Tengku and his successors established. Even after the Tengku was challenged in 1969 (and subsequently stepped down in 1970), the pattern had been well accepted; the process of elite change has not really been altered. One observer has argued that the lack of challenge to established authority may be a manifestation of the Malay psyche but it may merely be an expression of acceptance of the channels of political elite competition as being legitimate. To some extent, the elite style may be viewed as paternalistic, and it is no accident that the Tengku has been accorded the title of Bapa Malaysia (father of Malaysia), but this title may also symbolize the acceptance of the elite style by all sections of the diversified population.

One must also note the practice of “coopting” of elites. One practice, as has been mentioned, was the tapping of talent for political leadership from the civil service. The other was coopting of those in the opposition who could be induced to join those in authority. Similarly, public service regulations could be extended to those outside the bureaucratic circle. Thus, religious teachers loudly opposing the government were brought into the government by giving them better pay and conditions of service, thus stifling their criticisms. It was an efficient way of doing things. Simply stated, then, this elite style in its various manifestations is a major factor in the functioning of political institutions and processes in Malaysia.

Inasmuch as the elite style was also nationally or centrally oriented, the notion of "a strong central government" was stressed above that of the states in the federal system. The ruling elites saw the need for the primacy of the center and in fact controlled all political party organizations at the subnational level. To this day, federal politicians of the ruling coalition are "liaison chiefs" for their respective party units at the state level, more so as it concerns the dominant political party, the UMNO.

The notion of a strong, central government may be simply a continuation of a centralizing process that had been apparent from the beginning of the century, but Tilman has observed that it has been a strong theme in recent relations between the central and state governments. Through the "proclamation of emergency" clause in the federal constitution—used in Sarawak in 1966 and in Kelantan in 1978—the federal government has been able to exercise its writ. Tilman also notes the articulation of central political control in political party processes and in the arguments on the need for federally financed development aid so as to keep the state governments "in line." In Malaysia firm central control prevails over its constituent parts.

Related to elite style and central political control is the format that allows for political authority to be sustained in a multiethnic setting, a mode of politics labeled by von Vorys as a "democracy without consensus." According to von Vorys, "By necessity and choice, Malaysian (Malayan) leaders set out to establish a viable, democratic system not based on a national community, but on the cooperation of discrete communal groups." He elaborates the "formula" by noting its features:

First, the relationship of citizens within the same group would continue to be managed through a semiautonomous communal hierarchy. Second, the relationship of citizens across communal boundaries or to the government would be regulated through terms agreed to by an inter-communal Directorate at the highest level. Third, the terms of intercommunal relations would be promulgated in a constitutional contract, then implemented and when necessary augmented by policies secretly negotiated. Fourth, the members of the Directorate would have to possess dual qualifications. They would have to be the leaders of the political organization (party) of their community most capable of mobilizing mass support behind the government in democratically conducted elections. No less important, they would also have to be men who could maintain the confidence of their colleagues by keeping negotiations within the Directorate secret and by refraining from ever mobilizing their external mass-support to bring pressure on the secret negotiations.

Inasmuch as politics continue to be communally based, the prospects for communal-free politics would seem to be negligible, and hence a "democracy without

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18 In police documents of the 1960s, this term was commonly used as a government imperative. Zakaria Haji Ahmad, "The Police and Political Development in Malaysia: Change, Continuity and Institution-Building of a 'Coercive' Apparatus in a Developing, Ethnically Divided Society" (Ph.D. dissertation, M.I.T., 1977).


20 Ibid.

21 von Vorys, Democracy Without Consensus.


consensus” along the lines sketched by von Vorys would appear practical. There were, of course, problems arising from the model in experience, as developments and changes in socioeconomic status and political expectation took place in Malaysia. But the model is important because it specifies an “accommodationist” rather than “assimilationist” approach to the communal problems of the Malaysian polity and society through the intercommunal nature of a coalition government headed by its Directorate.

As an explanatory construct, the von Vorys model suffered its most serious setback with the May 13, 1969, riots, which must be seen as a watershed event. But after a period of emergency rule, during which parliamentary democracy was suspended and a specially established government body, the National Operations Council, was in control by fiat, the process of authority returned to the intercommunal Directorate. According to van Vorys, however, the functioning of the Directorate system after 1969 rested on the conditions of “integrity in government, depoliticization of the constitution (along with a new national ideology), and the decommunalization of politics.”

Essentially, the last two stipulate the prohibition of public discussion that concerns sensitive issues (citizenship rights of non-Malays, position of the sultans, status of the Malay language, and Malay special rights). There was also renewed vigor in pursuing the socioeconomic modernization of the Malays with a New Economic Policy that aimed at achieving a 30 percent share of corporate equity ownership for the Malays and other bumiputras by 1990 as noted earlier. The intercommunal Directorate after 1969 therefore rested on the additional conditions of economy and political rights.

The Directorate model was expanded from its tripartate representation of the major racial groupings to include other representatives of the electorate. Thus, the Directorate model comprises not only the previous Alliance Party but also in its form as the Barisan Nasional (National Front) other political parties, including for a time the Islam-based Malay opposition party, PAS.

The setback to the von Vorys formulation, then, necessitated a reinforced basis to the “intercommunal Directorate and democracy without consensus” model. In cultural terms, the structural model described by von Vorys would seem to allow for a resolution of sorts of the “identity crisis” prevalent in postindependence societies undergoing political change. In this sense, the solution to the identity crisis allows for an intercommunal coalition, and the intercommunal coalition in turn relies on an admixture of the various communal norms as well as traditions gained from the country’s history. As succinctly put by Pye, “The national identity must ultimately depend upon an awareness of Malay[sian] citizenship that is not Malay, Chinese, or Indian, but an amalgam of the ideals of British rule and Malayan tradition.”

Yet, as noted by Pye, the dominant “synthetic” political culture “represents a continuation of the traditions of British Malaya in which the Malays had a special role.” More

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24 Ibid., pp. 391-422.
26 Ibid.
importantly, “all communities have been sensitive to the problems of identity and of the dangers of communal divisiveness” and thus, “Malaysians cannot pretend that they do not have an identity problem and they have generally been forced to be more realistic and less given to illusions.”

Although such a situation is in danger of fragmentation and internal tensions, Pye concludes that “the creation of a new sense of identity, as in Malaysia, must in large measure be a synthetic product of contemporary history.” The model put forth by von Vorys provides the basis for understanding the mode of the intercommunal coalition still extant—that is, the institutional arrangements—but does not discuss the cultural aspects. In attempting to appreciate more comprehensively the structural arrangements, then, Pye’s explanations are a strong complement in understanding the governmental pattern existent in multiethnic Malaysia.

Another feature of the authority pattern is the notion of cabinet government and Westminster-style parliamentary democracy. This concept is less important than the institutional arrangements discussed by von Vorys that have their underlying basis in British colonial rule and its carryover into the postindependence period by the indigenous elites and hence represent an important element in the government’s legitimacy. But it is very significant that parliamentarism is formally accepted as part of the political process. “Thus, formally at least,” notes Puthucheary, “the convention of ministerial responsibility is applicable in the Malaysian situation.” In contradistinction to the British case, however, Puthucheary notes that “there is no consensus in society that ministers who act improperly in relation to their ministries and departments must resign.” The system of cabinet government is only a variation of the model as understood in Great Britain.

Similarly, in looking at parliament, Puthucheary notes that the parliamentary process is more a “formality” and “not a forum for public debate.” But in the Malaysian parliament, one reason for the lack of public debate is that the government, through its intercommunal coalition, has had since 1959 at least a two-thirds majority (see Table 1). Also, as noted by Michael Ong, “The business of the House continues to be controlled by the Cabinet.” In the proceedings of the House, Ong also observes that procedures (such as standing orders) have increasingly been used to serve the interests of the government with rare considerations given to the views of the opposition. But probably an overriding reason for the tight rein on parliament and the business of the Lower House has been “the government’s attempt to minimise politicking” both inside and outside the House so that the form is preserved while “the substance of democratic life is changed as it saw fit.”

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27 Ibid.
28 Ibid.
30 Ibid., p. 128.
31 Ibid., p. 128.
33 Ibid.
34 Ibid.
### Table 1
Strength of Government and Opposition in the Dewan Rakyat (Lower House), 1959–1982

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Election year</th>
<th>Government seats</th>
<th>Percent of votes</th>
<th>Oppositiona seats</th>
<th>Percent of votes</th>
<th>Total seats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1959</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>51.7</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>48.3</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964b</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>58.5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>41.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sabah</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sarawak</td>
<td></td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singapore</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>47.5</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>52.5</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>60.7</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>39.3</td>
<td>154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>57.2</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>42.8</td>
<td>154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>60.5</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>39.5</td>
<td>154</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a Includes "Independents."

b Parliamentary elections were only held in Peninsular Malaysia. Seats for the whole country were calculated with the addition of state legislative seats for Sabah, Sarawak, and Singapore. (See Ratnam and Milne, as cited below.)

c Not ascertainable.


A strong hand in parliament and in the operation of the cabinet-type of government may be seen as supporting the intercommunal Directorate and the elite style. There is tight ruling-party discipline, which has allowed for virtually all legislation proposed by the government to be passed and that proposed by the opposition thwarted. Although there is no corresponding notion of individual ministerial responsibility within the Malaysian cabinet, yet collective responsibility is maintained and all ministers who have not been toeing the line have been eventually removed.

Thus, even if there is a difference between form and substance, there is a semblance of parliamentary democracy along the Westminster model. The articulation and aggregation of interests is encompassed in the legislative process even when some laws act as a curb on the freedom of expression, but it is important that such functions exist and are performed.
The functioning of a party system involving a ruling government and an opposition is interdependent with an electoral system. From the table it can be seen that although the opposition obtained 22 seats in the 1982 elections, this represented 39.5 percent of the votes cast; in 1978, the 23 seats represented 42.5 percent. Opposition strength, at least for the non-Malay but largely Chinese Democratic Action Party (DAP) has mainly been in the urban areas with large electorates, whereas the government’s strength comes in large part from rural districts with smaller populations. Delineations of electoral boundaries in a system of single-member constituencies with plurality voting has been weighted in favor of rural constituencies. It has been argued that such an electoral system is unnecessarily biased, but, according to S. Rachagan, in the apportionment of constituencies “any analysis of the motives behind malapportionment borders on speculation.” Nonetheless, he observes that extant “apportionment introduces inequities in representation” which “in turn could introduce inequities between the various ethnic groups in the country.”

Despite so-called inequities in the electoral system, the ruling coalition government has been able to win the elections in the main because of the weakness of the opposition, which is fragmented and unable to contest on a national scale. Malaysia has a working electoral system, with periodic, regular, and free elections. Such a system contributes to the working of a party system, which in turn allows for at least the appearance of parliamentary democracy.

A significant feature that indicates a lack of instability in the Malaysian political experience is the subservience of the coercive instruments of state—the army (or more correctly, the armed forces) and the police (a national force)—to civilian political authority and control. Civilian control of the executive heads of these two agencies is specified in the constitution, but, more important, a smooth working relationship among the politicians, the army, and police that has evolved over time has created a situation where civilian authority is acknowledged. In a sense, the nonintervention of the military in the political process might be due to the lack of opportunity and perhaps also to its preoccupation with well-delineated tasks, but its propensity to act as a national political factor—like, for example, the Indonesian military—is clearly absent. Not only are the conditions for a military takeover absent—even the cataclysmic May 13, 1969, riots did not result in a military coup d'état—but important factors are also the nature of the intercommunal Directorate, the ability of the government to govern, and the army’s political culture, the military being regarded as subordinate to the civilian authorities.

36 Ibid.
38 Ibid.
The military, in Manning Nash’s terms, is an agent of the polity as viewed by both the military and the civilian population. According to him, “This is but the obverse side of the coin of political viability in Malaysia, based on a compact of parliamentary elections and representative institutions inherited from British models and nurtured after the Second World War.” Nash’s assertions would in this respect support the pattern of political authority asserted here and also explain the “anomalous” situation as perceived in political science and military sociology why no military takeover has occurred.

Similarly, the police, which is the law-and-order enforcement agency with intelligence functions and paramilitary tasks, enhances the capability and standing of the government, being committed to the rule of law and nonarbitrary coercion. Although there is powerful existing legislation such as the Internal Security Act, which allows for the detention of persons in the name of security and suspension from judicial review, in general it cannot be said that Malaysia is a police state. The role of the police not only contributes to political development but enhances the capabilities of the political system by extending law and order to the countryside. That is, the government’s writ exists because the function of penetration is performed nationwide.

The role of the police can also be seen as a countervailing weight to the army in terms of military-civilian relations. With a paramilitary force, which, at the end of 1983, comprised some twenty battalions (the army is said to have on paper thirty-six battalions), equipped to handle public-order tasks, army/police relations are important in understanding the control of the civilian authorities over the coercive instruments of state in the Malaysian political system.

The role of the police is equally important in the context of the “rule of law” in Malaysia. This notion is based on the notion of the primary importance of civilian authority. Although, as has been said, potentially repressive legislation exists in Malaysia, in general it cannot be said that authority has been abused. Nevertheless, the notion exists that behavior must be regulated to prevent excesses, extremism, and the breakdown of law and order. Legislation to this effect includes curbs on the rights of association, free press, assembly, and the right to assemble, but at the same time there is also a sense of the country as an “open” society. The power of the authorities to detain persons and impose harsh sentences merely because of unlawful possession of firearms is controversial, but it is well within the concept of the rule of law.

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40 Ibid., p. 146.
41 See also Zakaria Haji Ahmad, “The Police and Political Development in Malaysia,” in Zakaria, ed., Selected Readings.
43 For a discussion, see Zakaria Haji Ahmad, “The Bayonet and the Truncheon: Army/Police Relations in Malaysia,” Journal of Asian Affairs (Fall, 1978) vol. 3, p. 2.
for the rule of law must be coupled with additional sinews to the Malaysian govern-
ment given its past and present experiences with subversion, armed challenge to its
authority, and communist insurrection.\textsuperscript{44}

Finally, political authority has prevailed because of a working form of con-
stitutional monarchy (itself unique because the choice of the supreme ruler, selected
from nine ruling royal houses, is a democratic procedure) that has allowed for a
gradualism in political modernization and the symbolic representation of the Malays
as a central element of the Malaysian nation state. The effectiveness of the symbolic
representation of Malay political rights is difficult to measure, but according to at least
one school of thought it is the last bastion of Malay nationhood, indeed, the essence of
its political survival. The role of the sultans was challenged during the May 1969
elections, and their position became so politicized that amendments made to the
constitution in 1971 stipulate that it would be seditious to make an issue of this matter.

Although the role of the sultans and of the \textit{Yang di Pertuan Agong} (Supreme
Ruler) is merely symbolic, it may well have had a leavening effect on political
excesses of those with and without authority. The role of constitutional rulers may
have made the transition to postindependence politics more gradual; instead of the
replacement of old institutions with new ones, the need to work within the context of
authority relations between popularly elected people's representatives and those
whose positions were ascriptively derived gave a breathing space for newer political
processes to acquire legitimacy.

The pattern of constitutional monarchy devised in Malaysia thus provided an
opportunity for the politics of transition to be more meaningful and more legitimate.
Some did not agree or described such a pattern at best an anachronism, but in
perspective it seems valid to regard it as an important element of the political authority
pattern to be sustained, along with the other factors already enumerated.

\textbf{THE PATTERN CONSIDERED}

Thus, it is the conception of the authority pattern set forth acting in harmony that
allowed the functioning of the Malaysian political system. Although each element
may be seen on its own terms, it would be incomplete not to consider them all as
interrelated aspects of a pattern that has acquired roots and accounts for political
stability and leadership change. The basic form or the pattern can be expected to
remain, but some changes of modifications are likely in the future.

Since independence in 1957, six general elections have been held, and each time
the same ruling coalition has been given the mandate to govern. There has been
remarkable continuity in the parliamentary democracy of Malaysia, which in part is
attributable to the construct postulated by von Vorys. There has also been remarkable
continuity in the sense that no succession problem has arisen; the transition from one
leader to the next has been smooth. From the first prime minister to the third, changes

\textsuperscript{44} See Zakaria Haji Ahmad, “The Challenges to Malaysian National Security” in M. Taib Osman, ed.,
\textit{Malaysia Comes of Age} (in press).
did not result in drastic new policies or even a new style of administration. Even though the present prime minister seems to be embarking on some innovative and different policies, the transition from the third to the fourth prime minister was smooth. Indeed, leadership succession appears to follow an unwritten convention of the prime minister being the leader of the ruling coalition. This form of leadership change is expected to be maintained in the future.

Such continuity creates the conditions necessary for the working of the intercommunal Directorate. After the riots of 1969, however, the core of Malaysian politics has been the primacy of Malays in national life, with ramifications that affect social areas. Thus, rather than an accommodationist intercommunal bargaining trend, the trend is “hegemonistic” with accommodationist elements. For the moment, such a mode seems operational and accepted by non-Malays and other groups, but if dissatisfactions reach a critical point, then the Malaysian ethnic cauldron may boil over with disastrous consequences.

No hard data are available, but many leaders and intellectuals assert that racial polarization has increased. The political hegemony of the Malays through UMNO may be undeniable, but both Malays and non-Malays appear to reject the notion of a racial monopoly. One issue that has become prominent in this regard is that of the National Cultural Policy: the question of a balance between Malays and non-Malays. There are, of course, voices of communal chauvinism in the debate, but it is more likely that the issue will be resolved through compromises achieved by moderate elites. As Nash argues: “The Barisan formula of Malay privileges, economic development, and Islamic culture (not an Islamic state or polity) seems to have firmly enlisted the different communal groups, with an acceptance of Malay predominance in political life. The politics of compromise, the road of moderation, and the commitment to parliamentary democracy appear firmly entrenched institutionally and based on a wide social consensus.”

As for the intercommunal Directorate, it is workable if the intercommunal struggle is mutually resolvable, but it remains only a fragile political arrangement. Nonetheless, the continued basis of the Directorate is a function of the commitment of the political elites, which permits the political structure derived from Western political ideals to operate.

Because of the government’s success at the polls, it has concluded that it has the mandate of the people for any act and piece of legislation. Parliamentary democracy may be a luxury most Third World countries can ill afford, but in Malaysia it is practicable because the ruling government has always obtained a majority. In this manner not only can diverse constituencies be influenced by the concept of majority rule, but the laws of the country (including constitutional amendments) seem assured of passage. It is difficult to say whether a system permitting such an “easy” working of parliamentary democracy is an aberration, but in the Malaysian case, that system connotes stability in politics.

Power at the polls obtained through the Barisan Nasional (BN) coalition underwrites not only an intercommunal alliance but an “interlocking” of interests between the component political parties. There is as much a racial demand as there is a need for racial self-interest within this coalition, and the drama is acted out through the BN Supreme Council and eventually the intercommunal Directorate. Some have argued that the primacy of UMNO within the Barisan raises other issues, specifically (1) the divisions apparent through socioeconomic progress, creating intra-Malay struggles, and (2) the role of Islam, which has been given an increasing emphasis. These issues and their future ramifications can only be conjectured, however, though it is safe to say that they are resolvable for quite a while yet. As regards the “absorption of Islamic values in society,” this policy concerns more the introduction of those values having a “universal” nature; the government rejects radical concepts such as the introduction of an Islamic republic on the Iranian model under Khomeini.

If the intercommunal Directorate means that politics takes place in Malaysia, it does not warrant a rejection of the Esman “administrative state” construct. The public bureaucracy is well established and capable. Because of its inherited traits, however, the Malaysian public service seems less ready to meet the new challenges of industrial development and policy. Bureaucracies create their own demonics rather than dynamics. The Malaysian bureaucratic machine is not a law-and-order and custodial agency; but it is inept and not ready for participation in the business and investment activities required under the New Economic Policy. Its institutionalized basis, however, has furnished a capability for governmental performance as well as political stability. If the NEP fails (it is more likely to be extended beyond its 1990 deadline than fail), it will be as much a shortcoming of the political elites as it is of the bureaucracy. Indeed, there is even a notion that “prime ministers may come and go, but the civil service goes on forever.” Because the elite PTD is Malay-dominated, however, it is more likely not to allow the NEP or other such programs to fail.

Strong political control at the center has shown the relentless pursuit of power in overcoming challenges from the peripheries, and this will probably be sustained. Yet Sabah and Sarawak, the two states physically separate from the remainder of the country, are less likely to secede than, for example, Bangladesh before it seceded from Pakistan. There is an elite sense at both the center and periphery that their fortunes and future are best tied to the concept of a united Malaysian nation. True, there are feelings of alienation in the two states, and the federal government has stationed strong forces in Sabah and Sarawak. But a mitigating factor is a sense of political autonomy in terms of states’ rights. As for the states in the peninsula, the process of centralization has been complete enough that it is unthinkable, even for the two northeastern states of Kelantan and Trengganu (which have been previous opposition strongholds) to break away.

In the last four months of 1983, the issue of the role of constitutional monarchy arose after a government proposal was approved in parliament (in the form of constitutional amendments) to allow for legislation to become law automatically without royal assent after a stated period and for the power to declare an emergency to be transferred from the king to the prime minister. There was much debate and
controversy, but the matter was resolved through a series of compromises. The latter amendment was dropped and the former modified to allow the king to pass back to parliament for further consideration any legislation to which he did not give assent. In the course of time, the operation of constitutional monarchy may have allowed for some semblance of political power in the monarchy because royal assent was required for all legislation. However, in some quarters there was a misreading of the political role of the elected royalty because such a role was not recognized in constitutional law. There is a role for constitutional monarchy in terms of Malay nationhood in Malaysia; but it is only symbolic, and the power of the king is fictitious. Whether the role of royalty will now be eroded is not clear, but if that occurs, it may mean that it will be less valid as an element explaining the basis of political authority in the years ahead.

Finally, we must assess the notion of the rule of law and civilian authority over the coercive instruments of state. As we have indicated, an attitude of subservience to civilian elites and the political leaders prevails in the army and police, although they cannot be expected to depart from their professional missions. Such a situation supports Malaysian political stability and can be expected to continue. At the same time, civilian control is exercised in several ways over the coercive instruments of state—for example, the ministries in charge of the army and the police have always been under the portfolios of the prime minister or the most senior ministers. In terms of political stability, then, civilian control over coercive instruments has been given close attention, which is a contributing factor for continued civilian politics and non-intervention of the military.

POSSIBLE TRENDS

In the light of the modern Malaysian political experience it is possible to posit that change has been evolutionary and transition between important political stages has been orderly and peaceful. As has been discussed, the changeover between different leaders has been smooth. The transition from colonial status to independence was also tranquil and the process seemingly was slowed deliberately to allow for a gradual pace. This is most evident in the process of Malay(s)i)anization of the bureaucracy or the replacement of British expatriate officers with indigenous persons. Indeed, as late as 1966–67 British nationals occupied top positions in the police and armed forces. The formation of Malaysia in 1963 from its constituent parts of the federation of Malaya, Sabah (North Borneo), Sarawak, and Singapore was also achieved smoothly, and when Singapore left the federation, that too was accomplished peacefully.

The government led by Dr. Mahathir Mohamed, however, which came to power in 1981, seems to be pushing for changes that may alter the basis of the Malaysian polity. The government of Dr. Mahathir and his deputy, Datuk Musa Hitam, dubbed the “2-M administration,” operates under the slogan of “Clean, Efficient, and Trustworthy.” The 2-M government has attempted to eliminate waste, promote efficiency, and weed out corruption, especially in the public and public corporate sectors.

It is probably premature to conclude that the basis of the governmental pattern will be altered by the 2-M government. In 1983–84, the reshuffle of the cabinet and the appointment of ministers and state chief ministers reflected the style of the 2-M government, emphasizing a more “technocratic” approach to problems and the implementation of public policy. In spite of younger and more “professional” types in the leadership ranks, however, it seems certain that the operational code of the intercommunal Directorate will be maintained.

But changes in the role of the bureaucracy can be expected. Although the effort at administrative reform is not new, for the first time in the history of relations between government and the public service Dr. Mahathir has introduced his own procedures, the “office manual” and “action files.” One of his first actions on becoming prime minister was the “clock in” method so that public servants would come to work at the appointed time. It is not certain whether such innovations will diminish the exalted status of the bureaucracy, but the emphasis on efficiency is a hallmark of the 2-M government.

The bureaucracy is hurt that it can no longer enjoy the “close” relationship it had with previous governments. The intent and scope of change desired by the Mahathir government is vast and formidable. There seems to be enough political will but it will be a long and complex haul.

Further, the 2-M government is committed to the goal of making Malaysia an industrial country, an objective that is more consciously sought than in previous governments. The most explicit project of this goal is the “made-in-Malaysia” car, which is expected to roll off the assembly lines in 1985. Other heavy industry projects have been launched.

In line with the goal of industrialization, the 2-M government has also sought to introduce new ideas, specifically, the four concepts of “Look East” (mainly to Japan and South Korea), “privatization,” “Malaysia Incorporated,” and “Leadership by Example.” These ideas aim at better work ethics, diligence, and productivity. Although it is apparent that Dr. Mahathir does not propose that Malaysia become another Japan or South Korea, he does want the country to emulate the Japanese experience in emerging as a highly industrialized country. The four concepts have been criticized, however, and even been misunderstood in government circles, so much so that Dr. Mahathir wrote a memorandum to all heads of government departments, ministries, government agencies, and statutory bodies seeking to explain the four concepts.

For our purposes, it is not clear whether these concepts, which are societal in nature, will affect the political process and the governmental pattern we have described. The dominant party in the ruling coalition has been uneasy about the intent
and basis of the new ideas. Whether the new leadership will alter the basis of UMNO to achieve the enunciated goals can only be speculated upon at this time. At the beginning of 1984, however, the 2-M government indicated that it would tighten the UMNO organization through a series of measures, and the attempt will probably succeed. The strength and basis of UMNO may be more enduring than is sometimes assumed.

It is too facile to view the late 1983 impasse over the issue of royal assent as an indication that Dr. Mahathir’s legitimacy has suffered. That the issue was resolved by compromise demonstrated moderation on the part of the elites and the accepted need of a solution. Dr. Mahathir and succeeding elites may be anxious to achieve socioeconomic and political change, but the realities of Malaysia will probably act as a moderating influence. In short, the political system can be stable because its foundations rest on a broadly shared notion that it must survive.

CONCLUSIONS

The authority pattern that has evolved in the Malaysian experience was originally not one creatively designed to achieve stability and a gradual evolution. Rather, most characteristics of the political system were based on political institutions and values derived from the former colonial masters. Over time, however, the system developed in accordance with both indigenous circumstances under leaders who sought peaceful change and orderly government. Of course, the fact of an ongoing insurrection when the country gained independence necessitated a strong government practicing outwardly democratic forms. As Malaysia enters the last two decades of the twentieth century, the question is whether such forms can be preserved while goals of economic development and industrialization are pursued. Some recent economic evidence suggests that we can be optimistic.48

Malaysia’s circumstances as a multi-ethnic country, in which the pattern of governmental and political processes and the leaders must respond to ethnic demands, made the creation of an elitist and intercommunal authority framework necessary. In time, such a framework may appear to be “hegemonistic” and not merely accommodationist, as Malay political power rises. Nonetheless, the older framework remains. Other features, such as civilian control over the coercive instruments of state, a high degree of centralized political control, a Westminster form of parliamentary democracy, an extensive bureaucratic infrastructure, and a working constitutional monarchy have complemented the intercommunal formula. Stability has been possible because the same government is virtually assured of political power. As noted by Crouch, the parliamentary process is feasible because winning elections is a “foregone conclusion.”49 But the forms of parliamentary democracy, although only facsimiles, are functional and allow for system maintenance and elite turnover. Also, because of the

strength of the ruling coalition, politicking is kept to a minimum. Political stability may have been possible in Malaysia because the ruling elites, having no real challengers, have been able to sustain authority using the political institutions at hand. Moreover, the elites have gradually allowed these institutions to work more fully as confidence has been acquired.

It seems pertinent to ask whether the patterns of authority that have allowed for political evolution and stability in the past twenty-five years will endure for the remainder of the century. Will the emergence of new elites lead to new elite styles that alter accepted norms of political legitimacy? Will the push for industrialization create new groups with different political demands? Will security challenges in the fluid external environment existing since 1975 divert the attention of coercion mechanisms from hitherto domestic missions (a preoccupation that makes the army, at least, less inclined to intervene politically)\(^{50}\) to new concerns and transform them politically? For the moment, the answers to these questions are simply that heightened tensions and instability are not likely.

Malaysia's experiment in meeting the challenges of political modernity is conditioned by its multiethnic setting. Moreover, the country has a relatively small population but is blessed with abundant natural resources. It cannot depend solely on natural commodity production, its present source of economic strength, however, because such an economy is dependent on the vagaries of the international economy. But in switching to a more industrial economy, will it have to adopt stern political measures like South Korea to attain the goals its leaders seek?

Malaysia, alone among East Asian developing countries, has been able to achieve high growth rates in the 1970s and yet practice a working pattern of constitutional democracy. Moderation may be said to be characteristic of its past political process; we can be assured that some form of relatively open politics can coexist with the realities of global economic interdependence for Malaysia.

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11. Political Institutionalization in Thailand: Continuity and Change

Chai-Anan Samudavanija

The abrupt transplantation in 1932 of a Western democratic model to Thai society, in which political-economic forces had long been the basis of social relationship, presented great obstacles to the process of political institutionalization. The historic experiences of Europe and North America are different from those of the colonized states of Asia and Africa. At the time liberal democratic ideology and Western political models became accepted by the educated elites of these new states, economic forces were weak, unorganized, and subject to exogenous factors.

The development of capitalism, which marked the era of pluralist democracy in the Western world, had adverse effects on the new states, particularly those in which the military and civilian bureaucracy acted as the bastion of the "superstructure."

Explanations and expectations of developmental theorists—Marxists, neo-Marxists, and non-Marxists—aside, many common factors and experiences can be used as our conceptual compass. Modernization theorists are prone to be optimistic regarding the political future of developing societies, whereas Marxist and neo-Marxist gurus tend to be realistic and pessimistic about the role of the state vis-à-vis the future of the masses.

To understand the future of Thailand's development, stability, and security, the socioeconomic and political "givens" need discussion without a preimposed theoretical bias.

Present-day Thailand evolved from a long period of struggle for power, influence, and domination among small states inside and outside contemporary geographical boundaries. Throughout this period, religion, ideology, the political-administrative establishments, culture, subculture, languages, and communal and interpersonal relationship have continued without interruption; the changes that occurred took place within these systems and were internally designed and directed; at times, when exogenous forces became too strong, selective and adaptive changes were made by the ruling elites in coping with such forces.
It is possible to delineate the "givens" that provide for the context in which continuity and change are the Siamese twins. As a country that has never been colonized, Thailand is changing in a spiral manner—within a turning and widening gyre rather than linearly. The entrenched military bureaucracy has not been successfully challenged. Capital in modern Thailand is in the hands of the Chinese bourgeoisie and the so-called bureaucratic capitalists, but Thailand is not an entrenched neopatrimonial mercantilist state. Bureaucratic capitalism is challenged because forces emerging from within the country and outside it infiltrate the military-bureaucratic complex. Patrimonial bureaucratic authority is eroding not because of class struggles but simply because class interests and class identification are not as clearcut as the Marxists claim.

I propose to offer some prescriptive remarks on continuity and change in Thai society with particular reference to the process of political institutionalization. I shall discuss some fundamental issues current in contemporary Thai politics. These six interrelated issues are: the emergence of a new bureaucratic state and its repercussions; the lack of consensus about the rules of the game; the instability of governments—and continuity within instability; military coups as an institution; the discontinuity of elected parliaments and political parties; and the monarchy as a safety-valve institution.

THE EMERGENCE OF A NEW BUREAUCRATIC STATE AND ITS REPERCUSSIONS

In June 1932, a coup d'etat was carried out by a Bangkok-based military and civilian group calling itself the People's Party. This group had twenty-three participants from the army, fourteen from the navy, and twenty-four from the civilian bureaucracy. The group executed the coup without mass support and was essentially a counterelite against the princes and senior bureaucratic elites that ruled Siam under the absolute monarchy.

The military-led "revolution" ended the absolute monarchy and replaced it with a new praetorian elite of army generals and their bureaucratic allies. Of the sixty-one coup members, thirty-five had held positions in the cabinet at various times and all of them had had official positions before their rise to power.

Political institutions in Thailand are new—creations of bureaucratic elites who introduced democratic rule to the Thai people. In the beginning, a constitutional government was needed to curb the power and influence of the ancien regime. The first constitution barred princes from running in the elections and did not allow the formation of political parties. To reduce the economic base of the royal family, the government passed a law transferring the Royal Crown properties to the treasury.

From 1932 to 1945, the only political institution in Thailand was the parliament. Political parties were formed in 1946 and recognized as legal entities in 1955. The constitution of 1932, which lasted until 1946, provided for a single assembly composed of two categories of members—half elected and half appointed. What was
created, therefore, was not democratic political institutions but political roles for the bureaucratic elites. The parliament and the legislative process thus became an extended arm and additional function of the bureaucracy.

The strength of any political institution depends on its legitimacy. In Thailand, which has no colonial past and therefore no nationalist movement like other Southeast Asian countries, political groups outside the bureaucracy found it difficult to claim political legitimacy. The bureaucracy, especially the armed forces, by contrast, could claim that they had been able to maintain national independence and stability for several centuries. The military men of Thailand often claim that politicians were not only latecomers but had virtually no part in nation building. During the period of transition from the absolute monarchy to the constitutional period of the 1930s, the only group that could make such a claim were the princes and the old bureaucratic elites, whose political and economic bases were temporarily shattered by the revolution and whose potential movements were prevented by constitutional measures.

Although the new military-bureaucratic elites formed the only organized political group in society, they were not united. Soon after June 1932 a young military faction within the People’s Party emerged and by 1938 was able to eliminate the senior members. From 1938 to 1948, the military under the leadership of Luang Phibul Songkram succeeded in minimizing the power and influence of their civilian counterparts in the People’s Party.

The revolution of June 1932 marked the beginning of a new era. A new bureaucratic middle class arose that rapidly transformed itself into an entrepreneurial bureaucratic elite. Unlike Britain and Western Europe, in which the industrial revolution and mercantilism were major factors contributing to class formation, Thailand’s potential emergent force has been the Chinese merchant community, whose economic power was curbed by the old regime and whose political power was blocked by the policies of the bureaucratic elite.

Government policies after the establishment of the new regime in 1932 were consistent with those of the old regime. During Phibul’s regimes (1938–1942 and 1948–1957), government policies toward the Chinese were even more fascist and led to a partnership between the bureaucratic elites and the Chinese capitalists. The new military group evolved into a new bureaucratic capitalist class through monopolizing political power and using it to channel the economic wealth of the Chinese merchants into their groups.

Phibul’s cabinets from 1938 to 1942 marked the high point of army rule. During this period, there were seven cabinets with a yearly average composition of 51 percent military men. Also in this period, the yearly average percentage of military expenditure to total national spending reached 33 percent compared with 26 percent during 1933–1937.¹

Before World War II, the Phibul government was mainly controlled by members of the 1932 junior clique that included Luang Praditmanudham (also known as Pridi Panomyong), a leading civilian leader who was the chief ideologist of the 1932 coup group. World War II brought about a major conflict between Phibul and Pridi, the former identifying himself with the Japanese and Axis, the latter with the Allied powers. When Thailand declared war against the Allies, Pridi formed an underground movement against the Japanese and the Axis. The defeat of the Japanese and the Axis resulted in the collapse of Phibul’s military government. The civilian clique of the 1932 group under the leadership of Pridi came to power, but only for a brief period (1946–1947). Charges of corruption (rampant at the rank-and-file level of the administration), economic hardships as a result of the war, and the mysterious death of King Anan brought about an end to Pridi’s political rule when a group of army officers staged a coup in November 1947.

The coup marked the emergence of a younger group of army officers, more traditionalist than the 1932 coup promoters. They had not had the same degree of exposure to Western education and culture and thus were less interested in the parliamentary process. The leader of the coup was Phin Choonhavan, a retired army general; it was successful because of the support of the young military commander of the First Regiment of the army’s powerful First Division, Colonel Sarit Thanarat. Together with Sarit, a group of young army commanders of battalions in the capital city participated in the coup. These included Lieutenant Colonel Praphat Char-usathien, commander of the First Battalion of the First Regiment, Lieutenant Colonel Thanom Kittikachorn of the Royal Military Academy, Lieutenant Colonel Prasert Ruchirawongs, commander of the Second Antiaircraft Artillery Battalion, Major Pramarn Adireksan of the Army Transportation Department, Captain Prachuab Suntharangkura of the Armored Cavalry Battalion, and Captain Chartchai Choonhavmn, troop commander of the First Cavalry Battalion. Subsequently these young officers rose to prominent military and political positions.

In November 1951, the same group of officers who organized the 1947 coup once again intervened. The 1951 coup was an attempt by the 1947 group to consolidate their power through the suspension of parliament and abrogation of the 1949 constitution, which prohibited military officers from taking active political roles in the parliament.

They reinstated the 1932 constitution, which had provided for a unicameral legislature with two categories of members—half elected and half appointed. Ninety-one, or 74 percent of the total 123 appointed in the 1951 parliament, were military members, of whom sixty-two were army officers; thirty-four of these were of middle rank (major to colonel).

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2 Ibid., p. 103.
3 The coup was against the Thamrong government. Thamrong was a navy officer, a member of the 1932 coup group and Pridi’s friend and follower. For details, see Thak Chaleomtiarana, *Thailand: The Politics of Despotic Paternalism* (Bangkok: Social Science Association of Thailand, 1979), pp. 14–36.
4 The 1946 constitution, like the 1974 constitution, prohibited government officials from becoming members of the appointed Senate in the bicameral legislature.
Following this event, the leading members of the 1947 coup were rapidly promoted to the ranks of lieutenant general and major general, and they were given cabinet posts commensurate with their military positions. Sarit, for example, rose from lieutenant colonel in 1947 to lieutenant general in 1950 and was given the command of the powerful First Army Region. In 1951 he was appointed deputy minister of defense.

The close relationship of the three leaders of the 1947 and 1951 coups (Sarit, Thanom, and Praphat) is worth noting. Their military positions held from 1947 to 1957 provided their subsequent strong political power base. In 1947, Sarit was commander of the First Regiment of the First Division and provided the 1947 group with the troops used in the coup. Under him was Lieutenant Colonel Praphat as commander of the First Battalion. Thanom was at the Military Academy and was responsible for leading the cadets to participate in the coup. In 1948, Sarit became commander of the First Division, and Thanom was appointed commander of the Eleventh Regiment in the First Army Division under Sarit's command. In 1950, Sarit was promoted to lieutenant general and became commanding general of the First Army Region; Thanom was appointed commander of the First Division. In 1951, when Sarit became deputy minister of defense, Praphat was given control of Sarit's former command, the First Regiment. In 1952, when Sarit was appointed deputy commander-in-chief and in 1954 replaced Marshal Phin as commander-in-chief of the army, Thanom assumed command of the First Division and the First Army Region succeeding Sarit. In 1957, when Sarit became minister of defense—a post that usually includes the position of commander-in-chief of the army—Thanom was promoted deputy commander-in-chief and Praphat was given the position of commander of the First Army Region and deputy minister of the interior.

Following their consolidation of power in the 1951 "silent coup," the 1947 coup members built up their economic power base by establishing their own business firms, assuming control of state enterprises and semigovernment companies, and obtaining free shares from private firms mainly owned by Chinese merchants. This active involvement in business ventures resulted in the division of the 1947 group into two competing cliques, popularly known as the Rajakru and the Sisao Deves cliques. Between 1948 and 1957, the former clique controlled ten companies in the banking and financial sector, fifteen in the industrial sector, and seven in the commercial sector. The Sisao Deves clique owned twelve companies in the banking and financial sector, fifteen in the industrial sector, and ten in the commercial sector.

Thus from 1947 to 1957 the young professional army officers corps was quickly transformed into political-economic interest groups; they were "commercial soldiers" whose companies gained privileges in trading as agents or compradores of govern-
ment organizations. This phenomenon reflects the basic characteristic of Thai political life in the late 1940s and throughout the 1950s.

This military-political and commercial interlocking relationship continued after Sarit’s death in December 1963. In 1969 General Krit Sivara, General Prapht Charusathien, and Police General Prasert Ruchirawongs were on the boards of fifty, forty-four, and thirty-three firms, respectively. With the death of Sarit as the godfather of the Sisao Deves clan, Prapht emerged as the new “don.” The extensive business involvement of the Prapht clan is seen in the fact that four other persons associated with him were board members of several firms: Khun Thayan Ranron, his chief civilian assistant (31); Colonel Som Kartaphan, his military aid (27); Than Phuying Sawai, Prapht’s wife (19); and Colonel Narong, his son-in-law (41).

Membership on these boards, and access to the economic resources of these companies, represents the primary mechanism for military control. The economic resources available to the elite are allocated to their supporters and clique members in a downward flow. These funds build the capabilities for further political control and influence, which in turn guarantee access to more financial resources.

Throughout the late 1940s to the 1960s the Thai armed forces, especially the army, were dividing into several political and economic interest groups each composed of senior army generals led by Thanom-Prapht, Prasert, and Krit, all of whom were leading members of the 1947 coup and had been able to maintain their power for almost three decades. In 1957, when Sarit staged his coup against Field Marshal Phibul, and following a short interlude of the Pote Sarasin caretaker government, Thanom became prime minister and minister of defense, and Sarit retained the position of commander-in-chief of the army. During this short period (September 1957—October 1958), political parties and parliament were given another chance under the close watch of the 1957 group. The group soon became disillusioned with party politics, however, and in October 1958, the group moved in again, with Sarit as the prime minister replacing Thanom. To consolidate the political power of his group (Sarit-Thanom-Prapht), Sarit abrogated the constitution, abolished political parties, arrested politicians, intellectuals, and journalists, and ruled the country by martial law and military courts. A constituent assembly was created to replace the elected parliament, its chief assignment being to draft a new constitution, which took eleven years to be completed. In this assembly, young military officers—the colonels of the late 1950s such as Prem Tinsulanond and Prasert Thamsiri—were brought in as members.

After Sarit’s death in 1963, Thanom became commander-in-chief of the army and prime minister. In 1964, he relinquished his position in favor of Prapht, who held the post of commander-in-chief of the army for nine years until October 1, 1973. Hence, for sixteen years, from September 1957 to October 1973, Thailand was ruled

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by the military officers who rose to power first through their participation in the 1947
coup and later in Sarit’s coup. In the early 1970s, three military men in uneasy alliance
were at the pinnacle of the military group: Field Marshal Thanom Kittikachorn, Field
Marshal Praphat Charusathien, and General Krit Sivara. In 1957, all three had been
among the nine members of the overall group’s inner core. Each had risen to power
through the classic route: commander of the First Army, garrisoned in Bangkok.11

LACK OF CONSENSUS ON THE RULES OF THE GAME

The lack of consensus about the rules of the game is reflected in the number of
constitutions Thailand has had from 1932 to 1982: thirteen constitutions and seven
constitutional amendments in fifty years. The most important issue that has caused
constitutional changes is the relationship between the legislative and executive pow-
ers. Constitutional arrangements have presented three main patterns. One is the
democratic pattern, which takes as its model the British parliamentary system, in
which the elected legislature and political parties have active, dominant roles in the
political process; in such a system, the prime minister must come from a major
political party and is an elected member of parliament; an upper house may be
maintained, but the number of its members is relatively small and its power minimal.
In this model military leaders have no opportunity to become prime ministers, and
bureaucrats are not allowed to take political positions. The second pattern is
semidemocratic and favors a strong executive vis-à-vis the legislative branch; the
prime minister does not have to be an elected member of parliament, the upper house is
composed mostly of military and civilian bureaucrats with powers more or less equal
to those of the lower house, and the total number of senators is almost equal to the
number of the elected representatives. The third pattern is undemocratic and has no
elected parliament; legislature is maintained, but its members are appointed and act as
a rubberstamp on executive decisions; in this system, political parties are not allowed
to function, hence no elections are held.

Out of thirteen constitutions, only three can be classified as democratic, whereas
six are semidemocratic, and four are nondemocratic. Democratic constitutions were in
effect for only six years and two months; the semidemocratic and undemocratic
constitutions were in effect for twenty-nine years and five months and thirteen years
and four months, respectively. In fifty years there were only six years in which
political institutions could operate within democratic rules.

The democratic model is professed to be regarded by the military and bureau-
cratic elites as the ideal type and an end to be achieved, whereas the undemocratic and
semidemocratic models are said to be temporary arrangements. But after each coup
there has been a tendency to “freeze politics” by adopting either the undemocratic or
semidemocratic model with a promise that when the situation becomes normal the

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11 Thanom was commander of the First Army Division from 1950–1952, Praphat from 1952–1957, and
democratic model will be adopted. This has created problems because the frequency of coups has meant that temporary arrangements have become institutionalized. When the time of transition to a more democratic rule seems ripe, there has always been resistance by the bureaucratic elites to give up political power.

Periodic changes in constitutions concerning legislative-executive relationships affect the development of political institutions in several ways. Under an undemocratic constitution, participant political activities are prohibited. Political parties have to cease their functions because there are no elections, and political gatherings are not allowed. From 1958 to 1968, Thailand was ruled by martial law and the Constituent Assembly took almost eleven years to finish drafting the 1968 constitution. Discontinuity in the participant political process has an adverse affect on the attempt of parties to build their organizations. It also makes it impossible for the politically minded to become career politicians. Under the semidemocratic system, although elections are held and parliaments convened, elected members of parliament cannot fully perform their duties because the constitution gives equal powers to appointed members. In the past fifty years there have been sixteen prime ministers, but only three were elected members of parliament; the others came from the appointed houses.

Constitutional changes in Thailand have usually occurred because of coups. Of the thirteen constitutions, eight were promulgated by coup groups. After the 1947 coup it became customary for every coup group to abolish the existing constitution and replace it with a new one. It also became a tradition to put the blame for political instability on the constitution.

In the past, criticisms of constitutions were usually made after coups d'etat, but recently constitutional arrangements have become a controversial subject when military leaders seek to change its provisions. In January 1983, General Arthit Kamlangek—the army commander-in-chief—called upon political parties to amend the constitution to provide for government stability. The general expressed his disagreement with the voting system, which required voting for the whole slate of a single party in a provincewide constituency. His reason was that the rural people prefer voting for personalities to voting for parties.12

This voting system was conceived by the appointed 1977 National Assembly, which was dominated by the military. They reasoned that this system would create a stable government because voting for parties by the whole slate would promote a strong party government. An abrupt change in rationale, reflecting the changing power relationship within the military, occurred in October 1982 when General Arthit became commander-in-chief of the army. It was alleged that he aspired to become prime minister, but the constitution barred officials from taking political positions. To change this clause of the constitution, he and his followers used the controversial issue of the voting system and added riders concerning the powers of the senators and the issue concerning the political status of government officials.13

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12 The Bangkok Post, January 11, 1983, p. 3.
13 Provisional clauses of the 1978 constitution allowing senators to have equal powers with the elected representatives and government officials to hold political office concurrently with official positions ended in April 1983.
These attempts to amend the constitution aimed at modifying the rules of the game so as to maintain the status quo of the military leaders in politics. The move, made six months before the general election, was seen as a threat to all political parties since it was indicated that if no amendment was passed, the military would step in after the elections.

This conflict concerning the constitution partly confirms Fred W. Rigg's observation that when important shifts in the personnel of the Thai ruling circle took place, the previous constitution was suspended to permit the promulgation of new rules more compatible with the interests and inclinations of the winning group. As Riggs pointed out, constitutionalism was designed not so much to constrain the rulers as to facilitate their rule. The constitutions, therefore, did not prescribe effective norms of political behavior but were used to cast a cloak of legitimacy over the operations of succeeding rulers and to set the stage for a play to be enacted by the extrabureaucratic performers—parliaments, political parties, and electors.\(^{14}\)

In the 1980s, however, extrabureaucratic forces are much stronger and better organized than in the past three decades. The private sector and the middle class, especially the professionals, have grown larger because of developmental policies pursued by Sarit and successive governments. Political events between 1979 and 1983 (the "Prem period") have been more complex than in earlier periods, as evidenced by the April 1, 1981, coup episode and subsequent factional fights between various military academy classes.

Conventional coups are not easy exercises anymore because a single army leader or group is unable to consolidate support both from inside and outside the military establishment. Although it is difficult to assess public sentiments and behavior for regime support, it is clear that groups inside and outside the armed forces are disenchanted with authoritarian regimes. A military prime minister and his supporters can no longer control the extrabureaucratic forces as effectively as before because intrabureaucratic strife constrains their actions.

Although constitutionalism has always been a major tool to facilitate military-bureaucratic rule in Thailand, it is now insufficient for this purpose because more socioeconomic changes have taken place and many of the issues have been highly politicized. A new search for legitimacy has been required. Conflicts over constitutional amendments in 1983 show that the military has found it difficult to use force to do away with the constitution. In this sense, constitutionalism has become institutionalized and the military has had to develop new strategies and tactics in an effort to turn constitutional clauses to facilitate their rule.

THE INSTABILITY OF GOVERNMENTS—AND CONTINUITY WITHIN INSTABILITY

There have been two types of governments in Thailand—military or military-dominated and civilian. Military or military-dominated governments were normally

created by coups d'etat or the continuation of governments by leading military members of coup groups. This type of government was led by military men who held the position of premier concurrently with the position of commander-in-chief of the army. Although military men in the cabinets have been fewer than their civilian counterparts, important portfolios have been given to men in uniform. Civilian governments were formed by parties that had a majority of seats in the House of Representatives or by a coalition of political parties.

Out of the forty-two cabinets during 1932–1982, twenty-three can be classified as military governments, five as military-dominated governments, and fourteen as civilian governments. The civilian governments were the most unstable and most of them were overthrown by coups d'etat.

In fifty years, military and military-dominated governments were in power for forty-four years, civilian governments for only six years. Of the fourteen civilian governments, only one lasted more than a year; the rest averaged four and a half months.

Governments of military and military-dominated regimes were unstable because of conflicts among factions in the army. The postwar military regime of Field Marshal Phibul, for example, was challenged by three attempted coups in 1948, 1949, and 1951. The military ruling group was divided into three principal factions, each of which had economic interests of its own. The first was composed of the remnants of the People's Party (which overthrew the absolute monarchy in 1932), with Phibul as their leader; the second consisted of military and police officers under Field Marshal Phin Choonhavan and Police General Phao Sriyanond. These two groups later merged into one under the collective leadership of Phibul, Phin, and Phao. The third was a group of young army officers led by Marshal Sirit, who rose rapidly in military and political circles after the 1947 coup; it overthrew the civilian government of Luang Thamrong. As the power and influence of Sarit grew stronger, Phibul realized that he could no longer use military force to support his leadership and sought a new source of political support through democratic means by setting up a political party. His party won a majority in the National Assembly in the 1957 elections, but popular discontent with frauds in the Bangkok election led to mass demonstrations. Sarit, who was appointed “city peacekeeper,” emerged as a popular leader when he did not resort to force in coping with the demonstrations. The protests widened the rift between Phao and Sarit, and on September 26, 1957, Sarit led the army to topple Phibul’s regime. Apparently, the main motivation behind the coup was to crush General Phao and his clique, though the coup group announced that corruption among government officials and politicians and a communist threat to national security were the reasons. Sarit’s coup in 1957 thus ended a decade of Phibul’s military government and established a new military regime. It lasted until 1973, when the student uprising brought down the Thanom-Praphat regime, which was the continuation of Sarit’s rule. The decisive factor causing the demise of Thanom-Praphat’s clique, however, was the decision of General Krit Sivara, the commander-in-chief of the army, to support the student demonstration.
The military governments in Thailand have operated under two types of political process. The first has been semidemocratic rule in which the military has maintained its representatives in the National Assembly in order to curb the powers of the elected members of parliament. Under this arrangement, political opposition to the military governments exercised through the legislative process (such as a vote of no confidence, control over government budgets, and parliamentary debates) could cause trouble to the government as evidenced by the Democratic Party opposition to Phibul during 1948–1957 and again to Thanom in the 1969–1971 period. The second type was the undemocratic pattern, in which the executive branch had absolute power since there was no election, no political parties, hence no government opposition. Between these two patterns, the latter provided more stability if the ruling military elites were united. Changes in governments thus occurred either when the opposition party was able to discredit the government and gained more popular support, or when conflicts arose within the ruling elites. Under the semidemocratic rule, factions within the military were able to use the elected members of parliament to advance their interests and discredit the other factions. This happened in 1969–1971, when the military government set up a political party that won a majority in the 1969 election. But factions within the government party enabled the opposition parties to weaken the administration, and led to the 1971 coup.

After the Sarit period and the advent of the National Economic Development Plan in 1965, government stability became the norm. To implement the plan effectively, it was argued, political stability had to be maintained, which meant that democratization had a lower priority than economic development. Hence there has been a trend to find ways to strengthen the position of the executive branch vis-à-vis that of the legislature, the most common method of which has been the adoption of the semidemocratic model.

Power in Thailand is concentrated today in the cabinet and bureaucracy rather than in extrabureaucratic institutions. In contrast to Western parliamentary democracy, in which parliaments, parties, and pressure groups form the nuclei of the political system, elections in Thailand only serve to legitimize the rule of bureaucratic elites rather than to produce a political change. The bureaucratic elites are controlling both the rules of the game and other political resources, which enable them to dominate the political system. As Riggs points out, the outcome of political competition is determined by control of the military, not appeals to voters or parliament. Since the cabinet is the center of power, the domination of the bureaucratic elites in politics can be seen in their numbers in the cabinets.

Civil servants and military officers have also dominated the legislature through their representation in the appointed Senate, which, most of the time, has had equal powers with the elected House of Representatives. The high proportion of appointed

15 On this point, see Chai-Anan Samudavanija, The Thai Young Turks (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1982).
16 Riggs, Thailand, p. 213.
members (three-fourths in the National Assembly under the 1978 constitution) enables the executive branch to use the senators to balance the power of the elected members of the Assembly. In addition, some provisions and procedures of the constitution and parliamentary rules also constrain the roles of the members of parliament. For example, under the 1978 constitution members of parliament cannot freely propose legislative bills unless a Committee on Legislative Bills endorses the bills. This committee is composed of seventeen members—three are appointed by the Cabinet, six come from the Senate, and eight are appointed by the House of Representatives. The government, therefore, has nine members on that committee while the MPs have eight representatives, and consequently it can effectively block legislative bills coming from the elected House.

Control of the Senate over the House of Representatives is exercised through the requirement in the constitution that the following matters are considered by joint sessions: the budget bill, motion of a no-confidence vote, and legislative bills concerning national security and the economy.

Under the same constitution, the president of the Senate is the president of the National Assembly, and since the agenda of the meetings is prepared by the president of the National Assembly, the Cabinet can also control the agenda of Assembly meetings.

The House of Representatives in Thailand is maintained as a symbol of democracy rather than as a meaningful policy-making institution. In the 1969 parliament, 139 legislative bills were proposed by MPs but only four were passed, compared with the 73 bills proposed by the Cabinet of which 53 were enacted. Almost all bills proposed by the Cabinet that became laws were routine administration matters rather than related to social or economic concerns. Bills proposed by members of parliament concerning land reform, land rent control, local government reform, and anticorruption measures were voted down in the joint sessions. The Senate, therefore, is an instrument of control—the legislative arm of the bureaucracy extended to the political process. In the 1982 Senate, all undersecretaries of state were senators, and commanders of strategically important units were given the same position.

THE MILITARY COUP AS AN INSTITUTION

Military coups in Thailand are means by which political leaders alternate in power. It is not necessary that political, social, or economic crises provide conditions for military intervention, although they can facilitate the intervention, particularly when the civilian government's supporters are strong and active.

Thailand ranks high in military-coup frequency among the states in the world: From 1932–1982 there have been fifteen military interventions, nine of which were

17 Article 204 (5); Article 203 (1), (2), and (3).
successful. The more frequent military interventions are, the less commitment the military displays for democratic institutions. This can be observed by the fact that in all five coups during 1932–1958 the coup groups changed only the governments in power but did not abolish the constitution. Elections were held and political parties were allowed to function although their roles in parliament were limited by the appointed members of the Assembly. After 1958, however, military interventions usually resulted in the abolition of the constitutions and the “freezing” of participant political activities. In twenty years (1958–1978) there were seven constitutions, only one of which can be classified as democratic (1974); the rest gave vast powers to the executive branch dominated by bureaucratic elites.

While democratic political institutions suffered setbacks and discontinuity, the military strengthened its organizations and expanded its roles in several areas. During 1976–1982, the defense budget averaged about 20 percent of the total government expenditure. The military has also been granted a considerable secret fund each year that can be used for intelligence operations, but has also been widely used for internal security and political purposes. Several civic action programs, political education projects, and rightist movements have been financed from this fund.

Most media, particularly radio and television, are controlled by the military, which has reinforced its political potency. The army has 210 radio stations over the country, 87 of which are situated in the First Army Region, and it maintains two television stations. The control over radio and television serves two purposes. First, an enormous amount of income can be earned from renting radio and television time for commercial advertisements (the rate for advertisement on television as of January 1984 = U.S. $400 per 15 seconds). This revenue is kept outside the government revenue and is used for “welfare fund” purposes. Second, the military can use radio and television programs for psychological warfare or for mobilizing mass movements in times of political crises. For instance, the Armoured School Radio played an active role during 1975–1976 in mobilizing rightists against student demonstrators, which eventually led to the coup of October 6, 1976.

In the past five decades, military interventions in the political process have taken only one form—the coup d'état. But recently the military has been more sophisticated in developing a national strategy that helped expand its legitimate role in the political system. In 1980 the government issued a prime minister’s order (No. 66/2523), known as the order to defeat the Communist Party of Thailand (CPT). The order suggested that the strategy to defeat the CPT required the national armed forces cooperating with the bureaucracy. It was announced that to destroy the CPT it was necessary to establish a true democratic regime. Individual rights and liberty were to be guaranteed and democratic groups encouraged to actively participate in politics. The national army’s role in implementing this order was, therefore, not only to suppress the CPT but also to act as a tool to solve political and socioeconomic problems.

Since 1980 the military has taken another step to reidentifying its role in society. The open criticism of political parties reflected the attitudes of army leaders on the
roles of participant political institutions. In fact, the military leaders are raising some important questions, for example, the legitimate role of political parties: Do they really represent the people? And to what extent do parties successfully cope with national problems?

In mid-January 1983, Major General Pichit Kullavanich, First Army Division commander, said on television that the new electoral system would result in bringing only “capitalists” into parliament, and if there was no change in the constitution, the military would “exercise” (step in) to protect the security of the nation and the interests of the people. He pointed out that the military had been an important force in society for 700 years and had to be given a proper role in politics.

It seems that the military wants government stability and realizes that military intervention by coup d’etat presents a bad image. The new military leaders, therefore, have resorted to a softer method: they merely threatened to use force instead of carrying out a coup.

In a country where participant political institutions are weak, the military can effectively rally public support by pointing to the instability of government and the ineffective administration of state affairs by party politics. In militarist thinking, politics and government administration are inseparable, hence government officials can hold political positions, such as cabinet membership, concurrently, to ensure national security.

Historically, therefore, the military and the civilian bureaucratic elites represent the most dynamic political forces in Thai society. They were the prime movers for most changes and can be considered as the “political gamekeepers.” In 1932 they called themselves “Promoters”; in 1947, Khana Ratpraharn ("Coup Makers"); in 1957, Khana Patiwat ("Revolutionary Party"); and in 1977, Khana Patiroop ("Reform Group"). No matter what they call themselves, they are the most powerful political organizations in the country. The circulation of the military and the bureaucratic elites is also worth noting. As shown in the first part of this essay, the control and command of military positions, especially those at the top of the pyramid and also at the politically important posts, can be used for many purposes ranging from obtaining appointment to the National Assembly to capturing chairmanships or memberships on public-enterprise boards.

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19 The list system, which requires the electorate to choose the whole list of candidates proposed by each political party.

20 Also on November 5, 1983, Major General Pichit commented that the multiple-district electoral method had some drawbacks, most important of which was that the geographical areas covering electoral districts were too large, thus preventing candidates from effectively campaigning for votes. He said that the electors had a similar opinion on this matter. The general added that since laws are manmade, they should be changed according to circumstances and not be used for one or two hundred years (Thai Rath, November 6, 1983, p. 16).
DISCONTINUITY OF ELECTED PARLIAMENTS AND POLITICAL PARTIES

Unlike in Malaysia and Singapore, where tenures of parliaments have been completed without interruptions, in Thailand only four parliaments completed their tenures; the rest were disrupted by coups de’etat. Discontinuity in the operations of parliaments results in the discontinuity of political parties, which, in turn, affects the career of politicians.

While discontinuity of elected parliaments is a fact of political life in Thailand, the appointed assemblies have continued without disruptions. General Prem Tinsulanond had been a member of the appointed assemblies since 1958 before becoming prime minister in 1980—while the majority of members of the elected parliament in 1980 served in the House of Representatives for the first time.

When parliaments could not complete their tenures, several bills proposed by the members had to be resubmitted, which delayed the process of socioeconomic changes taking place during that time. Legislative supporting organizations, such as legislative reference and research units, were only established in 1974 and could not function effectively due to the lack of support from the government. Members on parliamentary standing committees keep changing from one parliament to another, preventing MPs from developing expertise in their chosen fields.

These consequences of parliamentary discontinuity have weakened the power of the legislative branch vis-à-vis that of the executive and have prevented the legislature from becoming a potent force in the Thai political system.

Discontinuity of elected parliaments has affected political parties in several ways. Party organizations could not be developed and political mobilization has been accomplished, at best, on an ad hoc basis. From 1946–1981, 143 parties were formed, but only a few survived. All have been urban based, with weak links to rural areas and party branches not well organized.

When political parties have been allowed to function, they have suffered from lack of discipline among members pursuing factional and individual interests rather than abiding by party policies. Usually political parties in Thailand are groupings of individuals or a network of patrons and clients forced together by the Political Party Law requiring candidates to contest in the elections under party banners. After elections, the parties have no programs linking them with the population.

Unlike Singapore and Malaysia, which are states dominated by one party, in Thailand no single party ever dominated the political scene. When government parties won the majority in parliament, factions within the parties usually led to political crises that ended with military interventions. From 1975 to 1982, parliamentary seats were shared by eight to twenty-two parties, which resulted in highly unstable coalition governments.

Apart from the previously mentioned factors inhibiting strong political parties in Thailand, the development of a party system is affected by the hostile attitude of bureaucratic elites toward political parties. As Kramol Tongdhamatchart observes: “The bureaucratic elites often perceived political parties as the cause of national
disunity and political instability and also as the political entity that could threaten their power positions." When political parties were allowed to function, the bureaucratic elites usually imposed obstacles to the formation and performance of the parties. The Political Party Law promulgated in 1981 forces potential party organizers to meet several requirements before their parties can be registered and legally perform their functions. Organizers have to recruit a minimum of 5,000 members with residences in five provinces in each region of the four regions of the country; in addition, each province has to be represented in the potential party with a minimum of fifty persons.

As with other problems rising from the weakness of political institutions, the impotence of parliament and political parties in Thailand is linked with the perennial issue of the conflict between the powers of the bureaucracy and the participant political institutions. Problems facing political parties, therefore, must be analyzed in a broader perspective and must not be restricted to internal characteristics of party organizations. It is impossible for any political party to develop its organization and to effectively perform its functions in a political system in which coups d'état have become more or less institutionalized. Furthermore, the civilian politicians have not settled among themselves their "appropriate" political relationship with the military establishment. A sizable number of the elected members of parliament usually maintain close ties with military leaders, and it is fair to say that some MPs are clients operating under military patrons. Hence, although a group of civilian politicians strive to perform their legitimate political roles and to build up their political base through party mechanisms, others remain subservient to military leaders. This mode of political behavior has made it difficult for committed civilian politicians to institutionalize the role of politician—let alone the more difficult task of transforming entrenched cliques and patron-client networks into a viable party system.

THE MONARCHY AS A SAFETY-VALVE INSTITUTION

Why do military governments have to care so much about a constitution? What is the role of a constitution in Thai society when it is not constitutional? The elites and the masses alike, it seems, do not grasp the Western concept of constitution and cannot distinguish between a constitution and a constitutional government. The same lack of understanding exists with respect to the meaning of democracy. Both constitution and democracy as concepts have been used by different groups for their own interests.

Constitutionalism as an ideology, as adopted by the People's Party, was conceived as an antithesis to monarchism. The military men and intellectuals who overthrew the absolute monarchy were aware of the deep-rooted traditional values ingrained in the minds of the masses. They therefore passed a resolution in the 1933 Assembly that all school children be required to recite the 1932 constitution. One

22 Ibid., pp. 37–38.
23 See National Assembly (Ordinary Session) Meeting no. 6/2476, first session, motion by Luang Vichivadhakan; the second motions in the same session by Thongyoo Putpat.
member proposed that the new "constitutional government" should construct edifices in all provinces containing the replicas of the constitution so that the people could pay their respect. This use of the constitution as a quasi-holy relic parallels the traditional claims of legitimacy by competing small old regimes because they claimed to possess Buddha's relics or footprints, which made their kingdom the center of the universe. In this sense, political symbolism is fundamental for regime credibility and legitimacy particularly when political institution building is badly needed but cannot be quickly achieved.

Such political behavior of the elites has not been uniform; other members of the assembly were opposed to those motions. Yet they passed. But the same issue reoccurs; there is still no consensus on the meaning of constitutionism and democracy. Educated men continue to argue, and some diehards are prepared to stick to their beliefs about what they think is right for the "Nation, Religion, Monarchy, and Constitution."

A Constitution Fair has been held every year following the decision of the new elite to promote and defend the constitution and democracy. A nationwide contest has been organized for the best song praising the constitution, and a Miss Siam pageant has been held as a special incentive for people to buy tickets to the fair.

From the beginning, however, constitutionism and democracy have been empty concepts, never fully put into operation. There has been no power vacuum, but rather a vacuum in terms of the absence of a legitimate symbol. The king was still there, but he was seen but not heard, and when he took the role of a constitutional monarch seriously, he was forced on one occasion to abdicate. But in only three decades, the monarchy has staged a comeback in the political arena. While constitutionalism and democracy in Thailand gradually erode, monarchism slowly ascends.

Sir Ivor Jennings once remarked: "The sovereign's capacity to influence depends upon his personal qualities. It would be unreasonable to expect that he will be more than an ordinary man . . . These . . . qualities . . . if used at the center of affairs, can be extremely valuable."

In the film Soul of a Nation, written by Leo Aylen and narrated by Sir John Gielgud, King Bhumibol Adulyadej summed up his role in a subtle way when he said: "I am called a king, but my duties are quite different . . . or difficult to define . . . I do things that I think will be useful and that is all." Queen Sirikit's response to critics of the monarchy was equally revealing: "The task of merely visiting the people as a conventional duty is nonsense. If we cannot participate in helping to alleviate the misery of the people, then we consider it to be a failure as Head of State."

Both the king and the queen understand their legitimate role and institutionalize it by initiating projects aimed at helping the masses. As King Magnus said in the play The Apple Cart, a king does not have to worry about his political fate, for he does not have to campaign to be elected. Hence, while military and civilian factions in the bureaucracy spend their time fighting among themselves for positions, budgetary allocations, and jurisdiction; politicians in political parties busy themselves with the

formation of coalitions within the parties, among parties, or with military or civilian factions; the king and his family travel nationwide and build their palaces. As Leo Aylen observed: "Thailand's strength and unity lie in its religion and monarchy. The lives and talents of the royal family are full of dramatic contrasts, from the regal splendor of traditional ceremonies to the earthy contact with the bulk of their people—the villagers with whom they spend nine months of each year. They travel the length and breadth of the country, working on a stream of projects to help, encourage and generally lead the Thai people to better lives."\(^{25}\)

The institution of monarchy can thus be regarded as a factor of continuity when setbacks and crises occur in other political institutions, and at times acts as a catalyst for reforms.

It is irrelevant to discuss whether the king's perception of his role is right or wrong. It is more relevant to assess his influence and legitimacy.\(^{26}\) The monarchy is the most institutionalized symbol in the Thai polity, but much of its fate resides in the ability of this institution to maintain its stability. Its future remains in its own hands and the extent to which its own members can accommodate forces of change in society.

**CONCLUSIONS**

So far we have discussed fundamental issues of Thai politics and have come to the tentative conclusion that the development, stability, and security of Thailand depends on the interplay of traditional and emerging forces.

Socioeconomic changes resulting from unbalanced developments have brought about new and politically active groups such as labor unions, farmer associations, student groups, religious movements, and even reform-minded military men. While these intra- and extrabureaucratic forces have provided stronger restraints than before, they have thus far failed to produce a continuing political movement. Labor unions have suffered from personal and ideological conflicts among their leaders as well as weak organization. By 1976, the military, which is a better-organized force with ample resources, was able to infiltrate into the core groups as well as the rank-and-file of all labor unions, especially the active state-enterprise unions. Opportunities for employment in the Middle East (and to a lesser extent in Singapore) led to a changing state of labor relations. It gave the unskilled and semiskilled workers, most of whom came from the Northeast, a new alternative they could not find in their own society. This development, together with the government's recognition of past mistakes, the emphasis on more equitable resource distribution, a concern for decentralization and popular participation in rural poverty eradication programs, provided an opportunity for the government to readjust societal conflicts. Although the success of bureaucratic reforms is yet to be seen, the pendulum has been set in motion. Attempts to improve the budgeting and accounting system, restructure major staff agencies, strengthen the

\(^{25}\) *Soul of a Nation*, filmscript written by Leo Aylen.

\(^{26}\) On this point, see Chalermitiarana's excellent work, *Thailand: The Politics of Despotic Paternalism*.  

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role of ministries and reduce departmental autonomy, link the national development plan with sectoral, provincial, district, and village plans, improve coordination among ministries for joint developmental efforts, demonopolize banking and financial establishments, mobilize the professional class in the private sector to help solve economic problems, establish rapport between public and private sectors in regional centers—all of these were initiated in 1980.

Will these many endeavors help to solve or minimize the negative aspects of the bureaucracy and the deviant behavior of officials? Much will depend on the political will or capacity for self-adjustment of the bureaucracy and on the efficacy of emerging restraining forces in the system as a whole. Bureaucratic reforms are necessary conditions for the achievement of national development goals, but they are not sufficient to guarantee that the bureaucracy (military and civilian) will be more responsible and responsive to the public. A strong bureaucratic polity is the antithesis of responsible government, and “bureaucratic reform” in a strong bureaucratic polity may eventually lead to a kind of statism in which the bureaucratic politicians (military and civilian) use modern technology and a near-monopoly of information as well as other political and economic resources to act as “big brother” or a modern Leviathan. As discussed in Chalmers Johnson’s contribution in volume one, the role of the government and its degree of reliance on authoritarian intervention can be enlarged by crisis conditions in the environment. Such crisis conditions (succession struggles, capital-intensive industries, balance of payments squeezes, serious exchange rate fluctuations) plus perceived threats from the military confrontation with Vietnam are prevalent in Thailand. I strongly agree with Chalmers Johnson that the changing relations between the public and private sectors in Thailand will be cyclical and not linear. Moreover, circumstantial evidence suggests that the Thai polity is evolving from a capitalist developmental state into a capitalist regulatory state, with the military as the regulator. The military can claim its legitimate role in restructuring Thai society in the face of civilian disarray, for they are more determined to have power and conserve it than are other groups.

Although civilian control of the political process and the armed forces has been something of a myth during the past five decades, the issue of transition from military rule has remained vital. In a political system characterized by political legitimacy emanating from the king and patron-client transfers of political resources among the military, the bureaucracy, and the business community, constitutions, elections, legislatures, and political parties have all periodically emerged or been strengthened in attempts to effectuate civilian control.

A statement about the future of Thai politics must be restricted to saying that the issue of political institutionalization rests with the perennial issue of legitimacy and consensus, which is a universal aspect of political relationships among men. Lack of consensus on the rules of the game follows from differences in the perception of roles of the elites and the masses. Role perception is a product not only of objective reality alone, but also of cultural and historical experiences.
Thailand is a unique example of interlocking links between social institutions and participant political institutions. Social institutions (monarchy, religion, family, and cultural heritage) are deeply institutionalized, but Western-type democratic institutions are fragile. This is not to argue that the Thais are culturally different from Anglo-Saxons and therefore incapable of developing democratic political institutions. In the pursuit of a participant political rule, however, cultural and historical factors play significant parts in the institutionalization process. To bring about peaceful political reforms, every party must take a long-term view of how Thailand should develop, economically and politically. Economics cannot be separated from politics because economic issues in the 1980s have become politicized, especially those that are fundamental for the livelihood of the masses. One cannot expect to see a military strongman become a philosopher-ruler overnight; otherwise the problem of political institutionalization would have been solved centuries ago. Nor can one expect the strongman to be selfless, because power corrupts. Through a process of trial and error, however, and through political socialization and education, it is possible to create a well-informed and aroused public. A participant political regime can emerge in Thailand—a political system in which military, technocrats, civilian politicians, and electorate can work together through role adjustments under which antagonistic conflicts are minimized for each group. Through this process, each might come to realize that it pays no one to seek omnipotence. Likewise, socioeconomic change itself will make all parties concerned with developmental efforts more dependent on each other, and, either voluntarily or forcibly, they will come to cooperate more closely. In this manner, political institutionalization can be gradually achieved. The Thai have proven themselves to be adjustable in many aspects of life, including cultural assimilation. There is no reason why they should be unable to develop a political system attuned to their own needs and nature in the coming decade.
12. Political Institution Building in the Philippines

Carolina G. Hernandez

Institution building is a critical requirement for stability and order in society. A noted American political scientist has argued that popular participation and social mobilization, two common indicators of political development, could lead to instability and political decay in the absence of adaptable, complex, autonomous, and coherent institutions capable of managing such participation and mobilization.¹ In the ASEAN countries, as in most developing countries in the world, the problem of institution building for the purpose of promoting development, stability, and security remains vital in the last two decades of this century.

This contribution limits itself to institution building in the Philippines during the past ten years or so and will attempt to look at future prospects, particularly its evolutionary potential, for the late twentieth century. For the purposes of this essay, political institutionalization or institution building will mean the establishment and maintenance of dependable structures and procedures through which policies may be made. Philippine institutions to be considered have been involved in the mix in civilian-military controls that evolved in the 1970s as well as the party system that developed during the same decade. Specifically, these are the executive, the legislature, the judiciary, the civilian bureaucracy, the media, the military, and the party system.

It will be argued that (1) as a consequence of developments during and after martial law, including the decline of civilian political institutions other than the executive as well as of the further expansion of the military into society and politics, the traditional bases of civilian supremacy over the military have been eroded, resulting in a mix of civilian-military controls more favorable to the military than at any previous time in the country’s post–World War II political history; and (2) the

¹ Samuel P. Huntington, Political Order in Changing Societies (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1968).
1970s saw the development of a dominant party system guaranteed by various mechanisms, the foremost of which have been the martial law regulations circumscribing the activities of the traditional political parties and their leaders, and the various election laws that tend to favor the evolution and supremacy of a single political party in the Philippines for years to come.

Let us first briefly review Philippine civil-military relations and the party system before martial law was established, in order to place the problem at hand in the proper context.

INSTITUTIONS IN THE PHILIPPINES BEFORE MARTIAL LAW: AN OVERVIEW

The Mix in Civilian-Military Controls

Before the declaration of martial law on September 21, 1972, the Philippines was one of the last strongholds of civilian control over the military in the Third World. Prior to 1972, civilian political authorities enjoyed supremacy over the military at all times, as provided by the National Defense Act of 1935. In spite of the existence of the Huk emergency in the late forties and early fifties, and the consequent involvement of the military in essentially civilian social and economic programs, a strict observance by the military of its subordinate role in Philippine society and politics was maintained. The military continued to discharge its civilian-mandated functions, namely: (1) to provide for the country's external defense, (2) to promote Philippine internal security, and (3) to maintain law and order through its constabulary arm.

Elsewhere this author has argued that the subordination of the military to civilian political authorities was facilitated, among other variables, by the Filipinos' negative experiences with early military institutions such as the Spanish colonial army and the Guardia Civil; the absence of a militaristic tradition inasmuch as the military had not been highly regarded by Filipinos (except perhaps during the Pacific War) and was never involved in the struggle to regain Philippine independence from the United States; the legal recognition of the principle of civilian supremacy over the military in the National Defense Act of 1935; the institutionalization of this principle through the controls wielded by the executive and the legislative over the military; the energetic and countervailing role played by the free press in Philippine society; and the regularity and effectiveness of the mechanism for political succession.

2 The Huk emergency was occasioned by an uprising of a large group of discontented tenant-farmers who had legitimate grievances against the government. They were ideologically inspired by socialist ideas. An excellent analysis of this emergency may be found in Benedict Kerkvliet, *The Huk Rebellion: A Study of Peasant Revolt in the Philippines* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977).


4 The Guardia Civil was a paramilitary force used by the Spaniards in maintaining civil law and order during the latter part of their rule in the country. This was a notoriously abusive organization and hated by the Filipinos.
In considering civilian institutional checks over the military, it is pertinent to discuss briefly the controls exercised by the executive, the legislature, and the press over the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) before 1972. The principle of civilian supremacy, which was legally enshrined in the National Defense Act, became institutionalized through various controls wielded by the executive, the legislature, and other civilian government agencies over the military. The most important executive control stemmed from the constitutional provision making the president commander-in-chief of all armed forces in the country. This provision is related to emergency situations during which the president may suspend the privilege of the writ of *habeas corpus* or put parts of, or the entire country, under martial law. Being commander-in-chief enabled the president to direct military units to perform certain tasks even as he remained a civilian political official.

The president enjoyed the power to nominate and appoint officers of the army from the rank of colonel, and of the navy and air force from the rank of captain or commander. He also appointed the holder of the defense portfolio in his cabinet. Through this official, the president had indirect access to the military. Military promotions were similarly subject to his approval. He could either subtract from or add to the promotions list submitted to him by the defense secretary. The appointing power on the whole served as an important control over the military inasmuch as the chances for the advancement of an officer's career depended upon presidential approval.

In addition, presidential participation in the budget process before 1972 represented another form of civilian control over the military because power over the purse strings constitutes an important tool in any organization. Related to this power was the vast amount of patronage which the president commanded and which he could wield over both military and civilian personnel.

For its part, the legislature enjoyed appointive, budgetary, investigative, and legislative powers vis-à-vis the military. Congress did not hesitate to use them, whenever appropriate, to whip the military into line. Much of the credit for having kept the military subordinated to the civilian political authorities before 1972 should be shared between the Congress and the president. Deep frustration with Congress had in fact been expressed by officers interviewed by Harold Maynard precisely because of what they perceived to be excessive congressional interference in military matters made possible by these legislative powers. Anomalies allegedly implicating military officers were investigated and brought to public attention. The military had to defend their budgetary requests before Congress, sometimes making concessions to Congress with respect to military matters in order to obtain congressional approval of the defense budget.

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6 The reorganization of the AFP in the 1950s was effected through the insistence of Congress in exchange for the latter’s budgetary support for requests of additional appropriations by the military. See Hernandez, “Civilian Control of the Military,” p. 88.
Moreover, the presence of an active, critical, free, even if often abusive, press further enhanced the evolution of a mix of civilian-military controls favorable to the former. Press attacks and polemics against heavy defense spending, military abuses and lack of discipline, and other developments tending to challenge the civil-military status quo contributed to the maintenance of civilian control. Through its activities, Filipino public opinion had been informed about and mobilized against any development tending to alter the civil-military balance in favor of the latter.

The effectiveness of these various controls over the military in the Philippines is reflected in the relatively small size of the military before 1972 as well as its modest budget, even during times of stress such as that caused by the Huk insurgency. From a strength of 36,800 in 1946, the military grew to more than 53,000 by 1951, and to 62,000 by 1961; but this strength was reduced to 58,000 by 1971. Its expenditures grew from approximately U.S.$70.8 million in 1948 to about $153.6 million in 1951, or about 117 percent during the peak of the Huk emergency. Keeping the military small and regulating its expenditures assured its continuing inability to challenge civilian rule during this period.

The regularity and effectiveness of the mechanism for political succession also contributed to the preservation of civilian control. Empirical evidence elsewhere in the Third World points to the fact that one of the more common occasions of military takeover is the military’s participation in installing a new political leader where the rules of succession are either nonexistent, ineffective, inadequate, or untried. Whatever might be said against Philippine society and its brand of democracy before 1972, it at least provided a mechanism for peaceful and regular replacement of leaders, especially of unpopular ones.

Among the civilian bureaucracy, the Commission on Audit was able to provide a further civilian check over military expenditures and finances. In an environment where separation of powers and checks and balances prevailed, the commission was not hindered in publishing its findings; indeed, other branches of the government, particularly the legislature, made sure that financial misappropriations by the military were brought to the attention of the public. The free press similarly facilitated this type of civilian control over the military.

Finally, although the judiciary did not participate directly in exercising civilian control over the military, its independence—guaranteed by the constitution and hallowed by custom and tradition—as well as its widely recognized integrity enabled it to pass judgment on any matter within its competence regardless of the party disadvantaged by its judgment. Judicial judgments and opinions enjoyed a high level of acceptance before 1972 and the Supreme Court was recognized as the highest and most authoritative source of legitimacy in the polity.

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7 Ibid., pp. 131-132.
The Party System

Before 1972, the Philippine party system is generally regarded to have been a competitive two-party system. An analyst, perhaps partly in jest, once characterized it as a “one and a half party system,” because of the fluidity and flexibility of the party affiliation of prominent political leaders. Turncoatism was a standard practice. The major political parties largely revolved around personalities, with kinship, compadrazgo, and patron-client ties being the bases of these parties’ political following among the masses. The parties were in reality loose national alliances of local factions that centered on the affluent and prestigious families in various municipalities. Political leaders came from these families and distributed minor favors (such as financial assistance in times of need), rewards (in the form of temporary appointment to the bureaucracy or to private enterprises owned by them or their relatives and friends), and services (free legal, medical, or dental assistance).

The two major political parties that competed for political power before 1972 were the Nacionalista and Liberal parties. They originated in the American colonial period as a single party under various names, but often split into two wings on certain issues. By the Commonwealth period, a coalition between its two wings was formed and the name “Nacionalist Party” was chosen. The coalition, however, was shortlived, for another split occurred in 1946 over the issue of which of two political leaders was going to be fielded as the party’s standardbearer in the first presidential election after the restoration of Philippine independence that year. The party split into the Nacionalista Party (the loyalist wing) and the Liberal Party (the liberal wing). The latter’s candidate ultimately became the first president of the country after World War II. Henceforth, these two parties participated in competitive politics until 1972, when all political party organizations and activities were proscribed in accordance with the martial law regime’s effort to suppress any form of political challenges to the political order.

The two-party system that prevailed before 1972 had been shaped by constitutional provisions. One such provision in the 1935 constitution established the composition of the Electoral Tribunal of each house of the legislature. This body was the only agency in the government charged with authority to judge all contests involving the election, returns, and qualifications of the members of either the Senate or the House of Representatives. The constitution provided for a nine-member electoral tribunal composed of three justices of the Supreme Court and six members of Congress, three of whom were nominated by “the party having the largest number of votes and three [by] the party having the second largest number of votes” in each house. By limiting the membership of such an important body in the legislature to the two parties garnering the largest numbers of votes in each house, third parties tended to be discouraged from developing into organizations that could effectively compete in politics. The evolution of a two-party system was thereby facilitated.

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9 The Constitution of the Philippines, 1935, Article VI, Sec. 11.
The electoral laws before 1972 also tended to facilitate the emergence of a two-party system in the Philippines. Just as only two political parties were allowed to have representatives on the electoral tribunal of Congress, the electoral laws also allowed only the representatives of the two largest political parties on the boards of election registrars, the boards of inspectors, and other electoral bodies. Third parties were further discouraged because of the poor competitive environment created by these regulations. The relatively high incidence of election frauds and malpractices such as "flying voting," padding the election registers, and falsifying election returns also made it impractical for third parties to compete with the two largest parties, which were appropriately represented in the various electoral bodies having access to voter registration lists, boxes of official and sample ballots, counting of votes, and certification of the election results.

As a consequence of these constitutional and statutory rules, regulations, and political practices, third parties were discouraged from developing into permanent organizations, although they did compete from time to time. A two-party system consequently developed before 1972 with no widely divergent political ideology, programs, or platforms. The two parties were formed around personalities rather than political issues, and they alternately provided political leadership in the country until 1971.

THE IMPACT OF MARTIAL LAW AND ITS AFTERMATH

The formal legal basis of civil-military relations during the martial law period and beyond remains the National Defense Act of 1935. This basis was reinforced by the constitution of 1973, which recognizes, in its Declaration of Principles and State Policies, the principle of civilian supremacy over the military at all times. When martial law was extended throughout the country, the military was involved—through the initiative of its commander-in-chief, the president of the Philippines, a civilian political authority—in the management of the country.

Until this period, the mix in civil-military controls had favored the former, although the military's role in society had begun to expand before 1972. As already noted, this role expansion properly began during the Huk emergency, when the military was directed by the civilian political authorities to undertake socioeconomic programs as a measure of counter-insurgency. Even as this took place, however, there continued the careful monitoring of the military by civilian political leaders. Defense Secretary Ramon Magsaysay exercised strict administrative control over the military, often to the detriment of military internal autonomy. As already noted, Congress

10 Election Code of 1971, Article VII, Sec. 105, Article VIII, Secs. 144 and 145, and Article IX, Sec. 169.
11 "Flying voting" is a practice in which a voter is registered in more than one polling precinct and casts as many votes as his precincts of registration.
also maintained an effective check on the military's activities through its control powers. In fact, military reorganization in 1950, including changes in its top officers, was preceded by congressional insistence on such reform. Congress allowed the military's request for additional appropriations required to expand its army component only after the military agreed to reorganize itself.

When the Huk insurgency subsided, the military was submitted to an austerity program like all other government agencies in the country. Nevertheless, the military continued to perform modest socioeconomic roles through the Socio-Economic Military Program (SEMP), a program designed to use military resources in the socioeconomic development of the country as well as to assist retired military personnel in acquiring homestead land to be administered after the fashion of the Economic Development Corps (EDCOR) projects of the Magsaysay era. Although six SEMP settlements were established, however, this became a full-scale development program only after President Marcos began his term of office in 1966.

The military became at once an integral part of the Marcos economic development program. His first Four Year Economic Program states:

> The Armed Forces of the Philippines with its manpower, material, and equipment resources plus its organizational cohesiveness and discipline possess a tremendous potential to participate in economic development which should be exploited to the maximum. Such participation becomes imperative considering that the problem besetting the country is socio-economic rather than military and the resources available to solve this problem are scarce and limited.

To equip the military for these roles, ten engineer construction battalions were established in 1966, another fifteen in 1967, and an Engineer Brigade for Mindanao in 1968. In exchange for Philippine participation in the Vietnam War, the United States trained and equipped these troops from 1967 to 1968, at a cost of $7 billion. These activities prepared the military for its task of participating in government economic development projects under the direction of civilian political authorities.

The 1970s, however, witnessed the transformation of the mix in civilian-military controls as a consequence of certain developments during and after martial law. This transformation led to the decline in civilian political institutions, with the exception of the presidency, and the emergence of the military as a partner of the martial law regime in implementing its policies and managing society.

The Decline of Civilian Political Institutions

Soon after the proclamation of martial law, President Marcos decreed the disbanding of Congress and the proscription of political parties. Many leading politicians noted for their opposition to the Marcos administration were arrested and

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14 EDCOR is a program initiated during Magsaysay's term of office as defense secretary in which select surrendering Hucks were resettled in government land and given their own farms.

detained, including Senators Benigno S. Aquino, Jr., Jovito R. Salonga, Jose W. Diokno, and Francisco "Soc" Rodrigo. From January 1973 to April 1978, the Philippines was ruled solely through decrees, general orders, and letters of instruction emanating from the president, who, under the transitory provisions of the 1973 constitution enjoyed the powers of president (1935 constitution) and those of prime minister (1973 constitution): hence the title president/prime minister.

As martial law administrator, President Marcos ruled without a separate legislature. In this capacity he transformed the government from a democratic to an authoritarian one for the declared purpose of "saving the Republic and building a New Society." All decrees, general orders, and letters of instruction passed during the so-called transition period became part of the law of the land to be obeyed as any statute passed by a regular legislative body. Political power became concentrated in the hands of the president with the assistance of the military.

Even after the election of an interim legislature (the interim Batasang Pambansa) in April 1978, legislative powers remained under the control of President Marcos through Amendments 5 and 6 of the 1973 constitution. These amendments were submitted to a plebiscite after the fashion of other amendments (with the exception of the ratification of the 1973 Constitution, which was submitted for approval to special citizens assemblies contrary to the provisions for constitutional amendments in the 1935 constitution). Amendment 5 enabled the president to continue enjoying legislative powers even after the election of the interim legislature or until the lifting of martial law. The proclamation of martial law was formally lifted on January 19, 1981. Its effects, however, continue to be felt up to the time of this writing in 1984.

In spite of the lifting of martial law, the president continues to enjoy legislative powers, as guaranteed by Amendment 6:

Whenever in the judgment of the President (Prime Minister), there exists a grave emergency or a threat or imminence thereof, or whenever the interim Batasang Pambansa or the regular National Assembly fails or is unable to act adequately on any matter for any reason that in his judgment requires immediate action, he may, in order to meet the exigency, issue the necessary decrees, orders, or letters of instructions, which shall form part of the law of the land. This amendment can undercut the legislative power of the Batasang Pambansa because the determination of an emergency depends solely on the judgment of one man. There are no institutional checks to such presidential power. Neither is there accountability to another institution or body. Many repressive decrees including that authorizing the issuance of a Presidential Commitment Order (PCO), and its successor, the Preventive Detention Action (or PDA), were ordered by the president under Amendment 6.

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16 Proclamation 1081, September 21, 1972.
18 See PDs 1836, 1877, and 1877-A.
Moreover, the interim legislature was controlled by the government party, Kilusang Bagong Lipunan (KBL). An overwhelming majority of its elected members were drawn from the KBL and all appointed members were the president's men, further tilting the balance in favor of the president. It was generally regarded as the president's "rubber stamp" and a cosmetic agent for simulating democratic processes by the present regime. Its record of performance left much to be desired in terms of initiating critical legislation or pursuing policies independently of the president.

A recent study\(^{19}\) conducted by a member of the Liberal Party, Abraham Sarmiento, indicates that during the six years of the interim legislature's existence it was able to pass only four substantive laws out of a total output of about 1,200 bills and resolutions. Most of its output related to health, local government, and education. On the other hand, during the same period, President Marcos enacted, through his vast powers—including Amendment 6 and presidential decree (PD), letter of instruction, general order, or executive order—1,935 pieces of substantive legislation, excluding unpublished and secret decrees.

The quality of the opposition in the legislature also declined. Perhaps this was the result of the limitations imposed on it by the martial law regime and by the nature of the dominant party system, where the opposition is designed to be puny and noncompetitive. Moreover, it must have also been affected by policies of President Marcos intended to decimate opposition leaders, the initial ban on political parties and party activities, and the suspension of the electoral process.

The judiciary underwent similar decline. Traditionally esteemed as the highest source of legitimacy in the polity, the Supreme Court, thanks to its demonstrated timidity in asserting its independence from the president, lost in public esteem. The sheer length of President Marcos' term (1966 to 1987), eighteen years as of 1984, created a situation in the Supreme Court in which its justices are his appointees. In a country whose political culture continues to be influenced by extended family and traditional values such as utang na loob (debt of gratitude), the behavior of the Supreme Court becomes understandable and predictable.

Judges in the inferior courts are similarly appointed. Because they no longer have to be appointed by a Congressional Commission on Appointments as in days past, all owe their appointments to the president. Since the judicial budget is prepared under the direction of the president and releases of appropriations are approved by his budget minister, the lack of judicial independence becomes obvious. Lawyers and other legal experts at a recently concluded workshop on the role of the judiciary under the present system cited all these problems as affecting the independence of the judiciary.\(^{20}\)

Finally, the creation of military tribunals during martial law also affected the role of the judiciary. For a while, many cases involving civilians were brought before

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\(^{19}\) Abraham F. Sarmiento, speech delivered at a symposium sponsored by the Women in Media Now (WOMEN), January 21, 1984, Quezon City.

these tribunals. Even after the formal lifting of martial law, some of these tribunals continue to try civilians accused of subversion and crimes of economic sabotage. Consequently, the judiciary has been unable to provide an effective check against the power of President Marcos. In fact, it has been used to legitimize his rule.

The dismal record of the Supreme Court was indicated in a paper assessing the evolution of Philippine political institutions over the past years. According to it:

Based on previous decisions made, the Highest Court has failed to play the role of political balancer. In most cases involving the constitutionality of the executive acts, the Supreme Court upheld their validity. Among the major issues decided by the Court in favor of the government are: (1) Validity of the suspension of the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus; (2) Power of the President to call a plebiscite for the ratification of the Constitution; (3) Validity and effectivity of the New Constitution; (4) Constitutionality of martial law; (5) Constitutionality of the referendum; (6) Validity of the creation and jurisdiction of military tribunals; (7) Power of the President to propose amendments to the Constitution; (8) Validity of the Judiciary Reorganization Act of 1980; and (9) Power of the President to exercise legislative power even after Martial Law.21

Incidentally, a recent promulgated decision of the Supreme Court upheld the validity of presidential issuances of PCOs.22 The courts were deemed powerless to pass judgment on the legality of the PCOs as the basis of ongoing detention of alleged subversives. They cannot order the release of detainees unless the president himself recalls the PCO.

A conclusion that can be made on the role of the judiciary is as follows:

The Supreme Court hesitates to act and defers to the President in interpreting the political conditions or rationale for the issuance of decrees and orders. Its hesitation to compete for political power with the other branches does not help in maintaining an image of independence, competence and reliability....

Despite the normalization policy, it seems the courts would continue to abstain from questioning issues of national security and the judgment of the President. In such sensitive issues the courts would defer to the executive branch because national security is paramount. There lies the tenuous position of the courts, for security can cover many aspects of society, including the infringement of individual rights and freedoms.23

In fairness to the Supreme Court, however, after the assassination of Senator Aquino, it ruled in favor of granting opposition groups permits to hold rallies and similar forms of protest actions.24

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With regard to the civilian bureaucracy, martial law brought about the promulgation of the Integrated Reorganization Plan, one of whose major features was the decentralization of government administration. This plan provided for the regionalization of administration through the establishment of regional offices for all relevant ministries in the country's thirteen regions. Planning was also meant to be made on a regional basis through the Regional Development Council (RDC) of each region. The RDC was composed of the various heads of the regional offices of the relevant ministries in the area and was supposed to coordinate and plan development programs and projects in the region. The RDCs have not been effective in discharging their functions, however, largely because they lack substantive authority. They have no power to allocate funds or to determine development priorities for the region.  

Another development during martial law that affected the civilian bureaucracy was the reorganization of the Philippine Constabulary (PC) into regional commands. Before 1978, the PC was organized into zones that overlapped the military areas. The reorganization of the PC into regional commands was part of an effort to weaken the political power of traditional local political leaders at the same time that it enhanced the control by the president over local administrative agencies. In practice this has tended to increase the role of the military in local administration.

The creation of a superministry of Human Settlements under the First Lady has also affected the rest of the bureaucracy. This ministry is identified with the government because it is able to dip its fingers into everybody's pie, and its predominance in the administration has tended to weaken other ministries. Funds are diverted to projects of the ministry such as the housing project called Bagong Lipunan 'Improvement of Sites and Services' (BLISS) and the livelihood program called Kilusang Kabuhayan at Kaunlaran (KKK). BLISS is portrayed as a housing project to provide homes to low-income families. In reality, however, it has awarded homes to influential persons, including many high-ranking government officials, who then sold their rights to other persons at a profit. The low-income families who were awarded BLISS homes serve as token symbols of BLISS's original objective. Like BLISS, KKK is another program that suffered in its implementation because of the intervention of the patronage system, in which persons close to the First Family, high-ranking officials mostly in the executive branch of the government, and the military became favored recipients.  

Graft and corruption remains a continuing feature of administration. A study of this problem shows that corruption is primarily political in origin, contrary to earlier beliefs that it is bred by economic or cultural factors.

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Finally, the bureaucracy has also been penetrated by the military. Since 1972 an increasing number of military officers have been assigned to various administrative offices upon orders of President Marcos. The most important of these were the six military Presidential Regional Officers for Development (PRODs). These officers enjoyed presidential powers in the development projects of their respective regions and were the political superiors of civilian bureaucrats and local executives in their regions. The six military PRODs constituted 50 percent of all such PRODs until 1979.

An important development affecting the bureaucracy and involving the military took place in January 1984 when President Marcos refused to accede to a demand by the Bishops'-Businessmen's Conference (BBC) to return officers assigned to civilian positions back to the barracks. This refusal by itself was adverse to reestablishing a civilian-military balance of power. But the president made the situation worse by saying that these officers had proved to be more efficient than their civilian counterparts and were able to give the country enormous savings over the years. Such statements encourage the military to see themselves as superior to civilians and tempt them in the direction of political intervention.

Martial law set up controls over the media. While a special board to apply restraints on the media was formally disbanded after the first years of martial law, PDs encroaching on the freedom of the press were passed. The author of the workshop paper for the BBC in December 1983 on "Free Press/Media" noted that many provisions of these decrees are so vague and all-embracing that they make virtually all criticisms of the government a criminal act. Prohibited materials include those that (1) produce divisive effects among the people, (2) promote distrust for duly constituted authorities, and (3) tend to undermine the integrity of the government. The most frightening of the decrees is PD 1834, which prescribes the death penalty for media people who permit the use of their facilities for sustained propaganda attacks against the government or any duly constituted authorities. These decrees have resulted in the adoption of self-censorship or the exercise of prior restraint by media persons.

There are also unwritten guidelines issued to editors and publishers. According to the same BBC author, the guidelines prohibit stories that (1) are critical of the First Family, (2) discuss corruption in high places, (3) tend to cast aspersions on the military, and (4) are inimical to Philippine interests, its culture, and its people.

Consequently, during the past few years, attempts of some media persons to bypass these guidelines have led to separation from their employment through forced resignation, dismissal, or suspension. Some opposition newspapers, now called the alternative press, were also shut down as a consequence of having violated either the various PDs or these unwritten guidelines. Since the assassination of Senator Aquino, however, the government has pursued greater liberality in dealing with the media. This development is probably the result of the active role that the foreign media have played in reporting on the Philippines as well as some degree of toleration by the government for the benefit of foreign observers.

29 Ibid.
In view of the foregoing, the media’s role in society, especially checking the military as it had done before 1972, declined. The media joined in the decline of the other political institutions that formerly controlled the military before that date. Collectively, their decline partly accounts for the change in the mix in civilian-military controls favorable to the latter. The other factor responsible for this new state of civil-military relations is the rise of the military through its role expansion in the years since the application of martial law.

The Rise of the Military

The first subtle indicator of the rise of the military in society and politics was President Marcos’s prior consultation with leading military officers and the defense secretary about the wisdom of putting the country under martial law. With the sole exception of General Rafael Ileto, then vice chief of staff of the AFP, who, for military professional reasons, objected to the martial law decision, all top-ranking officers of the AFP supported the president’s decision. His supporters were later called his Twelve Disciples, and General Ileto was subsequently appointed ambassador to Iran, a distinction that made him the first active-duty officer in the country’s history to occupy an ambassadorial post.

The Twelve Disciples included the current defense minister, the AFP chief of staff, the constabulary chief, and a business associate of the defense minister who in 1972 was recalled to active duty with the rank of colonel. The rest are now either dead or retired, but many of them remained in their posts for many years after 1972 although they were due for compulsory retirement. Some of those who retired are currently occupying managerial positions in government or in private enterprises. Three of these twelve are still in their posts, twelve years after the event—an indication of the president’s confidence in them and their loyalty to him. These twelve pledged to support President Marcos and agreed, in the event of his death, to subordinate themselves to a civilian successor.

Under martial law, the military became the primary regime support as well as the partner of the martial law regime in implementing governmental policies. As already noted, soon after the proclamation of martial law, Congress was disbanded, political parties were proscribed, the media were controlled, and civil liberties were curtailed. In a country with no militaristic tradition to speak of, and where the military was traditionally low key and had a low profile, it soon became visible, performing expanded security and law-and-order roles, adopting a new judicial role, greater management, administrative, and development roles, and a new political role.

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30 The names of these Twelve Disciples were made public in a speech delivered by President Marcos at the Loyalty Day celebration of the AFP on September 10, 1974 and was published in the Philippine Military Digest, 2, no. 2, 1974, pp. 3–11 under the title “A Pledge of Loyalty to the Republic.”

31 Ibid., p. 8. The chief of staff went on a temporary leave of absence when he was implicated in the alleged military plot to assassinate Aquino, and the constabulary chief became acting chief of staff.
Security and Law and Order Roles

Apart from external defense, the military's security and law-and-order roles included the suppression of insurrection, rebellion, and lawless violence and the enforcement of all laws, decrees, orders, and regulations issued by the president as commander-in-chief of the military forces. These resulted in the arrest and detention of persons named in a list attached to General Order 2, which included many leading opposition politicians and leaders of suspected subversive organizations. The AFP was also charged with the implementation of the nationwide night curfew until 1978, collection of unlicensed firearms, suppression of rallies, strikes, and demonstrations, and seizure of privately owned water-transport facilities required for national security purposes.

To enhance law enforcement, all police forces throughout the country were merged into the Integrated National Police (INP) and placed under the command of the constabulary chief in 1975. By 1983 the INP was also integrated into the military. These developments contributed toward further centralization of power in the hands of the president since control over the police forces was taken away from local governments. This centralization of power through the mediation of the military is a development with clear implications for the mix in civilian-military controls.

Moreover, beginning in 1982 the organization of the Regional Unified Commands (RUCs) contributed further to the ascendancy of the military over local officials. The RUC commanders have military jurisdiction over regions that, because of the participation of the military in socioeconomic and other civilian functions, means a greater area of operation for them compared with that of local officials, including assemblymen who were elected by provinces instead of regions since the parliamentary elections of May 1984. The institution of the RUCs also centralized control over the military in the hands of the chief of staff. Troops in these units include a component each from the army, navy, air force, marines, constabulary, and police. They are under a single commander chosen by the chief of staff (who went on a leave of absence after his alleged implication in the Aquino assassination).

The security role played by the Presidential Security Command was also expanded. Originally designed to provide security for the First Family and mostly confined to the Greater Manila area, since 1972 it has reportedly done intelligence work not only in the country, but also in Philippine embassies and consulates abroad. It has also grown into a full-sized command and is reputedly now a crack unit. The present chief of staff is concurrently the head of this command including the National Intelligence Security Authority (NISA), which organizationally falls under the Office of the President.

Judicial Role

The military's judicial role was defined in General Order 8, which empowered the chief of staff to set up special military tribunals to try military personnel and "other cases." These other cases were subsequently spelled out in General Order 12. They included a wide range of cases including breaches of security, violations of the
Espionage and hijacking laws, crimes committed by public officers, and violations of the Dangerous Drugs Act. Twenty tribunals were set up and were operating throughout the country by 1974, even as at year's end, the government had ordered the return of many civilian cases from these tribunals to the civilian courts.

Nevertheless, crimes of subversion, rebellion, espionage, illegal possession of firearms and explosives for use in the commission of murder, robbery in bands, usurpation of military authority, title, ranks, or illegal use of military uniforms and insignia, offenses committed by military personnel in the performance of duty, distribution of subversive materials, and crimes undermining the security of the country continued to fall under the jurisdiction of military commissions, which replaced the tribunals in 1978. The absence of a clear-cut definition of subversion tended to widen the sphere of competence of these tribunals since it could be construed to include even criticism against the government.

After the formal lifting of martial law in 1981, military tribunals were disbanded and cases were transferred to civilian courts, except for those involving subversion and economic sabotage, which remained pending under the tribunals. Crimes of economic sabotage have grown in number, however, and now include arson, fraudulent loans granted by rural banks, and others. This practice has tended to contribute to the decline of the judiciary.

**Management and Administrative Roles**

Before 1972, retired military officers had frequently been recruited into management and administrative positions both in and out of government; since 1972, this practice has increased. During the initial days of martial law, the military was directed to control all communications media throughout the country. It was also given control, management, and operation of all public utilities as well as the assets of several private enterprises engaged in military-related industries. Media and public utilities were restored to civilian management shortly after the declaration of martial law, but military monitoring of these companies continues, and the private companies, formerly owned by the Jacinto family, continue to be managed and controlled by boards of directors largely composed of military officers.

The military was also rewarded with two investment corporations in recognition of its contribution toward consolidating the power of the martial-law regime. In addition, until October 1979, six out of twelve PRODs were military officers. In their region, they enjoyed presidential powers in development activities and were placed in a position where they could extend patronage to their supporters.

Many active-duty and retired officers also became heads of various agencies such as the Ministry of Muslim Affairs, National Housing Authority, and Bureau of Posts, among others. The Philippine ambassadors to Bangkok, Beijing, Hanoi, Jakarta, Seoul, Rangoon, Teheran, and Tel-Aviv are retired officers. An increasing number of officers also find their way into the country's lower diplomatic and consular services. The administrative and management functions of the military have not only
provided it with both administrative and management skills and experiences, but have also given it control over defense-related industries and access to the dispensation of patronage.

**Development Roles**

Under martial law, soldiers were viewed by President Marcos as "vanguards" in national development activities with three distinct roles: (1) to assist in the implementation of development goals, (2) to participate directly in development programs, and (3) to create an atmosphere conducive to national development. Pursuant to these roles, the AFP, through its civic action (SEMP and Home Defense Programs) built thousands of school buildings, provided medical and dental services to millions, constructed many infrastructure projects, and engaged in rural electrification, food production, and education.

With regard to education, one critical development in officer training was caused by its changing content. Social science courses were included in the curricula of the Philippine Military Academy and the Command and General Staff College. At the National Defense College of the Philippines, the orientation to civilian issues in its academic program is evident. The exposure to these ideas and issues could influence the development of political orientations among the military, a tendency that is reinforced by graduate education in civilian institutions that is being encouraged in officer career development.

The military has similarly been made responsible for enforcing price controls concerning primary commodities and preventing backsliding among government officials and employees. It was also used to collect loans owed by the farmers to the Land Bank that were made available to them under the agrarian reform law. The military is also often used to evacuate populations from regions or areas designated as development sites, thereby depriving those people of the right to their home and ancestral lands. With respect to ethnic minorities, such practices are placing the military in a conflictual relationship with these communities, often manifested in violent form.

Finally, the use of the military PRODs, as already noted, not only engaged the military in the implementation of regional development projects, but also enhanced the military's political influence through the wide scope of PROD powers in this activity, as well as enabling the military to develop its political base.

**Political Roles**

Perhaps the most significant political role of the AFP since 1972 is its replacement of the traditional politicians as dispensers of political patronage in the political

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system. Recognizing the change in the distribution of political power, many petitioners transferred their locus of operation from the traditional politicians to the officer corps. Problems ranging from seeking the release of a detained relative from military custody to obtaining casual employment are now brought to the attention of officers. It bears repeating that the integration of all police forces under the control of the constabulary chief removed an important power of government from local officials. Together with this development, a number of officers also act as officials of some political subdivisions (towns, subprovinces, and so on) where internal security is minimal. Like the military PRODs, they enjoy executive and administrative powers in their political subdivisions as well as political patronage and a political base.

Expansion in Size, Budget, and Privileges

The role expansion of the military was accompanied by an increase in its size as well as its budget. In 1972, the AFP numbered about 55,000 men; by 1977, its total strength had risen to 164,000. A current estimate places army, naval, and air forces at 113,000 and paramilitary forces totaling 110,500, of which 43,500 are constabulary, 65,000 Civilian Home Defense Forces, and 2,000 Coast Guard personnel. Reserves are estimated at 124,000. The total number of people who can be legitimately armed is about 347,000.33

Defense spending increased from $136 million in 1972 to $420 million in 1977. The Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (ACDA) estimates that in 1979 and 1980 military expenditures amounted to $643 million and $808 million, respectively.34 Most revealing, military expenditures in the Philippines between 1971 and 1980 have increased fastest among the five ASEAN nations although the growth of the Philippines’ economy has been slowest.35 In 1984, military expenditures continued to outstrip other government spending with the possible exception of those for education. Military expenditure also continued to consume a considerable amount of American military assistance, often matching the annual defense budget.

The military’s importance in regime maintenance is largely responsible for the rapid increase in benefits extended to the military since 1972. Basic pay for the AFP had been raised four times between 1972 and 1983, outstripping the salary scales of comparable civilian institutions. The salary scales of the rank-and-file military remain low, however. Other privileges are the opening up of investment opportunities for the military, as noted earlier. The annual extension of the service of retireable officers is another evidence of military privileges. Many officers become retireable at a fairly

young age but at fairly low ranks. The extension of their service enables them to become promoted at least to the rank of colonel, if not general, before their retirement.

The privileged position of the military in the polity may also be seen through other developments in the recent past. When President Marcos went on a state visit to Saudi Arabia in March 1982, he chose to leave his instructions on government management, including the matter of political succession, with the chief of staff, rather than the Assembly or the Supreme Court. Furthermore, on July 31, 1983, he made a significant clarification on the channel of command and control between the president and the military. At that time President Marcos emphasized that the chief of staff, rather than the defense minister, was his direct link to the military. The defense minister, though he is the president’s alter ego, is not part of the channel of command and can only act on military matters upon delegation by the president. This arrangement stems from the principle of unity of command, which implies that only the president or his subordinate, authorized in writing, can move troops, authorize the transfer or assignment of military personnel, and be responsible for making military operational decisions. This clarification in effect excludes the defense minister from the direct line of command and control linking the military with the civilian political authority, unless he is explicitly directed by the president to act in any of these capacities.

In November 1983, the president himself invited the top-ranking officers of the AFP to attend a joint Cabinet and Executive Committee meeting for the first time. This landmark event did not escape public attention. It was also subsequently announced that these officers would be allowed to participate in the caucuses of the KBL.

All these recent developments are crucial to civilian-military relations because they suggest a decreasing number of civilian authorities in the line of command and an increasing opportunity of the military to influence policy.

Furthermore, in July 1984 President Marcos, in full battle gear, conducted a surprise visit to the Cordilleras, where extensive encounters between the military and the New People’s Army were reported. This was the first and only occasion where he appeared in military dress in public and could be a symbolic act. The interpretation of the event varies among observers. Some think that it may be an indication of the possibility of the reimposition of martial law. Others believe it may indicate an even larger role for the military in politics in the near future.

With the inception of the most serious economic crisis in the country since 1946, the military has been actively engaged in the suppression of an increasingly growing mass movement that cuts across all sectors and social classes. The military has participated in the breaking up of strikes, rallies, and demonstrations and has engaged in an intensified campaign against an escalating armed insurgency. Accounts of alleged military overreaction to dissent appear almost daily in the alternative press and sometimes even in the government-controlled press.

In July and August 1984, the issue of which office has the authority to grant permits for the holding of rallies and other forms of demonstration of protest occupied

center stage in Philippine politics as opposition groups were repeatedly denied such permits by mayors in Metro Manila. Government guidelines were vague because the police and military authorities were given recommendatory powers on the granting of such permits by mayors on the basis of military assessments as to whether such rallies constituted a “clear and present danger” to the public. At one point, the approval of the chief of staff was required.

Finally, on August 18, 1984, the Supreme Court’s intercession was sought by the August Twenty-One Movement (or ATOM, a group of young businessmen and professionals established after the Aquino assassination). The high court ruled that the planned rally and program commemorating the first anniversary of the Aquino killing should be allowed to take place and that the civil authorities in the cities and towns through which the rally would pass should issue permits. Nevertheless, the issue has not been fully settled. The military continues to enjoy a kind of veto power over the granting of such permits, making people wonder whether civilian supremacy still remains effective.

As can be seen, the military in the Philippines has deeply penetrated the society and the polity since 1972, to an extent that it has developed into a major political force capable of exerting great influence or even control in the future politics of the country.

The Contemporary Mix in Civilian-Military Controls

In the absence of the former institutional bases of civilian control over the military—such as the Congress, the free press, and, to some extent, the political parties that fielded candidates for executive and legislative offices—the balance of power between military and civilian political authorities rests on an unstable foundation and favors the military.

From the start, the military participated in the decision to put the country under martial law, through the Twelve Disciples. There is no direct evidence that the officer corps has a veto power over policy decisions made by civilian political authorities. Yet there is at least one known instance in the past that indicates increased military competence and willingness to influence basic policy. The government purge in 1975 that was meant to include the Defense Ministry and the military eventually did not reach these two institutions. They were allowed to clean their own houses after the defense minister reportedly submitted to the president “the resignations of a long list of officers. . . . [Consequently] the parameters of presidential power over the military had been more clearly defined.”

As a consequence of its role expansion, the military was able to occupy influential positions in the government, to obtain access to wider political bases, to develop political skills, and to replace traditional politicians as dispensers of patronage. Coupled with the increasingly politicized content of military education and training, and the president’s own policies favorable to the military, these devel-

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opments could contribute to the further, and perhaps eventually the complete erosion of civilian control.

The elimination of the network of political groups and institutions that monitored military behavior in the past also contributed to the decline of civilian control. The abolition of Congress in 1973 left an important gap in this network, a gap that the newly elected National Assembly has yet to prove capable of filling. The proscription of political party activities until 1978 similarly removed another institution of civilian control; so did the continuing governmental censorship and control over the media.

Currently, however, the government claims that civilian control remains dominant in the country. If it does, and I tend to agree with the government, it rests largely on President Marcos' personal control over the military rather than on the institution of the presidency as in the past.

In this connection, it is noteworthy that during the anniversary celebration of the AFP in early 1984, President Marcos emphasized that the loyalty of the military should be to the flag and to the country the flag represents rather than to the person of the commander-in-chief. This has implications for the future of civilian control.

There are also divisions within the military on issues of policy, including the very basic issue of the appropriate political role—if any—for the military. In this regard, an analyst expressed the belief in early 1984 that up to that time, enough military personnel remained who could make the military "a force for freedom and democracy." He said that this view was shared by former Senator Jose W. Diokno, a leading member of the opposition, who implied that such personnel might constitute the majority in the military. If this view is correct, there is a potential for a future restoration of the civilian-military balance in favor of the former.

If the institutional bases for civilian control are not restored or replaced by equally effective ones within the next five years, however, the likelihood of military subordination to civilian political authority will decrease, especially within the context of the political and economic crises that have developed since the assassination of former Senator Aquino. These crises are not expected to be resolved in less than five years. Moreover, they can only be resolved if favorable internal and external conditions obtain within this period.

Unfortunately, such conditions may not develop. Already there are significant indicators of stress that have emerged during the past few years. Some of these indicators are the growing communist threat, deteriorating peace-and-order conditions, labor unrest, and massive protest actions since the Aquino assassination. These are not likely to abate in the immediate future; they could grow increasingly extensive if more sectors become alienated from government as a result of worsening political and economic conditions and the perception that government is both unable and unwilling to undertake meaningful political and economic reforms. The presence

40 Miranda, p. 6, citing J. W. Diokno, The National Times [Australia], November 18–24, 1983.
41 See ibid. for a well-documented analysis of these stress indicators, pp. 7–14.
of these stress indicators will probably result in a greater role taken by the military in controlling and suppressing them. President Marcos in February 1984 introduced the employment of “secret marshals,” military plainclothesmen authorized to keep the peace and to shoot to kill suspected criminals. These “secret marshals” were withdrawn due to widespread public reaction against them. Nevertheless, the continued presence of such stress indicators will affect future civilian-military relations in the country.

THE IMPACT OF MARTIAL LAW ON THE DOMINANT PARTY SYSTEM

Major Developments Affecting the Party System

On the advent of martial law, many political leaders were detained by the military, including the later slain leader of the opposition (Liberal) party, Senator Aquino. The opposition found itself in disarray not only because of the newly imposed martial law regime, but also because of the physical disabilities suffered by a number of its leaders barely a year before, when a political rally of the party was bombed by persons who remain unknown thirteen years after the tragedy.

A ban on all political party activities, including President Marcos’ own Nacionalista Party, was imposed as he consolidated political power in his hands. Elections were suspended until April 1978, and political parties consequently had no opportunity to develop either their organizations or their future leaders. The only electoral exercises held between 1973 and 1977 were the five national referenda whose purpose was to obtain popular approval of the reforms undertaken by the martial law regime and to legitimize the continuing rule of President Marcos. These exercises were by no means comparable to elections held before 1972 because they were held under martial law. Meaningful popular participation was obviously absent in these exercises.

Like many authoritarian regimes in the rest of the Third World, the martial law government established its own political party, the KBL, to advance President Marcos’s perception of his ideal Philippine society. The KBL’s formal structure is akin to that of most political parties in which the chairman is the head of the incumbent government with local organizations existing below the national level. Regular caucuses are held to determine party/government policies. Its elected members in the legislature toe the party line.

In an attempt to provide the country with a semblance of democracy and an elected government, President Marcos allowed the election in 1978 of members of the Interim National Assembly. The opposition decided to participate in the elections although it was aware of the assembly’s lack of real powers, because the election was perceived as an opportunity through which the voice of the opposition could be heard in government. Several opposition parties were formed: LABAN (Lakas ng Bayan,

Not surprisingly, these parties did not win in electoral contests for the most part. Amid massive election frauds, LABAN lost even though unofficial tallies indicated the victory of some of its candidates, including Senator Aquino. *Pusyon Bisaya*, however, won sixteen seats in the assembly, and other minor parties won a few more seats. Their performance in the assembly was poor, however, because of their puny strength and because the assembly remained dominated by the president.

The opposition parties did not do better in the three subsequent elections held between 1978 and 1982: the local government elections in 1980, the presidential election in 1981, and the barangay elections in 1982. The KBL swept the polls and emerged by 1983 the only party that dominated the elections. The opposition remained disunited and disorganized even as an attempt was made in 1981 to unite the factions under the United Nationalist Democratic Organization (UNIDO). This group now has twelve affiliated political parties, but the only unifying factor among them is their desire to end President Marcos' rule.

The assassination of Senator Aquino is acknowledged to have been a major blow to the opposition. He is perceived to have been the best hope of the opposition to run against the president, largely because he still enjoyed a considerable political base; he was an articulate and witty orator; he had the charisma that any successful Filipino political leader must have, and his political ideology was considered moderate enough to appeal to a large cross-section of Filipinos.

While the Aquino assassination dealt a blow to the opposition, however, later events indicated that the tragedy resulted in positive changes in the politics of the country. The most relevant to this discussion is the assassination's impact on the people's rights to free press, free assembly, and free elections. Aquino's death benefited the opposition in that his cause became a rallying point for various opposition groups to contest the 1984 parliamentary elections and to engage in pressure politics as a "parliament of the streets" (the protest movement) amid a considerable degree of liberalization of the press and toleration of the right to peaceful assembly. The opposition parties that contested the elections performed much better than their own expectations, capturing 61 out of the 200 contested seats. They are still a minority in the legislature, but their combined voices can increase the range of opinions, publicize issues more widely, and bring greater pressure to bear in the legislature to consider alternative views on important issues. One of the most significant achievements of the legislature since its election in May 1984 is the unanimous adoption of a resolution condemning military heavy-handedness in violently dispersing a group of peaceful demonstrators on September 27, 1984.

Still, the opposition remains divided as of late 1984. Attempts are being made to form a coalition of all opposition groups amid speculation that Marcos may be

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42 The *barangay* is the basic political unit in the Philippines. The *barangay* elections of 1982 were supposed to be nonpartisan, but the KBL unofficially fielded candidates and provided them with material and organizational resources.
critically ill and presidential elections may take place sooner than 1987. It will be
crucial for these opposition groups to have a single candidate if they are to defeat the
KBL. Within the KBL itself, there could be stiff competition among a number of
contenders, the most important being the First Lady, the defense minister, and the
labor minister. Without President Marcos, however, all may not be well with the KBL,
in which case the opposition might be in a good position to defeat the KBL, especially
with the economic crisis, the growing lack of confidence in the government that
followed the Aquino assassination, and the implication of top military leaders in the
alleged conspiracy leading to his death. The opposition's success, however, will
depend a good deal on its ability to choose a credible candidate acceptable to the major
groups within in.

**Contemporary Election Laws**

The effective code governing elections was passed in 1978 preparatory to the
elections for the National Assembly. Although it was ostensibly designed to encourage
the growth of a competitive party system, in reality its provisions discouraged this
development. In fact, they tended to strengthen the position of the dominant govern-
ment party.

According to one such provision, the National Assembly would be composed in
part of "representatives elected from the different regions of the nation." These
regional representatives constituted 160 of the assembly's total membership of 185.
Without the appropriate political machinery and other requisite resources, opposition
parties had practically no chance of competing equally with the KBL in regionwide
elections. Consequently, the KBL controlled 169 of the total seats in the interim
legislature.

On January 27, 1984, the government held a plebiscite to determine the people's
sentiment regarding four proposed constitutional amendments. One of them provided
for the election of assemblymen by provinces and by districts in the case of Metro
Manila, instead of by regions. The plebiscite reportedly endorsed the four proposed
amendments, although there was a record low voter turnout according to an inde-
pendent private organization which monitored the plebiscite.

Even with this provision on representation by provinces or districts, the opposi-
tion parties still have to operate under other liabilities. One of these is the method of
accreditation of political parties that the 1978 Code puts under the charge of the
Commission on Elections (COMELEC). In 1979 the KBL-controlled assembly passed
a law on this matter outlining the rights and privileges of accredited parties. These
include the nomination of official candidates and the right to opt for block voting
where such system is allowed. Block voting is an advantage for government parties in
a system where media access is asymmetrically distributed in favor of the government.

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43 Election Code of 1978, Article II (Section 11).
where most voters are not well informed, and where many of them are barely able to read and write. The current rule on accreditation also seriously inhibits the growth of competitive political parties because it limits accreditation to the first two parties obtaining at least 10 percent of the votes in a previous election. In the 1981 presidential election, not even the Nacionalista Party, which obtained the second largest number of votes, met this requirement. The KBL, however, announced in 1983 that it was willing to give up its accreditation rights to give the opposition a “sporting chance.”

Other rights of accredited parties include party campaign expenditures, representation in the printing and verification of official ballots, and a share in the media space and time mandatorily allotted to COMELEC. Since no party could be accredited other than the KBL, all other parties become seriously disadvantaged, in fact deprived, of availing themselves of these rights. Moreover, election rules change so quickly that even COMELEC has a difficult time keeping up with them. When the rules of the game are so fluid, in addition to being loaded in favor of the ruling party, the growth of competitive parties is unlikely.

Finally, COMELEC, which oversees all electoral matters, is composed of officials who owe their appointment entirely to President Marcos, because he has been in power for the past nineteen years. Again in an effort to demonstrate the government’s willingness to compromise with the opposition, President Marcos offered to appoint to COMELEC two members to be nominated by the opposition. Many opposition members are wary of such moves from the president, however, stating that unless substantive reforms such as the abolition of Amendment 6 and the repeal of the repressive decrees are undertaken, no meaningful elections can be forthcoming and people should not participate in elections. Such was the official position of a political group called Kongreso ng mga Mamamayan Pilipino (KOMPIL) regarding the elections of May 1984 for the regular National Assembly. KOMPIL’s unity, however, rested on a fragile basis. As it turned out, some of the signatories to KOMPIL’s demands did not honor their commitments, and they participated in the May 1984 elections even though there was no substantial compliance by President Marcos with their demands. The cumulative effect of all the cited circumstances is the institutionalization of a one-party system in the Philippines for the time being.

PROSPECTS FOR THE FUTURE

Given the present-day realities in the Philippines as described, it seems unlikely that the erosion of civilian control will be reversed in the next few years. As long as the institutional bases for civilian control continue to lie dormant or repressed, and as long as civilian control continues to rest on the person of President Marcos and the military’s self-inhibition, the return of the mix of civilian-military controls in favor of the civilian political authorities remains doubtful.

One hopeful development in late 1984 was the relief of General Fabian Ver as chief of staff of the AFP and his temporary replacement by General Fidel Ramos (constabulary chief). This was occasioned by the majority report of the Agrava Fact-Finding Board which implicated General Ver in the military conspiracy to
assassinate Aquino. General Ver went on a temporary leave of absence and is expected to remain in that status for the duration of the investigation and trial of the case. The country’s ombudsman, the Tanodbayan, included General Ver as a “principal” in the double murder case of Aquino and his alleged assassin, Rolando Galman, when it adopted the Majority Report’s findings that asserted his implication in covering up the military conspiracy after the assassination.

Many Filipinos view General Ramos as a professional soldier whose primary loyalty is to the Constitution and are hopeful that while he heads the AFP the military will remain subordinate to civilian political authority. One constraint in his capacity to institute reforms within the military to improve its image and restore the people’s confidence in it is the fact that he is just acting chief and hence feels he lacks full powers. As a professional, he would not hastily venture into major structural reforms within the military without such powers.

Another perceived handicap is the alleged loyalty of the RUC commanders to General Ver. This, however, may not remain a handicap should General Ver be found guilty of complicity in the cover-up by the Sandiganbayan, the court which will try the Aquino case. His restoration as chief of staff then becomes impossible.

Nevertheless, the present mix of civilian-military controls in favor of the military, which was facilitated by the role expansion of the latter, can be expected to remain for some time. The reversal of this condition will require a reduction of military size, a prospect that will no doubt be resisted by the military. The labor market will not be able to absorb such a labor force readily, given the current economic crisis that created some 86,186 new unemployed in 1984 alone. Reduction of size would also mean restructuring the offices within the AFP and, with them, the officers heading these offices. This will probably be resisted by the officer corps that stands to be adversely affected by such changes.

The retirement of senior officers trained under the old curricula prescribed by military educational institutions will also affect future civil-military relations. There is talk among retired and older officers about the new ethics prevalent among junior officers. The latter were trained under curricula more socially and politically oriented than those before. Older officers worry about the younger generation’s attachment to the principle of civilian supremacy. Many of them doubt that this principle will be upheld by junior officers in the long run. Intervention could be rationalized in terms of the military’s functional imperative of preserving order and protecting the state in the face of instability and chaos. This view is shared by senior officers who feel that there might be an event leading to the violation of civilian supremacy, such as the sudden death of President Marcos.

Related to this point is the absence of a tested mechanism for regular political succession. There are enough instances in the contemporary world when the military has intervened in politics to install a political leadership of its choice. The opportunities for this kind of military action are reduced when regular mechanisms for political succession exist. This could be one explanation for the persistence of civilian control in the Philippines before 1972, as noted earlier. Frauds in elections notwithstanding, these exercises regularly facilitated the peaceful succession of one leader by another.
Prospects for such a succession are facilitated by the recent emergence of an alternative press (relatively freer than the controlled press), the growth of popular movements throughout the country, the relative success of the opposition parties in the last parliamentary elections, and the recent tendency of the Supreme Court to become more independent. There is no certainty that Filipinos will be given the opportunity to choose a successor to Marcos in the event of the president's death or incapacity before 1987, in spite of the recently approved constitutional amendment restoring the position of the vice-president effective in 1987.

In the event of the president's earlier death, the existing succession rules provide that the Speaker of the Batasang Pambansa presides over the interim, during which the legislature convenes within three days of the presidential vacancy, and within seven days of the meeting enacts a special law calling for presidential elections, which must take place from forty-five to sixty days thereafter. This mechanism, however, operates only if the unexpired portion of the president's tenure is more than eighteen months.

This scenario seemed possible during the second half of November 1984 when the president disappeared from public view from November 14 to 25. Rumors about a critical illness spread all over the country. These temporarily ceased when he appeared briefly on television signing the 1985 budget. But public concern has not been completely assuaged because he continued to miss several public appearances, and because the KBL was reported to be rushing a succession bill^45 that will take care of a loophole in the current succession law, that is, who is to take over in case of temporary incapacity of the president.

The person who has the best chance of filling the political vacuum if the president becomes temporarily incapacitated may be Mrs. Marcos, who is governor of Metro Manila and also the head of the Ministry of Human Settlements. She is allegedly supported by General Ver, who in spite of his temporary relief as chief of staff is believed to have many loyal generals, especially among the RUC commanders. The military or a portion thereof might support Mrs. Marcos under the justification of saving the republic from chaos and destruction.

However, Mrs. Marcos's support would probably last only briefly. She would probably become a liability because of her propensity to promote showcase projects that tend to be costly but not significant for the socioeconomic life of the average Filipino. She is also reportedly unpopular among a significant group of military officers.

Several alternative scenarios exist. Should President Marcos die suddenly, a group of professional officers, possibly below the flag rank, might fill the vacuum in the face of prospective chaos and in pursuit of their perceived professional function of saving the country from destruction, especially if this group were to see the left gaining ground in the interim. Generally, officers are virulently opposed to communism, and they see the broad protest movement, popularly called "the parliament of the streets," as being infiltrated and manipulated by the left for its own ends. It would be

^45 Ang Pahayagang Malaya, December 4, 1984, pp. 1, 2.
logical for them to block the assumption to power even by constitutional means of the leading persons of the “parliament of the streets” for fear that these might yield to leftist pressures. Desire to clean up the military and the government could be another motivation for military intervention.

With respect to the party system, present trends indicate the maintenance of a single dominant party within the immediate future. The traditional political parties, which have been disadvantaged since 1972, are not likely to recover overnight in the face of all the constraints imposed on them by the general political situation and the electoral laws in effect today. Martial law disrupted the organizational development of opposition political parties, decimated their leadership, and inhibited them from developing future leaders who could continue the work of rebuilding viable parties after the old leadership has passed from the scene and when conditions become conducive once again for competitive politics. In view of the current situation, the KBL is likely to remain the dominant party (although in the event of President Marcos’ sudden demise the KBL will probably splinter). Some other parties will probably continue to act as cosmetizing agents within the regime. A military takeover, moreover, would probably maintain the dominant party system instead of allowing competitive politics to develop, precisely because the military approach to decision making is antagonistic to compromise, bargaining, and negotiation, features that characterize competitive politics.

Yet there is another possible scenario for the future. If the military does not intervene after President Marcos passes from the political scene, the chances for a democratic restoration seem bright. As already noted, a section of the media has become freer, multisectional bodies of citizens have become more politically aware and active in public affairs, the parliamentary success of more opposition candidates has been realized, and the Supreme Court has become a little less controlled. These are positive signs that, if they continue to grow in the future, could lead to a more liberalized environment conducive to the growth of competitive politics.

In sum, the reversal of the process that began in 1972 affecting both the mix in civilian-military controls and the party system is fraught with difficulties. The intensely fluid state of contemporary Philippine politics makes it difficult to provide accurate evaluations of future prospects. On the other hand, precisely because of this fluidity, one is tempted to project a future for political institutionalization in the Philippines that is bleak. Given existing conditions, the dismal record of political institution building in the Philippines that characterizes the last decade or so will probably continue.
13. Institution Building in South Asia

Myron Weiner

Of the imperial powers, only the Soviet Union and the United Kingdom have an impressive record of leaving behind their distinctive political institutions in the countries they once occupied. From one point of view, the Soviet record of institutional transfer is perfect. In every country of Eastern Europe once occupied by the Soviet army, the basic institutions of governance put in place by the Soviets have remained: the communist party, the secret police, the military, state-run public corporations, and collective agricultural institutions. Some older institutions of the precommunist period have persisted and some new institutions have emerged—the Catholic Church and Solidarity come to mind—but thus far they have not significantly transformed the Soviet-modeled institutional structure. But how legitimate these state institutions are is a matter of doubt: would they continue in their present form in Poland, for example, were they not sustained by the threat of Soviet intervention, or would they have remained in Czechoslovakia and Hungary if the Soviet army had not intervened?

The British imprint on their former colonies is less all-inclusive than the Soviet's, but considerably more legitimate in the sense that these institutions are not sustained by the prospect of British intervention. Certainly, many former British colonies have long since given up the Westminster system: Tanzania, Kenya, and Uganda have abandoned democratic elections, competitive parties, and a freely elected parliament. Pakistan and Bangladesh, for most of their postindependence history, have been under military rule, as have Ghana and several of the other former British colonies in Africa. Nonetheless an impressive number of former British colonies still remains that have British-style democratic institutions: India, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Nigeria (until December 1983), Jamaica, Papua—New Guinea, Botswana, Gambia, Mauritius, Fiji, Nauru, and Belize. In several of these countries the democratic parliamentary model has been fragile and (in Nigeria and India) erratic. Nor can one speak with confidence of the future of democratic parliamentary institutions in all these countries. Still, among the newly independent countries of the Caribbean, Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and the Pacific, competitive democracies exist only among
the former British colonies. Not a single former American, Dutch, Belgian, or French colony currently has democratic institutions. The Philippines, Indonesia, Zaire, Vietnam do not now (and, with the exception of the Philippines, as independent states never did) have the political institutions introduced by their former rulers.

Why the British have had more success in institutional transfer than other imperial powers, and why these institutions have remained intact in some of the former British colonies is an important issue in comparative political analysis. It is the purpose of this essay to deal with the second question, focusing attention on institutional developments in South Asia, with the hope that such an analysis may illuminate the larger question of the conditions under which institutions, especially democratic institutions, are transferred, sustained, modified, or eroded.

VICEROYAL AND WESTMINSTER MODELS

Of the three successor states to British India, only India has successfully sustained a British democratic model, with competitive political parties, eight national parliamentary elections, an independent judiciary, a nonpolitical military, the police and paramilitary institutions controlled by elected representatives, a free press, and associations (including trade unions, peasant organizations, and caste associations) more or less free from state domination. True enough, the Indian experience has been flawed: for twenty-one months from June 26, 1975, to March 1977 India lived under emergency rule when the electoral process was suspended, leading opposition figures were in jail, a number of political parties banned, the press censored, and the power of the judiciary circumscribed. But the elections of March 1977 (called by an authoritarian government) brought about the defeat of Mrs. Indira Gandhi and her governing Congress party, and the restoration of democratic institutions, a process not reversed by Mrs. Gandhi’s return to power in the parliamentary elections of 1980. The durability of India’s democratic institutions was further demonstrated by the orderly transition of Rajiv Gandhi to power following the assassination of Prime Minister Gandhi by Sikh extremists. Rajiv Gandhi’s own position was further solidified with his victory in the parliamentary elections held in December 1984.

In Pakistan, British parliamentary institutions formally came to an end on October 7, 1958, when President Iskander Mirza dissolved the national parliament and the provincial assemblies, dismissed the central and provincial governments, banned all political parties, abrogated the 1956 constitution, declared martial law, and appointed General Mohammad Ayub Khan, commander-in-chief of the Pakistan army, as chief martial law administrator, placing all armed forces of Pakistan under his command. In a national radio broadcast the next day, General Ayub Khan explained that the decision had been taken “with great reluctance, but with the fullest conviction that there was no alternative to it except the disintegration and complete ruination of the country.” Thus, Pakistan abruptly ended a decade of Westminster parliamentary government characterized by competitive political parties, elections, a free press, an
independent judiciary, and freedom of association. In its place emerged an administra-
tive state controlled by a civil and military bureaucracy, a viceregal system of authority
based upon a patrimonial process of decision making.

Efforts to create a competitive parliamentary system in Bangladesh proved to be
abortive. The founders of Bangladesh, Mujibur Rahman and his Awami League party,
assured their supporters that once East Pakistan became an independent country it
would (in contrast to Pakistan) be an open, competitive, democratic system run by
political parties freely elected. But it was Mujib himself who on December 28, 1974,
barely three years after Bangladesh became independent, proclaimed a state of
emergency, suspended all fundamental rights, abolished all opposition parties, closed
down most of the country's daily newspapers, and created a one-party dictatorship.
Eight months later, on August 15, 1975—the anniversary of the British withdrawal
from South Asia—the military in a lightning and bloody coup overthrew Sheikh
Mujib, killing him and almost every member of his family, and established an
administrative state under the civil and military bureaucracy.

Both Pakistan and Bangladesh have experienced institutional changes since
their first coup. Pakistan had a competitive national parliamentary election in 1971,
but it proved to be a catalyst for civil war when the military refused to turn power over
to an East Pakistani Awami League majority. Civilian government was restored in
1972 when the army stepped down and the leader of the Pakistan People's Party,
Zulfikar Ali Bhutto (whose party had a majority), was invited to form a government.
The new government, however, was nearly as autocratic as its military predecessors,
and it ended with a military coup in 1978 that had considerable support from the
opposition parties.

The attempt to move Bangladesh out of military government proved no more
successful. In 1978, three years after he took power, General Ziaur Rahman held
Bangladesh's first general elections with some measure of open competitive politics.
But only three years later, in May 1981, President Ziaur Rahman was killed by an
assassin. Once again elections were held, with candidates put up by the Bangladesh
Nationalist Party that Zia had founded in 1978, and the Bangladesh Awami League,
the party of the late Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. Abdus Sattar, leader of the BNP, easily
won with 66 percent of the vote, but the following year Lieutenant General Hossain
Mohammad Ershad seized power on behalf of the army and appointed himself chief
martial law administrator. Some 200 persons were arrested, including former mini-
sters, parliament was dissolved, a martial law order was issued enabling Ershad to act
in place of the parliament, and the martial law administrator assumed the authority to
appoint civilian judges. Once again, the military and civil administrations were in
complete control.

It would be incorrect to conclude from this brief account that the Indians
inherited the British institutional legacy, while Pakistan and Bangladesh did not. Each
in its own way has built upon the institutional foundations initially created by the
British: Pakistan and Bangladesh on those institutions that sustained the imperial state,
and India on the electoral institutions, parliament, state assemblies, and political
parties that the British either nurtured or tolerated. Indeed, it is commonplace in much
of the scholarly writings about Pakistan and Bangladesh to point to the similarities between these governments and the spirit as well as institutions of British viceregal rule. The viceroys and governors-general were, after all, not democratic rulers, and British authority rested upon the coercive powers of the military, the police, and civil administration. The commander-in-chief of the military shared authority with civilian administrators, reporting directly to the British government, and neither military nor civilian authorities were held accountable to elected officials for their actions. There was a division of powers between the executive and judicial branches of government at the higher levels, but at the district level the senior officers combined both judicial and administrative functions. Administrators had a paternalistic view of their own authority and little regard for the elected politicians permitted by the British to exercise some authority at the local and provincial level.

The viceregal model is thus just as much a part of the British tradition as the Westminster model.

WHY THE INSTITUTIONAL DIVERGENCES IN SOUTH ASIA?

How, then, does one explain the divergent institutional paths taken by India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh? Many conventional explanations about why some countries in the Third World have taken an authoritarian path while others have remained democratic do not apply in South Asia. The theory, for example, that there are socioeconomic determinants of democratic institutions does not explain the divergences in South Asia. According to this theory, democracy is not compatible with illiterate and impoverished populations, rapid population growth, large-scale unemployment, rural misery, and urban squalor. Such conditions, it is argued, make the poor vulnerable to revolutionary appeals. A variant of this argument is that a high rate of economic growth, accompanied by an inequitable distribution of its benefits, will widen the gap between the rich and the poor and generate class conflicts and revolutionary movements. Both growth-oriented and equity-oriented economists and social scientists conclude that unless there is either rapid growth or more equity, democracy will not survive in India. Thus, in the fifties and early sixties many observers warned that too much attention to industrial development as compared with agriculture would turn the peasantry against the government; in the late sixties and early seventies, in contrast, observers feared that the Green Revolution would widen the gap between rich landowning peasants and the landless agricultural laborers and small landowners, resulting in class conflict in the countryside.¹

Inequities and impoverishment are commonplace in India, and of the same magnitude as in Pakistan and Bangladesh. Growth rates have varied from year to year,

¹ A review of various theories of democracy and their applicability (or inapplicability) to contemporary developing countries can be found in Myron Weiner, "Empirical Democratic Theory," in Ergun Ozbudun and Myron Weiner, eds., Competitive Elections in Developing Countries (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, in press).
and neither the level nor rate of change in national income has had an impact on the form of government. Few observers would argue that Mrs. Gandhi’s decision to declare a national emergency in 1975 was a consequence of economic deterioration.

It is true, on the other hand, that the military coup in Pakistan in 1958 followed a period of economic decline. The cost-of-living index had risen from 98 to 120 between 1949 and 1958 in West Pakistan and from 103 to 117 in East Pakistan. Pakistan also had problems in its balance of payments. On almost any economic measure, however, India’s economic performance during this period was hardly better. The cost-of-living index rose from 96 to 124 in the five years 1953 to 1958, and the balance-of-payments deficit was substantial. “In all cases,” wrote Wayne Wilcox, “an objective comparison would favor Pakistan... [but] no one seriously advocated martial law for India.”

According to another theory, social heterogeneity is a threat both to democratic institutions and to the state itself. On the scale of social heterogeneity, postindependence Pakistan ranked among the most diversified countries in the world. Pakistan’s cleavages were made worse by two factors: the division of the country into two parts, and the overlapping of ethnic groups across international borders. Pakistan shared its Pathan population with Afghanistan, a country that asserted a claim over the Pushtun-speaking regions, and it shared its Baluch population with both Iran and Afghanistan. It controlled a small part of Kashmir and claimed the entire province of Kashmir from India. Both the Punjab and Bengali-speaking East Pakistan shared the same linguistic/ethnic identity with neighboring populations in India, although they diverged on matters of religious identity.

It is therefore plausible to conclude that ethnic strains must have played a role in the demise of democracy in Pakistan. Moreover, it also appeared as if religious, caste, and linguistic cleavages would tear India apart, leaving either a weak, truncated center with powerful provincial rulers or, alternatively, an authoritarian state that would hold the country together by coercion. Heterogeneity, however, has not destroyed Indian democracy, nor that of Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Fiji, Mauritius, and several other developing countries, nor that of Canada, Belgium, Switzerland, the Netherlands, or the United States. Moreover, though Bangladesh is a remarkably homogeneous country—almost the entire population speaks Bengali, and there are few sharp cultural-economic cleavages, the well-to-do Hindus having left the country in 1947, and West Pakistani capitalists having left in 1971—the country has not sustained democratic institutions.

In part, one can account for the differences among the countries of South Asia on the basis of their institutional legacy. In August 1947 the Indian army was divided: fifteen infantry regiments were given to India, eight to Pakistan. A similar two-to-one division took place in the armored corps and artillery regiments. But ordnance

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3 The classic statement concerning the inappropriateness of democracy in a heterogeneous society is John Stuart Mill’s Representative Government. For an alternative view of the way in which representative government and cultural pluralism can and have been made compatible, see Arend Lijphart, Democracy in Plural Societies: A Comparative Exploration (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1977).
factories were located primarily in India, and in the division of equipment Pakistan actually received less than the one-third initially proposed. Among commissioned officers, Pakistan received disproportionately fewer than India since only 23.7 percent of the officers were Muslims as compared with 56 percent Hindus.4

Nor did Pakistan fare better in administrative services. At the time of independence there were 549 Indians in the Indian Civil Service and Indian Political Service, of whom 101 were Muslims. Ninety-five opted for service in Pakistan. Moreover, the penetration of the administrative services into the North West Frontier Province and into Baluchistan was less than in most provinces of India or the other provinces of Pakistan.5

In short, the administrative services and the military were initially weaker in Pakistan than in India. Moreover, within Pakistan both the administration and military were less developed in East Pakistan than in the West: only two members of the Indian Civil Service were from East Pakistan and there were few military officers from the lower ranks who came from Bengal. Even on the eve of the civil war, the Bengalis were disproportionately underrepresented within both the Pakistan military and the civil bureaucracy—an important element in Bengali resentment of what they viewed as Pakistani domination. But the breakdown of civilian rule in Pakistan in 1958, as we shall explore later, can hardly be attributed to the weakness of the military or civil bureaucracy. The military grew quickly in size, and its political position was enhanced as the politicians proved unable to resolve the major institutional issues essential to the task of governing. For an explanation of why political developments in India and Pakistan diverged as they did, we need to examine the way in which the political as distinct from state institutions developed within the pre-1947 areas that ultimately went to Pakistan.

ELECTORAL AND PARTY POLITICS IN BRITISH INDIA

The political party system that developed in British India not only reflected the divisions between Hindus and Muslims but was substantially conditioned by the electoral process created by the British authorities. The electoral principle was first introduced in India in 1884 for local bodies and in 1892 for provincial councils. The Gladstone Liberals looked upon the introduction of elected governments as a first step toward national self-government. In contrast, the British Conservatives were of the opinion that an electoral system along British lines—one person/one vote, territorial representation, and majority rule—would be disastrous for India’s Muslims. Their concern for the Muslims was based less on an abstract notion of justice than on their awareness of the need to sustain Muslim support for British rule in India. Once the Liberals had won on the question of whether the elective principle should be introduced into India, the Conservatives turned their attention to the question of how

best to ensure representation for the Muslim minority. The issue was resolved with the appointment of a commission cochaired by John Morley, the Liberal secretary of state for India, and Lord Minto, the Conservative viceroy. Minto, in a letter to Morley, said, “I am as firmly convinced as I believe you to be that any electoral representation in India would be doomed to mischievous failure which aimed at granting a personal enfranchisement, regardless of the beliefs and traditions of the communities composing the population of this continent. . . . The Mohammedan community may rest assured that their political rights and interests as a community will be safeguarded by any administrative re-organization with which I am concerned.”

Minto successfully argued for “communal” electorates in which Muslims could vote for their own candidates. In 1909 the Morley-Minto Reforms were introduced. They provided for a further extension of the elective principle to the legislative councils in the states, an extension of the suffrage, and the establishment of a system of communal electorates into all elected bodies. Communal electorates freed both Hindu and Muslim politicians from needing to win the support of the other community. Communal electorates assured Muslim politicians that they could win elections solely by appealing to the interests and loyalties of Muslims. Communal electorates guaranteed that two party systems—not a two-party system—would develop, one for the Muslims and the other for the Hindus. Social cleavages were thus institutionalized into a system of political dualism.

The major institutions of state in South Asia were created by the British—the military, the bureaucracy, the courts, the legal system, and elections themselves—but the political parties, though shaped by these institutions, were wholly an outgrowth of an indigenous process, not a foreign transplant. There are, however, two separate stories to be told, the story of the development of parties primarily among Hindus in the areas that subsequently became part of India, and the story of the growth of the parties among the Muslims, both in the areas that became part of Pakistan and within the areas that remained in India. Both histories have been told at great length elsewhere and need not be repeated here. What does need to be emphasized, however, are those features of the preindependence party development that significantly influenced the role played by parties after partition and independence.

Among the Hindus the great social division at the turn of the century was between the newly emerging urban middle classes and the older elites, the landlords and members of the ruling families. Initially, the Indian National Congress primarily reflected the interests of the urban middle classes, but in the 1920s Gandhi turned the Congress into a mass movement, appealing to the peasantry and industrial labor as well as to the middle classes. The party functioned at the level of a mass protest movement, but at the same time it also took on characteristics of a political party with provincial and district offices, dues-paying members, internal elections, fund raising, all made necessary by the need to contest elections to legislative bodies. The Indian

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National Congress was not the only political party that won support among India’s Hindus. There were a variety of regional parties and countless local political agitations of limited duration. But in the elections of 1936–37 for the provincial assemblies, the regional parties among the non-Muslim population were virtually wiped out: Congress formed ministries in seven of the eleven provinces, six with a clear majority of seats.

The Muslim League, organized in 1906, was the first major national Muslim organization, but unlike Congress its roots were primarily among the landholding aristocracy and only later did it attract the urban Muslim middle classes. Not until the late thirties and early forties did it acquire mass support among Muslims. Indeed, in the 1936–37 elections the League failed to win a majority of the reserved Muslim seats. The League won only 109 out of 485 seats—and these were primarily in the Hindu majority provinces, not in the areas that subsequently became Pakistan. In the Muslim-majority provinces the League did poorly, winning 40 out of 117 seats in Bengal, 2 out of 86 seats in Punjab, and none in the North West Frontier Province and in Sind. In each case it was a regional party that won the Muslim vote: the Krishak Praja Party in Bengal, the Unionist Party in the Punjab, the Khudai Kidmatgar in the Northwest Frontier Province—parties that opposed the League and its proposal for a Muslim-majority Pakistan state. The League subsequently won popular support, and its popularity increased as the prospect of a British withdrawal grew. Fear of Congress (and Hindu) domination became a driving force behind the movement for a Pakistan state. Many provincial leaders, though distrustful of Jinnah and his associates in the Muslim League, rallied behind the League as the one political force capable of representing India’s Muslims in negotiations with the British over the future of the Indian state.

The commitment to the idea of a Pakistan state, however, was historically rooted in the Muslim-minority areas of India, mainly in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, and Bombay and not in the areas that subsequently became part of Pakistan. Thus, when Pakistan was founded in 1947, its strongest supporters, those who cherished a Pakistani as opposed to a regional identity, were the migrants from the Muslim-minority areas that remained in India. Pakistan’s governing party after independence had its roots, both historically and socially, in areas outside of Pakistan. League leaders saw themselves not only as the founders of Pakistan but the only political group sufficiently identified with the state to legitimately take part in the country’s political life. Said Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan in 1950: “The formation of new political parties in opposition to the Muslim League is against the best interests of Pakistan. If the Muslim League is not made strong and powerful and the mushroom growth of parties is not checked immediately, I assure you that Pakistan which was achieved after great sacrifices, will not survive.”

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8 Rizvi, The Military, p. 61.
League leaders did not trust the recent converts to the cause of Pakistan, and many of the provincial leaders were hostile to the centralizing, nationalizing instincts of *muhajirs*, the immigrants from India. From the moment of its birth Pakistani elites and their supporters were divided over what should be the institutional structure of the new nation.⁹

**THE WEAKNESS OF POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS IN PAKISTAN**

The institutional structure of a political system determines who can participate in the political arena. The political struggles in much of the Third World over institutions is thus a struggle among various groups about how much power each should have and who should be excluded from power sharing. The victory of one group or coalition in determining the institutional structure does not end the struggle unless the new institutional arrangements are perceived as legitimate by all significant politically articulate forces. In the absence of that legitimacy, the struggle to reshape the country's institutional structures will continue. The political problem in much of the Third World is not merely unstable governments—frequent changes of government are not uncommon in the older European democracies—but that the existing institutions lack legitimate authority. How illegitimate these institutions are in much of the Third World is demonstrated by the frequent need by many military regimes to promise a return to civil government (an admission of their own illegitimacy); by the head of one-party dictators to promise more competitiveness and openness within the party, and by the effort of many dictators to create ideologies (“Nasserism,” “Mujib-ism,” Islamic socialism, “Guided Democracy”) that might serve to legitimate governing institutions.

The political development of Pakistan from 1947 to the present and that of its partitioned successor state, Bangladesh, since 1972, illustrate these points. The most divisive issues in the united Pakistan were not questions of public policy, though there were clashes over questions of land reform, the respective roles of the public and private sector, taxation, education, and other issues typical of developing countries. But these were secondary or derivative as compared with the issues of whether West Pakistan should be a single-unit province or federalized, the degree of autonomy of the provinces in relation to the center, the authority of the president in relation to parliament, and the question of bureaucratic-military rule versus elected representative government. The country has already had three constitutions: a parliamentary Westminster-style constitution approved in 1956 but revoked by the military two years later, a centralized presidential-style constitution promulgated in 1962 and intended to legitimate military rule under Ayub, and a centralized but civilianized semiautocratic system put in place by Prime Minister Bhutto in 1973 and subsequently suspended by President Zia. The debate over institutional forms continues. The same issues that

⁹ “The defence of the state is our foremost consideration. It dominates all other governmental activities.” Liaquat Ali Khan, 1948. Quoted by Rizvi, ibid., p. 52.
have divided Pakistanis for more than a third of a century still remain unresolved: the respective roles of military and civilian bureaucratic institutions versus organized political parties, the character of the legal structure, centralism versus federalism, and the relationship between Islam and state institutions and policies. As in the past, behind the debate over institutional forms lies the question of which groups should have power, how much, what kind, and how accountable.

The muhajirs (immigrants) and Punjabis have been the dominant elites in Pakistan since its inception. Both groups feared the rise of the Bengali majority from East Pakistan. The schism over the respective representation of East and West Pakistan in the national government, and the issue of a single unit for West Pakistan, revolved around the Punjabi-muhajir anxiety over the prospects of losing political control to the Bengalis, alone or in association with the linguistic minorities in the West—the Baluch, Pashtun, and Sindhis. The 1956 constitution provided for the consolidation of the four provinces of West Pakistan into a single unit, with representation in the national parliament based upon parity between East and West Pakistan rather than on the basis of population. A coalition government, led by the Bengali Suhrawardy, which sought to use the resources of the center to strengthen the economy of East Pakistan, proved threatening to the Punjabis and muhajirs in the West. National elections were scheduled for February 1959, but in a preemptive strike the Punjabi-dominated military took over the country in October 1958, establishing a dictatorship of senior army officers and civil servants. This group ruled the country under martial law decrees until 1962; during this period not a single Bengali was in the cabinet.10

Just as the Muslim League before independence opposed the establishment of a democratic system in India based on personal enfranchisement and representation according to population on the grounds that the Muslims would be outvoted by the Hindus, so too in postindependence Pakistan, Punjabi and muhajir elites opposed the establishment of a democratic system that would permit Bengali domination. The overwhelming defeat of the Muslim League in the provincial elections in East Bengal in 1954 proved in retrospect to have been a decisive element in persuading the West Pakistanis that the Bengalis wanted a political party of their own and that there was a serious possibility that a politically cohesive Bengali population could take control over the central government in a free national election.

Ayub Khan sought to legitimate not only his own rule but that of a set of institutions that would in effect prevent the Bengalis from taking power.11 The constitution of 1962 provided for presidential government and indirect elections by "basic democrats" or elected local elites. The constitution was rejected by the Awami League, which in 1966 issued its six-point program: (1) the reintroduction of a


parliamentary form of government and universal adult franchise; (2) a federal form of
government with defense and foreign affairs in the hands of the center and all residual
powers to reside in the two states of East Bengal and West Pakistan; (3) separate
currencies and state banks for the two states; (4) taxation powers in the hands of the
states; (5) independence for the two states in international trade, and (6) the develop-
ment of a militia or paramilitary force in East Bengal. The governing elite in West
Pakistan saw these demands as threatening to the very existence of the state of Pakistan
and to their own dominant role within it.

By the late sixties the military-bureaucratic elite was persuaded that their efforts
to create a legitimate set of institutions had not succeeded. Yaya Khan, Ayub's
military successor, agreed to hold national elections for parliament in December 1970.
Many observers believe that the military assumed that the Bengali vote would be split
among several parties so that there was little prospect of the Bengalis dominating the
central government and imposing their six-point program on the West Pakistani elites.
But the overwhelming victory of the Awami League—it captured 160 out of 162
national assembly seats allocated to East Bengal, giving them a clear majority of
assembly seats—alarmed the West Pakistani elites. The Pakistani People’s Party
(PPP), a left-of-center socialist party committed to a strong center, won 82 of the 138
seats allocated to West Pakistan, a clear majority in the Sind and Punjab, but got no
support in the Frontier Province or in Baluchistan.

The civil war that ensued, the military defeat by India, and the breakup of
Pakistan meant, among other things, a massive defeat for the civil and military
bureaucracy that had run the country since 1958. The military turned power over to
Bhutto largely as a result of pressure from junior officers, who believed that the defeat
of the military in 1965 and again in 1971 was a result of the incompetence of the
generals. The generals put Bhutto in power in an effort to stem the revolt within the
military and in the hope that they could continue to control the government through
Bhutto. But several months after taking power, Bhutto dismissed many of the senior
military officers, including those who had placed him in power.

Bhutto devoted many of his five years in power to the restructuring of Pakistan’s
political institutions. He introduced a new constitution modeled after the British
viceregal tradition. The president (Bhutto) was given much of the authority of the
British viceroys. Provincial ministries were responsible not to the legislatures but to
the governors appointed by and accountable to the president. Bhutto used these
powers to remove from power the opposition and regionalist National Awami Party in
the North West Frontier Province and in Baluchistan. At the same time, Bhutto took
steps to weaken the position both of the military and the senior administrators, the
Civil Service of Pakistan (CSP). The power of the courts was limited and several laws
were passed expanding the power of the executive at the expense of the courts. And in
an effort to win popular support for these measures Bhutto, a Berkeley-educated,
Westernized intellectual, sought to nurture and politically harness the growing
religious resurgence in the country. He called for “Islamic socialism,” banned gam-
bling, alcohol, and nightclubs, called for an “Islamic bomb,” and declared the
Ahmediyas, a heterodox sect, as non-Islamic. But Bhutto failed to win the support of

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the Islamic fundamentalist groups or of the regionalist-minded minorities, while his autocratic style and his moves against the bureaucracy and courts antagonized much of the urban middle classes.12

Once again elections demonstrated the sharp divisions within the country. Nine opposition parties joined together to form the Pakistan National Alliance (PNA), with strong support from the urban middle classes, the fundamentalists, and some of the regional minorities. In the 1977 national assembly elections, the PNA succeeded in arousing considerable popular support, but when the votes were in the PNA had won only in the North West Frontier Province (with 65.4 percent of the seats) and garnered another 26 percent of the seats in the Sind. Bhutto’s Pakistan People’s Party, which by now had attracted support from landed groups on the one hand and sectors of the rural and urban poor on the other, swept the Punjab with 93 percent of the seats and the Sind with 75 percent of the seats. Nationally the PPP won 58 percent of the vote, the PNA 35 percent.13

Bhutto’s triumph in the Punjab came as a surprise. The opposition was persuaded that the polls were rigged; large-scale demonstrations, then riots, broke out in Lahore, Hyderabad, and other large cities. Bhutto called out the army to restore order, but the opposition, with popular urban backing, continued to challenge him. Finally, in July 1977, General Zia ul Haq staged a bloodless coup d’etat. Bhutto was subsequently arrested on the charges of having conspired to murder a political opponent and in April 1979 was hanged.14

The Military Seeks Legitimacy Through Islamization

Once again the military justified its intervention on the grounds that the major political groups had reached an impasse and that Bhutto’s Pakistan People’s Party was no longer able to govern the country without the military. Once again the military promised that its tenure would be brief as it prepared the country for an orderly return to civilian rule.

Eight years later President Zia remains in power, running a far more stable government than anyone anticipated. The execution of Bhutto did not result in any mass movement against the military government. The frequently postponed elections and the outlawing of political parties have resulted in few organized protests by parties or political strikes by trade unions. Regional protests have subsided. Baluchistan, in violent revolt against Bhutto’s central government from 1973 to 1977, has remained

quiet. So has the North West Frontier, once the center for a movement for the creation of an independent Pushtunistan.\footnote{The role of Baluch and Pushtun separatism in contemporary Pakistan is described by Ataur Rahman, “Pakistan: Unity or Further Divisions?” in Wilson and Dalton, The States of South Asia, pp. 197–222.} There have been few student protests, and many students have joined the Jamaat-i-Islami, an Islamic group that is mildly supportive of the Zia government. The Movement for the Restoration of Democracy, a coalition of what the government describes as “defunct” political parties, appears thus far only to be a force in the Sind. A terrorist movement, the Al-Zulfikar, led by the son of the late prime minister, dramatically hijacked a Pakistan International Airways DC10 in 1982, but the result was a popular revulsion against this Kabul-based group. The ulema remain critical of Zia, insisting that his Islamization program is moving too slowly, but they evidently prefer the present government to its predecessor or to any elected government. At the same time much of the Westernized middle class resents the Islamization program, but its effect on their daily lives has been limited.

The major institutional innovation of the Zia regime is its attempt to infuse Islamic ideas into legal and economic institutions.\footnote{The attempt by both Bhutto and Zia to use Islam to provide legitimacy for their regimes and as a force for creating a sense of national identity is described by John L. Esposito, ed., Islam and Development: Religion and Sociopolitical Change (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1980), pp. 139–162; and Edward Mortimer, Faith and Power: The Politics of Islam (New York: Vintage Books), pp. 186–229.} Zia has reconstituted the Islamic Ideology Council, an advisory council to the president responsible for recommending measures for creating a more Islamic system of government. Pakistan’s penal code has been modified to provide for the imposition of hudud (Quran-prescribed penalties) for adultery, drinking, theft, and false accusation. Shariat benches or courts were created in 1978 to determine whether specific laws were contrary to the Shariah. The Shariat courts now represent one of three competing legal institutions: there is also the civil court system, including the Supreme Court, high courts for each of the four provinces, and district and lower courts; and there is the system of martial law courts empowered to deal with violations of martial law crimes, such as the gathering of politicians, riots, and demonstrations. These three legal systems represent the three major legal traditions competing within Pakistan: British, autocratic military, and Islamic.

Zia has also sought to Islamize many economic institutions: a Zakat Fund was created to finance social welfare programs. Zakat and ushr (an agricultural tax) have been introduced. Interest-free banking has been established, along with a system called Profit/Loss Sharing (PLS), which permits account holders to share in company profits rather than earn interest.

Zia has pressed the bureaucracy to become more Islamic in conduct and appearance, a demand made more palatable to the secularized bureaucracy because of the steps taken by Zia to restore to the Civil Services of Pakistan many of the powers and much of the prestige that it lost under Bhutto. Similarly, the business community has been able to live with an “Islamic economy” because the present military regime is committed to the protection of private property and toward reversing the nationalization measures and socialist controls adopted by Bhutto.
In a situation in which the press continues to be censored, many opposition leaders are in jail, and antigovernment strikes are halted by martial law authorities, an assessment of Zia’s popularity or the acceptability of the new institutions is a matter of conjecture. In his quest for legitimacy, President Zia held a referendum in December 1984 seeking approval for his Islamization policy, then used that approval as an endorsement of himself as president for another five years. But most observers believe that popular sentiment for the restoration of civilian government remains high. Corruption persists, though Zia himself has not been touched by any scandals. The army still remains primarily Punjabi and secondarily Pathan, with little representation from Sind or Baluchistan. Many view Zia’s efforts to Islamize the Pakistani state as a tactical maneuver by a military that remains Westernized and secular in spirit, in spite of Zia’s own devotion as a Muslim believer. Many Baluch and Sindhis (and some Pathans) view military rule as a cover for Punjabi dominance, since Punjabis are predominant not only in the military, but in the civil bureaucracy, in the business community, and among the wealthier farmers.

Though it has been transformed by many martial law decrees, the 1973 constitution technically remains in effect and President Zia agreed to hold party-less elections for the National Assembly in early 1985, an admission that, Islamization notwithstanding, there is considerable popular support for the restoration of popular democratic government.

The persistence of the regime—Zia has now been in office for eight years—and the limited pressure for political change, have in part been the result of external circumstances. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan has clearly strengthened the Zia government. It led the United States to revive its military and economic aid programs. The $3.2 billion economic and military assistance package has strengthened Zia’s standing within the military and the bureaucracy. The International Monetary Fund, the Aid-to-Pakistan Club, and a consortium of international commercial banks have been more forthcoming since December 1979. Neither the Pathans nor the Baluch are presently inclined to destabilize the government at the risk of inviting external intervention. Zia’s continuation of the Bhutto policy of strengthening Pakistan’s relations with the Islamic world has been made easier. Since 1980, aid from Saudi Arabia and other Middle East countries has been stepped up.

The Soviet presence in Afghanistan, and the response to it by the West and by the Middle East, thus helped to avert an economic crisis for Pakistan, reduced criticism of the government from within the military and bureaucracy, and lowered opposition to the government from both regional and Islamic groups.

In the long run, however, few governments in Asia remain in as precarious a position as the present government of Pakistan. Its weakness derives first of all from

the absence of a clear national identity. A state created by secular Muslims from India, it remains vulnerable to the demand of orthodox Muslims that it be converted from a country for Muslims into an Islamic state. The military and the bureaucracy remain dominated by the Punjabis and to a lesser extent by Pathans, while the Sindhis and Baluch have little power. Though the military has governed Pakistan almost continuously since 1956 (with a break from 1972 to 1977), it is not popular. The government has sought to increase political representation by creating national and provincial advisory councils and some elected local bodies, but the politicized urban middle classes remain deprived of political rights.

Which of the two institutional traditions established by the British, the viceregal or parliamentary democratic, is likely to prevail in Pakistan? Will the present military-bureaucratic state, reinforced by Islamic laws, institutions, and sentiments, persist or can Pakistan be redemocratized? One way of addressing the question is to look at the experience of other countries that have shifted from democratic to military rule and back again. There are a handful of such cases: Greece, Turkey, Nigeria, Colombia, and Venezuela. Though each has its own peculiar features, there are some shared elements that may prove relevant for Pakistan.

Conditions for Demilitarization

In each of the cases just cited, the transition to democracy took place because the military made it possible. In none did the military collapse, overthrown by democratic forces. The disintegration of military authority and a mass upheaval on the part of political forces hostile to the military, all leading to redemocratization is, historically speaking, the most unlikely outcome. These are situations that lead to intensification of military rule and an increase in repression rather than a broadening to democratization.

Under what conditions might a military regime relinquish its authority? One condition is that the military is assured that the conditions of disintegration (as defined by the military) that precipitated the decision to take power not be reestablished. The Nigerian military, for example, eager to prevent the recurrence of ethnic conflicts that might lead to civil war, reconstructed a constitutional framework to prevent the formation of tribal parties and electorates. They set the ground rules under which political parties could run and how many votes each had to obtain from the several regions of the country to be declared a political party.

Other military regimes feared the return of radical parties, particularly in the case of the Greek and Turkish military. Outlawing the communists and other radical groups has often been a step that has enabled the military to set constraints on who could participate in the political arena. Such a ban need not persist, of course: in Spain the centrist government of Suarez ended the ban on the communists imposed by the military and thereby deprived the left of the political advantages of martyrdom. And in Greece, the Papandreou government restored civil rights to the parties of the left.
In Latin America the pressure of the center and of the right wing to redemocratize politics has often proven a more potent force than pressure from the left-wing parties, which has often had just the opposite effect. Pressure for political participation by the right and center tends to reassure a military regime that justifies its domination as a means of preventing the rise to power of radical forces. In Greece, Turkey, Colombia, Portugal, and Spain the transition to democratic rule was made possible by the presence of a conservative party to whom power could be transferred. In Greece, for example, the military was prepared to transfer power to Karamanlis, a right-wing politician who assured the military of many of its perquisites. The conservatives may, of course, prove to serve as a transition to a more left-of-center government, as was the case in Greece. Moreover, the elections permitted by the military may not result in the election of the military’s choice, as was demonstrated in Turkey in 1983 when the Motherland Party led by Turgut Oxlal won over the objections of President (and General) Kenan Evran. Still, Oxlal was clearly acceptable to the military, for the Motherland Party was committed to a liberal economic policy and took no positions threatening to the military.

Another consideration is whether the military is confident that, if civilian rule is restored, the military will not be prosecuted for crimes it committed when in power. The Nigerian military elite, for example, wanted some assurances from the political elites. A similar concern shaped the attitude of the Argentinian military toward the question of whether and how to democratize politics, particularly in the light of the military record of forcing the “disappearance” of many of its opponents. Again, these assurances may be violated by a postmilitary civilian regime. In Greece, for example, Karamanlis placed some key military figures under arrest, and in Argentina the present civilian government has arrested generals on charges of abuses of power.

The military also wants to be assured that the military budget will not be decimated by a civilian government and that the military will continue to have a decisive voice in the magnitude of military expenditures, the disposition of forces, control over internal promotions, the kind of military technology to be acquired, and which countries equipment should be purchased from. Mujib’s six-point program calling for autonomy for East Bengal was rejected by the Pakistan military in part because the Awami League proposal deprived the center, and hence the military, of control over defense expenditures and policies.

To these permissible conditions for a transition to civilian rule one should also add the need for a high degree of consensus within the military. Those sections of the military in a position to take measures to transfer power to civilians are unlikely to do so if they have reason to believe that strong and potentially threatening factions within the military view such measures as unacceptable. This does not mean that the military must be a monolithic group for a transition to be acceptable. Indeed, just as the military has sometimes intervened in the political system precisely in order to avoid the internal schisms that might result from its use as a coercive instrument by a civilian government, so too the military may be prepared to hand back power in order to reduce the likelihood of a struggle for control over the government by factions within the
military. Military officers may recognize that it is in the corporate interests of the military that they not be sharply divided and that their internal power struggles may subside if they hand back power to the civilians.

The deep penetration by the military into the economy makes it difficult for the military to relinquish power. In Indonesia, Brazil, and in other military-dominated political systems, countless retired generals, colonels, and majors hold positions in state enterprises, and in some instances (as in Indonesia) some enterprises are even directly run by the military. The military may derive so many direct personal benefits from their own involvement in the large state bureaucracy that they may have become so accustomed to the material perquisites and to the psychological attractions of power that they are reluctant to step down. The more deeply the state penetrates the economy and the more deeply the military penetrates the bureaucracy and the public sector, the more difficult does military withdrawal become.

Finally, it is necessary to distinguish between those military regimes who view themselves as temporary guardians of authority, manning the state only until conditions are ripe for a transfer of power to forces within the society, and those military regimes that see themselves as legitimately and hence permanently in power. The military governments of Turkey, Greece, Pakistan, and Bangladesh regularly promise a return to elections, but not so the military-dominated or military-dependent governments of Syria, Iraq, and Libya. It is easy to be cynical when a military ruler promises, as both Zia and Ershad regularly do, that elections will be held in a matter of months, but such promises are a restatement by the regime that it does not consider its authority legitimate and that it defines its political task as one of creating conditions within society that would permit the formation of a legitimately elected government.

This is not to say that the military in either Pakistan or Bangladesh necessarily welcomes the establishment of the liberal state, with its notion of competitive parties, adversarial politics, an independent judiciary, a free press, and a military under leash. While some military men might support the creation of such a political system, most would prefer a democratic cover for continued military rule. Hence the search for ways to demonstrate popular support for the military regime, through such institutional devices as "basic democracies," or a militarily controlled political party that has won an election, or a popular mandate for an elected (military) president, without the constraints of an elected parliament.

In both Pakistan and Bangladesh the experience of electoral politics, political parties, adversarial politics, a politically articulate middle class, and independent journalists remains sufficiently strong so that in both countries efforts by the military to legitimize themselves and their institutions through some form of controlled political participation has invariably resulted in a push by political parties for still greater democratization.

For the Pakistan military the dilemma is particularly acute. The Pakistan People's Party remains popular—some say that even without Bhutto it would emerge as the majority party in a free election—but it remains anathema to the military, if only because of the spirit of vengeance toward the military that motivates many of the PPP leaders and especially the Bhutto family. The several regional parties, particularly in
the Frontier Province and in Baluchistan, remain popular, and the military fears that a resurgence of regionalism would threaten the central regime to which they remain committed. Zia himself, it would appear, is sympathetic to the “Islam pasand” (lovers of Islam) parties, such as the Jamaat-i-Islami, and he may hope to strengthen them by his efforts to Islamize the economy, the laws, the courts, and the style of administration, but there is no evidence thus far that the Islamic parties are capable of assuming power in a free election. It is this inability to find a sufficiently popular political force with an outlook compatible with that of the military that remains a major constraint toward the pursuit of democratization by the Zia regime.

INDIA’S FRAGILE DEMOCRATIC STRUCTURE

Though it is more than a third of a century since India became independent and for all but twenty-one months of this period it has sustained democratic parliamentary institutions, competitive parties, a free press, an independent judiciary, and all the features of the liberal democratic state, India continues to be viewed, both by outsiders and insiders, as having a fragile democratic structure.

The fragility of the system was demonstrated in 1975 when Mrs. Gandhi declared a national emergency and suspended many of India’s democratic institutions and procedures. It was not the revolt of the masses, the disillusionment of the intellectuals, or a disgruntled middle class that led to the suspension of Indian democracy in 1975, but a coup from within the government itself.

Societies do not destroy their democratic institutions. States do. Historically, the growth of democratic institutions in the West was a means of limiting the absolute power of monarchs and the absolute power of the state over individuals. Modern mass movements, from the French Revolution to Solidarity, have been directed against authoritarian and totalitarian regimes, and only rarely against popularly elected governments. Popular movements within democracies rarely seek to overthrow democratic structures. Why should the masses attempt to overthrow a system when instead they can overthrow the government?

Moreover, individuals and groups within the state seize power either to prevent themselves from being overthrown (by their party, parliament, or electorate) or to establish themselves in power when they know they cannot do so by democratic means. Why Mrs. Gandhi chose to use her control of the state apparatus to silence opponents in her own party, the opposition, the press, and the judiciary may be less interesting than the question of why so many individuals and institutions acquiesced and why so few actively resisted. One factor is that the decision to declare an emergency was legitimized by the constitution. The prime minister, with the assent of the president, had the authority under the constitution to suspend democratic rights. That enabled the government to command the police to arrest politicians, the bureaucracy to censor the press, and the courts to provide legal sanction. Officials in the police, intelligence, and civil bureaucracy obeyed the government because they felt they were constitutionally obligated to do so. Whether many officials would have
resisted and jeopardized their positions had the government’s orders been illegal is
moot; though many bureaucrats welcomed an authoritarian regime that enhanced their
own powers, some bureaucrats opposed to the emergency nonetheless felt that they
had a legal obligation to enforce governmental decrees. Moreover, in the absence of a
mass movement against the government, no officials were prepared to offer public
resistance.

Although some individuals were prepared to defend democratic institutions and
joined the small underground movement, collective support for the democratic system
proved weak. Indeed, Mrs. Gandhi declared an emergency on the assumption that the
decision would be welcomed. She was evidently persuaded that the country’s politi-
cally articulate groups, including the business community, the urban middle classes,
the students, and organized farm interests would either be supportive or silent, and in
the main she was right. But the opposition was substantial enough so that in the long
run Mrs. Gandhi would have had to choose between adopting more authoritarian
measures of the kind employed in South Korea, the Philippines, and in many Latin
American countries, or taking the risk of seeking popular legitimacy (as distinct from
constitutional legitimacy) in open elections. That she chose the latter, while some of
her younger supporters preferred the former, demonstrated that British liberal ideas
still exercised some influence on her.

One does not have to accept the Marxist view of the state as the executive
committee of the ruling class to believe that a small number of people controlling the
state may feel sufficiently threatened to take measures to end the democratic process.
The experience of India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Indonesia, Ghana, and other develop-
ing countries suggests that the threat need only be to a single ruler, to the ruler’s party,
or to portions of the military for the government or some groups within it to argue that
the state itself is so threatened that the democratic political process must be suspended.
That one person of a handful of persons can take such measures indicates how
powerful the state is, how easy it is for a small group to dominate the state, and how
fragile are the political institutions of many societies. India’s brief authoritarian
interlude is a reminder of just how vulnerable India’s democratic system remains.

The Decline of the Congress Party Organization

It is the weakness of India’s political parties that makes her democratic in-
stitutions vulnerable. It was the growing centralization of power within the Congress
Party from 1972 to 1975 and a corresponding decline in the organization and popular-
ity of the party within the state that set the stage for Mrs. Gandhi’s decision to declare
an emergency. And it was the breakup of the Janata Party in 1979 that led to the fall of
the Morarji Desai government, new parliamentary elections, and the subsequent
reelection of Mrs. Gandhi. Though Mrs. Gandhi’s party won an overwhelming
majority of seats in parliament in 1980 and in subsequent state assembly elections, the
party remained organizationally weak, and Prime Minister Gandhi was reluctant to
allow Congress political leaders with an independent popular support to emerge in the
states or in the center.
Mrs. Gandhi had a patrimonial view of Indian politics. She saw the political system as a kind of estate she inherited from her father, which she believed should be transmitted to her heirs. The 1980 elections placed her youngest son, Sanjay Gandhi, in a strong position to become her successor. As many as half of the 354 Congress members of parliament and a quarter of the 2300 Congress state-legislative assembly members reportedly received their nominations through Sanjay’s intervention. Many of the chief ministers appointed by Mrs. Gandhi in Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Bihar, Orissa, and Karnataka were Sanjay’s men. These politicians (A. R. Antulay, Jagannath Pahudia, Jagannath Misra, J. P. Naik, Gundu Rao) did not command support from any significant social force. Nor were they chosen because of support from the rank and file of Congress Party workers in their states. Their power and position rested solely upon Sanjay Gandhi’s influence over his mother.

With Sanjay’s death, Mrs. Gandhi turned to her eldest son to assume the mantle of succession. An airplane pilot for Indian airlines, Rajiv had no experience in public life and was initially reluctant to stand for parliament in the seat previously held by his brother. But he did, and he was quickly recognized as heir presumptive. Appointed by his mother as general secretary of the Congress Party, he was placed in charge of preparing the party for the forthcoming parliamentary elections. When Mrs. Gandhi was assassinated, a handful of party leaders, all members of Mrs. Gandhi’s cabinet, immediately chose Rajiv as prime minister. He was duly sworn in by the President of India, and the choice was subsequently ratified by the Congress parliamentary delegation.

The politics of dynastic succession at first seems incongruous for a democracy, but it demonstrated not only Mrs. Gandhi’s personal commitment to dynastic rule, but the importance of patrimonialism as a consequence of the deinstitutionalization of the Congress Party. The deinstitutionalization of the party is by now a familiar story. Its organizational weakness—which can be dated back to the party’s initial split in 1969—has been disguised by its electoral victories in 1971, 1972, and again in 1980 and 1984. And yet signs of a weak Congress Party are unmistakable:

1. A large number of the taluka and district Congress committees do not function. Out of 365 district Congress committees, it is reported that as many as 143 are not functioning; of the remainder, most consist of a few appointed members.

2. There have been no organizational elections at the taluka, district, or pradesh (state) levels. Nor have there been elections to the All India Congress Committee. Historically, the principle of internal elections was central to the Congress organization, for these elections enabled it to nurture political leadership and to endow

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18 The deinstitutionalization of Congress is described by James Manor, “The Dynamics of Political Integration and Disintegration,” in Wilson and Dalton, The States of South Asia, pp. 89–110.

its leadership with popular legitimacy. As internal elections disappeared within Congress, the party lost its ability to respond to grievances both within and outside the party.

3. In the absence of organization elections, office bearers were appointed by Mrs. Gandhi or by her appointees. Many of these committees, including the All India Congress Committee, were only rarely convened.

4. The result of this organizational weakness was that the chief ministers of the states were not chosen by the party, but by the prime minister. They had no roots, therefore, within the party, the state legislative assemblies, or the electorate. In many states dissension was open, factional struggles had become acute, and cabinets and state assemblies were barely able to function. Mrs. Gandhi dismissed several chief ministers, and much of her time was spent patching up state governments. Congress state leaders have been uniformly weak, even weaker than the chief ministers who held power between 1972 and 1975, when by all accounts the Congress Party was losing its capacity to govern and its electoral support declined.

5. Though Congress easily won the 1980 parliamentary elections, the party did badly in the subsequent state assembly elections. In the Kerala, West Bengal, Haryana, and Himachal Pradesh elections of mid-1982, Congress was able to win only 135 out of the 443 seats it contested. In the state assembly elections of 1983, Congress was defeated in Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka. Both states had been strongholds for the Congress Party—Mrs. Gandhi won both states even in the 1975 elections.

This combination of the deinstitutionalization of the Congress Party and the growth of patrimonial politics at the national level has facilitated the emergence of new forms of both party and nonparty mass politics in India.

Regional Parties and Protest Movements

India has seen an increase in regionalism. In Assam, a fragmented and weak state government failed to find a political solution to popular local protest over the infiltration of large numbers of illegal migrants from Bangladesh. The result was violent clashes between Bengalis and the Assamese and local tribals, resulting in the brutal massacre of thousands of people and turning an estimated quarter of a million people into refugees.

In the Punjab, a minority of Sikhs demonstrated an unexpected capacity to disrupt the state and the country by demanding a Khalistan, an enlarged autonomous and virtually independent state for the Sikhs. In Goa, a “sons of the soil” movement erupted, leading to the forceful ejection of substantial numbers of Kannada-speaking workers. In Andhra, a film star organized the Teluga Desam, a regional party that won the state elections and cut into Rajiv Gandhi’s parliamentary victory. In some areas, especially in the north, Hindu-Muslim tensions have grown, stimulated by the flow of Gulf money to Islamic schools and mosques, by the increasing migration of Indian Muslims to the Gulf, and by the growth of a Muslim middle class increasingly
conscious of its Islamic ties and resentful of the limited opportunities for social mobility. Finally, the conversion of some former untouchables to Islam has stirred anxieties among caste Hindus.

Class-oriented politics has also increased. The farm lobby has grown as farmers have been pressing for higher procurement prices, subsidized inputs, and an improvement in the terms of trade between the city and the countryside. One striking feature of the farmer agitations—they assumed mass proportions in Maharashtra and Karnataka—is that they have been organized outside the framework of existing political parties.

Similarly, the number of strikes among India's industrial workers has grown, especially in Bombay where a forty-nine-year-old Bombay doctor, D. N. Samant, emerged as a popular organizer. In Maharashtra alone, Samant organized 159 work stoppages in 1981, and he has negotiated more settlements than any other trade union leader. Neither the Congress-affiliated Indian National Trade Union Congress nor the Communist Party of India's All India Trade Union Congress has been able to prevent its workers from rallying to Samant's nonpolitical militant demand for high wages. Samant's success in winning substantial wage increases has won for him a large following within the industrial labor force, and while he may yet prove to be a short-lived public figure, Samant's success is another indication of the failure of existing institutions to retain the loyalty of their supporters.

Political violence continues to rise. The incidence of rioting per unit of population has doubled from 6.9 per 100,000 in 1965 to 12.6 in 1977. There were nearly 33,000 riots (defined as violence by five or more people) in 1965 and 76,000 in 1977. Rioting declined during the emergency, but increased between 1978 and the summer of 1980. Communal violence grew in the early eighties, reaching an acute level in the killing of Sikhs by Hindus in Delhi following the assassination of Mrs. Gandhi.

Protest and demand making is most advanced among the more modern sectors of Indian society: farmers who have gained from the Green Revolution, the urban middle classes, and the most advanced, upwardly mobile sectors of the Muslim, former untouchable, and tribal communities. There are no indications thus far that the lower social classes are in the forefront of agitation. Earlier arguments that the Green Revolution would turn red as immiseration among the lower classes grew do not appear to be valid. The worker movements in Bombay, the farmer movements in Andhra, Karnataka, and Tamil Nadu, and the regional movements in the Punjab, Andhra, Goa, Assam, and elsewhere are all within the more developed regions and among the more advanced social strata.

Protest movements are a persistent phenomenon in India's democratic politics, and one should not presume that their presence necessarily represents a threat to India's political stability or national unity. Compartmentalization is characteristic of

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India's social structure and its politics. What happens in one region does not necessarily spread to another, nor does it necessarily present a threat to the central government. The Assam disturbances, for example, have now persisted for several years. The Khalistan agitation is limited to the Punjab. The increasing importance of national economic links has stirred issues that have transcended regions, but none of the political parties has successfully identified itself with the cause of newly militant social classes across linguistic boundaries. Parties are reluctant to support the demands of farmers at the cost of the urban population; even the left parties are not sure whether they should appeal to a united peasantry against the city or seek to distinguish between kulaks and marginal farmers and agricultural laborers. Similarly, Congress is ambivalent about how to respond to the efforts of Muslims to seek conversions among former untouchables—a phenomenon that involves two groups that make up the Congress Party's electoral coalition.

The opposition parties have had little success in breaking out of their regional boundaries. The Marxist left parties remain tied to the Bengali- and Malayalam-speaking regions. The Bharatiya Janata Party has tried to break out of the Hindi-speaking region to which its predecessor, the Jana Sangh, was tied, but its energetic forays into Karnataka, Andhra, and Gujarat have yet to yield major electoral benefits.

Thus, India's opposition parties were poorly poised to take advantage of the weaknesses within the Congress Party. The Janata leadership that held power from 1977 to 1980 is old and politically discredited, and none of the younger opposition leaders has succeeded in building a national constituency. Several popular opposition figures have emerged in the states—T. Rama Rao, the chief minister of Andhra and a former film star, is one, and Ramakrishna Hegde in Karnataka is another—but none has made the leap thus far into national leadership. In the absence of a national leader or a "cause," it has been difficult for the opposition to create an enduring national party or effective coalition. India's many social divisions—religious, caste, linguistic, regional—continue to be mirrored in its party system.

The organizational weakness of the Congress Party, the emergence of extra-parliamentary movements, and the fragmentation and regionalization of the opposition parties created opportunities for a variety of electoral alignments in the 1984 parliamentary elections. But Mrs. Gandhi's assassination and a wave of national sympathy for Rajiv Gandhi enabled the Congress Party to win some 80 percent of the parliamentary seats and, for the first time, a majority of the electoral vote. One should not, however, confuse Rajiv Gandhi's personal triumph with that of the vitality of the Congress Party itself. Indeed, Mrs. Gandhi's electoral triumphs in the elections of 1971 and 1980 were both followed by the center's loss of control over the various states, increased conflict within the Congress Party, a growth of regionalism, and a recurrence of violence. India's central political problems—how to manage state/center relations and how to accommodate the claims of ethnic groups—have become more difficult with the deinstitutionalization of the Congress Party. In the absence of a strong governing party at the center, government has become highly personalized and

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the danger exists that personalized rule will not remain benign. For as conflict grows, the pressure on government to exercise force—to use the military, the Central Reserve Police, the Border Security forces, and other police and paramilitary institutions—will increase, all at the cost of the country’s parliamentary institutions. That conflicts will grow in India’s extraordinarily variegated social system with its mobilized caste, class, tribal, religious, and linguistic groups is as sure as anything can be. Whether they are managed by national and state political leaders organizationally linked in an institutionalized national party or by national and state leaders of different parties capable of bargaining, or whether national leaders must rely upon bureaucratic and coercive institutions is what is now at issue. India’s parties, parliamentary institutions, and press continue to have extraordinary vitality, but they can be easily eroded by a central and personalized leadership too weak to deal with conflicts except through coercion. If conflicts are managed through coercion, then the institutions of coercion will become more powerful and they in turn will have a larger voice in the way future conflicts are managed. The weaker the governing party is organizationally, and the more personalized rule becomes in India, the more likely it is that a prime minister will look within the state apparatus for the authority and the means to deal with societal demands and conflicts. The issue in India is thus which institutions will prevail, those of the state or those of society.

An equally fundamental question is what will be the character of India’s state institutions. The extent to which many of these institutions were weakened under Mrs. Gandhi was revealed by the extraordinary breakdown of the governmental machinery after her death. Mrs. Gandhi’s assassination by two members of her own security guard demonstrated the incompetence of officials responsible for the protection of the prime minister’s life. The subsequent large-scale killings of Sikhs in Delhi by gangs, some led by local Congress politicians, demonstrated the inability of the politicized police to maintain law and order. And the revelation that more than a dozen officers in the prime minister’s secretariat, the cabinet, and key ministries had for years been selling secret documents to an Indian businessman who in turn sold them to French and Eastern European agents demonstrated how pervasive corruption has become. To many Indians, these developments confirmed the widely held view that the civil administration, the police, and the intelligence services have become politicized and criminalized.

The major concerns of any Indian government—the maintenance of order and the management of the economy—depend on the character of governmental administration. A complex system of governmental regulation that now provides government officials with an opportunity for acquiring a second income has pushed up the cost of doing business and slowed the pace of industrial expansion, while the corruption and politicization of the police have weakened the ability of government to manage civil conflict without recourse to the military.

In the early months of his administration, Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi took steps to weed out some of the most corrupt figures within the Congress Party and
within the government bureaucracy, and he indicated his intent to begin a process of
governmental deregulation. But he will surely encounter deeply entrenched interests
in any effort to reform either the Congress Party or the administration. Rajiv Gandhi
will soon learn that it is easier to build an electoral coalition that can provide him with
overwhelming victories in parliamentary and in state assembly elections than it is to
build a coalition to carry out institutional reforms.