CHAPTER

7

THE POLITICAL STRUCTURES OF THE

INDEPENDENT STATES

Writing about recent history can be an incautious exercise. The closer
the past gets to the present, the more insecure it is for the historian. The
natural instinct is to withdraw from the present, which is precariously
perched on the edge leading to the future, and find that comfortable
distance between the writer and the brink. The aim is to gain the security
that is often professionally called 'perspective'. From the historian's point
of view, the trouble with the contemporary past is that it is still happening
and there are no reliable records ('primary sources') to cite. Equally
problematic is the possibility that the people described in the narrative
may still be alive, and writing about living personalities can be notoriously
insecure for the historian. Another dilemma is the fact that readers—
fellow historians and others—bring to bear on that same narrative their
own experiences and interpretations.

Couple these built-in disabilities in writing contemporary history to a
description of the political structure of the independent states of Southeast
Asia and there will emerge a veritable nightmare. So much needs to be
discussed. So many themes can be presented. It is like a Balinese painter
at work. He tries to depict as much as possible so that the canvas is
completely covered, including the corners. The viewer then faces the task
of relating the numerous features to each other. Very often, especially to
the uninitiated, the end product merely registers as a patchwork of colours
and shapes with no discernible message.

Within each state of Southeast Asia are legislative and executive institu-
tions: the military, the bureaucracy, religious hierarchies, interest groups
and others. All these constitute 'political structures'. However, they often
bear little relationship to one another, much like the variety in a Balinese
painting. The Balinese style is therefore not the preferred mode of expres-
sion. Rather, like Chinese calligraphy, a few strokes here and there on a
broad canvas will be applied in order to suggest to the reader what can
be perceived.

How should political structures in Southeast Asia be studied? Should
they be simply described? But if that alone is attempted, the links connect-
ing those structures would be lacking, and those interlinkages are them-
selves a matter of historical truth. The structures cannot be viewed simply

as external expressions of human behaviour: the milieu in which they function must also be studied.

For analytical purposes, it is convenient to identify three categories of political structures: those affected by revolution and war; the 'plural' ones; and 'maximum' government. Structures affected by revolution and war are relatively unfamiliar because they have been obscured by the more recognizable, distinctive and newsworthy 'events' of violence characterizing those phases of history. In Southeast Asia, those structures were largely found in the Indochina states and Indonesia during the early postwar years. To a large extent, they were fashioned by the milieu of war and violence that imposed constraints and demanded makeshift arrangements. Plural political structures were initially predominant in the first flush of independence. They catered for various elements of stresses and strains in society, allowing for dominant and subordinate structures not necessarily sharing common value systems to exist side by side in a plurality. In such political structures, attempts were made to accommodate counterstructures or counterpoints.[1] With the passage of time, however, conditions emerged which rendered these plural structures less than efficient. Apart from the Indochinese states, most of the other societies experienced a period of history during the years of independence that coincided with the great Asia-Pacific economic boom. Further research on its impact on political structures is required. However, for present purposes, it can be argued that political structures had to change in scale to adjust to the demands of the new economic conditions. Plural structures with their niches for local interest groups began to make way for maximum governments—pervasive, omniscient, all-powerful, often the fount of authority.

REVOLUTION AND POLITICAL STRUCTURES

Revolution impacted on the political structures by providing the consensus that transformed society from disparate and separate units into a united whole. It was possible to achieve consensus through revolution because, in the main, Southeast Asian leaders exploited nationalism and focused attention on eliminating a common enemy—usually the colonial power. This nationalism was still very much an extended version of the old anti-colonialism that was prevalent before the states of Southeast Asia became independent. It was especially widespread in Vietnam where the contest against the French and the United States was carried out in a continuous struggle, and it is to Vietnam that attention should first be given.

Northern Vietnam

Vietnam is not an easy country to understand. Much of what transpired in the society was so enveloped in mystery and secrecy that one could be forgiven for failing to delineate the specific segments of the political structure and give each part its due importance. For a great part of its

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[1] The term was used in W. F. Wertheim, *East-West Parallels: Sociological Approaches to Modern Asia*, The Hague, 1964, 26, 34.

history as an independent state, from 1945 till well into the 1980s, Vietnam was, moreover, at war. The military enemies included France, the United States, China, and then the Cambodian guerrillas. How the constant warfare shaped the political structures is particularly difficult to ascertain: given the nature of war, it is difficult to collect data about most issues. Moreover, Vietnam experienced war for such a long period that analytical approaches applicable to other states at peace cannot be simply grafted on to the Vietnamese case.

In other Southeast Asian states, leaders played significant roles in moulding political structures. In Vietnam, during the formative years from 1945 to 1960, this does not seem to have been the case. Although Ho Chi Minh remained the towering nationalist leader, there appeared to be no personality cult and no attempt by him to adopt a high profile. Similarly, the communist party kept in the background. The reasons for this state of affairs are not difficult to fathom. The need to reconcile differences among the splintered Vietnamese élite meant that Ho had to work behind the scenes until the situation was sorted out. Also, in the years from 1945 to 1960, the leader of Vietnamese communism—Ho himself—was not firmly established and he had to depend on the support of the non-communists. Much of the work of government was therefore carried out by committees which formed the main segments of the political structure.

As long as matters did not get out of hand, Ho took a back seat. Before 1960, he emerged only twice to decide on matters of national importance. The first was the partition of Vietnam into north and south along the seventeenth parallel in 1954. It is still not clear why Ho settled on this concession to the French, especially when the military victory of Dien Bien Phu (1954) clearly promoted the Vietnamese cause at the negotiating table. Most likely, he was under pressure from the Soviet Union to make concessions to the French in order to induce Paris to oppose the creation of a European defence community. Equally probable was a pragmatic decision taken by Ho to settle for the northern half of Vietnam in order to win some years of peace for reconstruction after a long period of war and destruction.

The second occasion when Ho showed his hand was his intervention during the November 1956 Nghe An peasant rebellion which arose principally over discontent with land reform. Issues like land reform reveal more about political structures than a plain description. From the earliest days of its inception, the party had concerned itself with the issue of land and the related problems of indebtedness, fragmentation of plots, rents and loans. In 1955, a major attempt at land reform was launched. In accordance with its goals, some cadres were specially designated to expropriate land without compensation, to redistribute the lands of the Catholic Church, and to confiscate communal lands which village elders could assign, thus boosting their prestige and power. Poor peasants were invited to classify their neighbours, denounce them and then move to have their lands confiscated. In the confusion, many people—including party members, government officials and supporters of the revolution—were branded as landlords and thus lost their properties, positions and sometimes their lives. The Nghe An rebellion was the result.

The opposition that was aroused led Ho to discontinue the forced collectivization of peasant land. Again, it was a crucial situation that he felt required his intervention. But Ho intervened without at the same time alientating the hardliners in the party: they were soon rehabilitated. Ho's role in the political structure before 1960 was not therefore a pervading presence. In fact, interestingly enough, the task of explaining the errors of the land reform programme was given to General Giap, the defence minister.

The low profile Ho assumed could be traced to the historical development of the Vietnamese revolution. Ho's quick action to correct the mistakes of the collectivization programme was an honest admission of the fact that the enemies of the revolution were not a feudal society and a feudal tradition. The French had already destroyed elements of the old feudal régime by reducing the royal court to insignificance and by commercializing agriculture. At the same time, the French did not contribute to the formation of a capitalist régime. In this environment, Ho could afford to de-emphasize class conflict and class struggle. His aim, before and after 1945, was to emphasize continuity with peasant opposition to foreign rule led by the gentry. What was important was the formation of an anti-foreign united front in the interim. Given these basic premises, most political structures remained essentially makeshift wartime innovations.

The Vietminh, a united front with the non-communists, was one example. The exigencies of war meant that party and state apparatus had to be decentralized, and this gave the middle and lower level cadres some impression of broad-based participation. This coincided with the traditional political structure which was decentralized with the village as the basic unit. The village was therefore the real political structure, and in 1945 the Vietminh made the wise decision to consolidate its control of the country by exploiting this traditional institution. As each village fell under Vietminh control, a committee of liberation was set up there. Following this decentralized approach, similar committees were established for 'liberated' factories, mines, barracks, towns, districts or provinces. As expected, the duties of the committees concentrated on gathering support for the national liberation movement. By ensuring that each local committee had its share of Vietminh cadres, the entire system guaranteed that a political infrastructure was developed by the Vietminh that could constitute the basis of a nascent authority.

However, as peace returned to the countryside after the Nghe An rebellion and after a spate of good harvests in 1958 and 1959 (always an important factor in the food-deficient north cut off from the rice granaries of the south), the stage was set for changes to make the political structure more permanent. But, even when communism was stressed, provocative issues like class conflict were not emphasized.

At the level of the central government in Hanoi, Ho commissioned and, in fact, played a personal role in the framing of a new constitution which was finally adopted on 1 January 1960. The new constitution was noted for the prominence it gave to commmunism. No longer was the facade of a broad national front with the non-communists deemed necessary. However, there was also no evidence that the constitution established a

fanatical, class-conscious political system. The other distinguishing feature was the recognition it gave to the contribution of Ho to the Vietnamese nation. As president, Ho was invested with absolute powers. However, he practised collective leadership. The principal party leaders were given charge over major power bases. Pham Van Dong was given control over the government machinery; Vo Nguyen Giap control over the defence forces; and Truong Chinh control over the National Assembly. Elections for the Assembly were held after the promulgation of the new constitution. The powers given to this body did not suggest, however, that it would wield much influence.

It must be noted that the history of national assemblies as a political structure in north, as well as south Vietnam, was chequered. The first colonial council had been formed in the 1880s in Tonkin. When independence was declared in 1945, one of the earliest actions taken was the formation of a National Assembly to provide an institution in which all political groups could be represented. With the partition in 1954, the north elected a new assembly, the south following in 1956. However, whether north or south, national assemblies were co-optative bodies appended to an élite or party decision-making process, not totally unlike the bodies set up by the French colonial authorities. Thus Vietnam in 1960 emerged as a totalitarian political structure with a dominant president, a disciplined party and the largest army in Southeast Asia to boot.[2] The system remained essentially unchanged through the 1960s and as the war intensified; further administrative changes were placed on the back burner until after the reunification of the north and the south in 1975.

The significance of the National Assembly as a component of the political structure, however, should not be dismissed just because the institution appeared powerless. Since the election of the first National Assembly in January 1946 and through the subsequent elections of 1960 and 1964, there were always southern deputies who supposedly represented constituencies in the south. The National Assembly therefore presented a powerful symbol of Vietnamese political unity. However, in 1971, for the fourth National Assembly, these deputies were not re-elected and the National Assembly became a strictly northern body. This was probably a consequence of the formation in 1969 of the Provisional Revolutionary Government (PRG) by the Vietcong in the south. The re-election of the southern deputies was therefore rendered irrelevant. This move was also designed to give credibility to the PRG as a political structure independent of Hanoi.[3]

The party and the army were also important segments of the political structure. The Vietnam Dang Lao Dong (Workers' Party) had always claimed to be the sole legitimate leader of the proletariat and the instrument of the will of that class. All other interests must be subordinated to the party and even professional military interests and attitudes had to conform to the party ideology. The party grew in strength from 1946 to

[2] Bernard B. Fall, 'North Vietnam: a Profile' in Robert O. Tilman, ed., *Man, State, and Society in Contemporary Southeast Asia*, New York, 1969, 382–92.
[3] Tai Sung An, 'The Fourth National Assembly of North Vietnam: Significant Developments', *Asian Survey*, XII, 4 (1972).

1960. Numbers and ubiquity alone, though, are insufficient criteria for an appreciation of the important role of the party in the political structure. Several key members of the Lao Dong's central committee also doubled as important leaders of the north Vietnamese government. Thus party beliefs could easily be translated into national policies. The party itself was not a homogeneous monolith: internal differences related to the Sino-Soviet conflict. In 1956, when Ho replaced Truong Chinh as Secretary-General of the Lao Dong, this was interpreted as a setback for the pro-Chinese wing. In September 1961, when Ho relinquished this top political post in favour of Le Duan (who was not considered objectionable by the pro-Chinese wing), this was viewed as a renewed sign of weakness of the pro-Moscow wing. There were also generational differences. Ho and Ton Duc Thanh belonged to the 'old Bolsheviks' who had fought the French. Le Duan belonged to the group of party bureaucrats who were not combatants in the revolution.

According to Marxist theory, the army was the handmaid of the party in the political structure. Control over the army by the Lao Dong was exercised by recruiting the commanders as party members. In fact, promotions in the military had to be approved by the party. Also, party cells were organized within the military for surveillance. Notwithstanding the theory, it would be difficult to understand how the Lao Dong could exercise authority over the army. After all, the army's magnificent victory at Dien Bien Phu against the French in 1954 gave it a high status. It was also more representative of the population than the Lao Dong because its soldiers were mainly peasants, and its officer corps consisted of a sprinkling of intellectuals (General Vo Nguyen Giap) and minorities (e.g. Major General Chu Van Tan from the Tho tribe). However, the fact that it agreed to the division of Vietnam along the seventeenth parallel in 1954 suggested that its impact as a political structure could be blunted by other political forces, notwithstanding its power. Furthermore, although the army was often described as pro-Moscow because of its dependence on the Soviet Union for weaponry and its modernization during the initial years, it also needed support from the population to compensate for its technological and material deficiencies. For this, the party was important for it helped to organize the people into labour gangs and military welfare groups. Party propaganda was also needed to stress the prestige of military work.

Ho's death on 3 September 1969 did not change the political structure to any significant extent. In accordance with the constitution, the aged vice-president, Ton Duc Thang, succeeded as president. However, Ho's powerful position as chairman of the Central Committee of the Lao Dong Party was left unfilled. Ton Duc Thang was old, and in poor health; his incumbency was largely ceremonial, and the presidency became a symbol, especially since he was a southerner—an important qualification in Hanoi's drive for reunification. If a change in the political structure was evident, it was the devolution of power to a quadrumvirate comprising of Le Duan (First Secretary of the Lao Dong Party), Prime Minister Pham Van Dong, Truong Chinh (the Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National Assembly) and Vo Nguyen Giap (the Defence Minister). In general, although power was divided among members in the quadrumvirate, the sharing was not even. At a time of war, it would not be

surprising if Giap was in ascendance. From the early 1960s to late 1968, his influence was in fact very evident. The military strategy that was current then stressed the 'main-force' approach that would result in a 'final glorious victory'. When that failed, strategic planning was transferred to the National Defence Council where the non-military leaders also made decisions on military affairs. Truong Chinh, a vice president of that council in 1971, was able to push for a protracted 'people's war' strategy.

The post-Ho political arrangements were formalized in the new constitution adopted in mid-December 1980. This replaced the earlier constitution of 1969 in which the presidency—held by Ho—was the highest office. Now it was replaced by the Council of State whose members would form a collective presidency. The administrative arm of the Council of State remained the Council of Ministers headed, as before, by the prime minister.

Southern Vietnam

War and revolution in the south failed to galvanize the population as in the north. Nationalism served to widen the chasm between the ruling élites and the population at large. However, as in the north, the combination of war and revolutionary changes also contributed to the confusion of political structures in south Vietnam. On the one hand, there were the constitutional trappings of elections, referenda, new constitutions, and constituent assemblies. On the other hand, the extra-constitutional forces were the 'real' structures that deserve attention. These included the personal family rule of Ngo Dinh Diem and later the military oligarchies that emerged, with or without civilian participation. Also, the counter-élite of the National Liberation Front was a major structure.

Diem first came into power during the crisis following the partition of Vietnam in 1954. He deposed the emperor, Bao Dai; a referendum on 23 October 1955 resulted in his being chosen as chief of state; finally, his rise was completed with the proclamation, three days later, of Vietnam as a republic with himself as president. The hallmark of Diem's government was authoritarianism. Diem chose this option partly because of his personal disposition but also because he believed that the Vietnamese nationalist élite was hopelessly divided and only an authoritarian structure could overcome its weaknesses. Indeed, Vietnamese history demonstrated that the élite was split, manipulated, enticed and used by French, Japanese, communists and Americans.

However, there was still the need to secure the support of various sectors of the society for the national leadership. Following the Vietminh model, Diem and his supporters formed the National Revolutionary Movement, the Republican Youth, the Vietnamese Women's Solidarity Movement, and the Personalist Revolutionary Labour Party which was supposed to be the counterpart of the Indochinese Communist Party. These organizations were used in a top-down approach as propaganda and political control mechanisms. They had no life of their own.

The most significant characteristic of Ngo Dinh Diem and the rulers who followed was their position in the spectrum of Vietnamese leaders. They were the allies of the foreign powers. Diem was sponsored, installed and

supported by the United States. At least eight out of fourteen cabinet ministers in the Diem government were civil servants (or collaborators) in the pre-1945 French colonial régime. All the military leaders who ruled from Saigon after Diem—Duong Van Minh, Nguyen Khanh, Nguyen Van Thieu, Nguyen Cao Ky—began their military careers fighting on the French side during the so-called First Indochina War, 1946–54. In contrast, all the top-level leaders of the north began their revolutionary careers fighting for Vietnamese independence.

A consideration of the role of the military oligarchy within the political structure in south Vietnam can start with the place of the military in society. As a general observation, it can be noted that the heavily Confucian-influenced environment in Vietnam did not accord the soldier much prestige. Bearing arms was not held in high regard. Rather, scholarship and intellectual pursuits offered better alternatives. Also, the military in Vietnam was not prominently associated with the nationalist movement. In fact, there were examples of Vietnamese military leaders within the living memory of people in the independent period who had fought with the French against the Vietnamese. Thus, there was no institutional base upon which the military could develop as a component of the political structure of which it was very much a part.

The governments that followed the fall of Ngo Dinh Diem on 1 November 1963 demonstrated the lack of roots in society by their short life span:

1. The Nguyen Ngoc Tho (civilian) government, in fact a facade for the military, lasted 86 days. Three generals were appointed to the cabinet in recognition of the military's role in deposing Diem.
2. The General Nguyen Khanh government lasted 260 days. Its aim was to forestall the neutralist tendencies of some army generals. Although its core group was the military, it tried to include lay leaders of the Buddhist movement.
3. The Tran Van Huong (civilian) government lasted 84 days. It represented an army-sponsored effort to restore south Vietnam to civilian rule.
4. The Nguyen Xuan Oanh (civilian caretaker) government lasted 19 days. This government marked the re-entry of the military into active political life. The cabinet members included Major General Nguyen Van Thieu and Vice Air Marshal Nguyen Cao Ky.
5. The Phan Huy Quat (civilian) government lasted 112 days. It was only a transitional government that emerged in the midst of political upheaval following a coup attempt, paving the way for the takeover by Thieu and Ky.
6. The Nguyen Cao Ky–Nguyen Van Thieu government lasted from 9 June 1965 till the fall of Saigon to the north Vietnamese forces. Although it showed more staying power, it had to be reshuffled many times.[4] Generally, the ultimate power holders under this military régime organized themselves into the Armed Forces Council (or Congress). A directorate served as the executive body of the council.

[4] I. Milton Sacks, 'Restructuring Government in South Vietnam', ibid., VII, 8 (1967).

By 1967, the Chairman of the directorate was Nguyen Van Thieu and, by virtue of this position, he was also head of state.

One aspect of the political structures created by these leaders was the lifeline provided by the United States. Their tenure and maintenance were made possible by the awesome power provided by this external body, which though not part of the domestic political structure, was certainly a great source of assistance. The American air-strikes, the search and destroy missions, the defoliation programmes, the Phoenix programme which applied 'selective terrorism' to ferret out the communists, the forced resettlement programme, all constituted an American presence which was a political structure in its own right.

The military governments after 1963 also permitted political parties to function. By the end of 1969, there was a total of twenty-seven active political parties and groups in south Vietnam. Most of them were based on personal ties and loyalties rather than specific programmes to mobilize mass support. Their divisiveness would have rendered them ineffective. But in any case mass participation was limited: President Thieu had made the conscious decision by the end of 1969 to limit his basis of support to the army, the Catholics and the parties rather than the population at large.[5]

The shallow roots of the Saigon authorities require the study of a counterpart political structure, but this is shrouded in obscurity. From what can be pieced together, it seems that Ho believed that the effort to recover territory in the south would be most decisive in the urban areas, either by elections or in the event of anarchy. This city strategy required a political structure that could realize Ho's objectives. Prior to 1951, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Vietnam had been represented by the Nam Bo Regional Committee, then located in Ca Mau in the deep south. Difficulties of communication led to the reorganization of the Nam Bo Regional Committee into the Central Office for South Viet Nam (COSVN) in 1951. The COSVN headquarters was moved to Tay Ninh, just a short distance from Saigon. The establishment of the COSVN marked a considerable increase in its status and authority. While the Nam Bo Regional Committee was also an advance guard of the Central Committee, the COSVN included a number of Central Committee members assigned to permanent duty in the south.

The decision in 1954 to abandon the south was viewed with disappointment by the communist cadres there. It was not till 1959 that the relatively low profile recommended by Ho was jettisoned in favour of limited armed activity. Whether this change of strategy was responsible for the creation of the National Liberation Front (NLF) is not clear. The view that the NLF was a creature of Hanoi appears to be an oversimplification, while the idea of a southern organization acting independently or in spite of Hanoi is also difficult to stomach.

The NLF represented a counter-elite to Saigon's leadership. However, the fact that the former succeeded in ultimately defeating the latter tended to give the impression that it had roots in society that the Saigon government (both military and civilian) did not enjoy. That may not necessarily

[5] Allan E. Goodman, 'South Vietnam: Neither War Nor Peace', ibid., X, 2 (1970).

be the case. In Vietnam, the basic political structure was the village. Government had always been viewed as the predator, the tax collector, the police, the undisciplined soldier-bandit. At the time when the Saigon authorities tried to exercise control over the Vietnamese countryside, the NLF represented the protection of society against the government. It had the advantage of being local, though in the end, it too had to behave like a government, exercising its power of tax and control.

It is still necessary to explain the support the NLF enjoyed that made it a viable component of the political structure. Apart from the abuses of the Saigon government and other factors, the prospect of acquiring more land constituted another important motive for villagers to support the NLF. The NLF, after all, was a patronage organization, redistributing land from the well-to-do to poorer farmers. It should be noted, though, that the NLF did not issue deeds of ownership.

The issue of land distribution brings into focus the problem of the dynamics of the NLF and its antecedent, the communist movement in the south. Was the central engine of the political structure the appeal of issues and causes, or was it the organizational technique with its attendant administration and methods of coercion? There is no reason for accepting one and rejecting the other. The communists in the south had always combined both. During the period 1954 to 1960, organization and discipline were important. With the formation of the NLF and the beginnings of factionalism in the Saigon government, the communists could rely on economic and social programmes to generate support. However, as the pressure of war increased after 1966, more reliance had to be placed on the organizational infrastructure. Worse still, as the tide turned against the communists with heavier American military involvement, the communists were compelled to depend on the northern parent organization for survival.[6]

Dependence on its organizational superiority of course did not mean abandonment of political reform. In 1967, the NLF promulgated a new programme after the presidential election held by the Saigon authorities. This programme was modelled on the early Vietminh platform of a united front of all interest groups. The salient promises included land purchase for equitable distribution; property rights for religious institutions; protection of indigenous industries through restrictions on and prohibition of foreign manufacturing interests; ethnic and religious liberties; equal rights for women; and provisions for a social security system. A victory policy was envisaged rather than negotiations with the Saigon authorities. Reunification of north and south Vietnam was accepted as a long-range goal.

The prospects of reunification were enhanced when the death knell for the Saigon government under President Thieu was sounded at the signing of the Paris Peace Agreement in January 1973. The agreement was the culmination of efforts by the United States government to disentangle itself gracefully from military involvement in Vietnam. Little was said about the fate of the Vietnamese, whether north or south. The only

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[6] Hammond Rolph, 'Vietnamese Communism and the Protracted War', ibid., XII, 9 (1972).

political structure provided in the agreement was the National Council for National Reconciliation and Concord which was to be formed for the purpose of enabling the contending Vietnamese sides to thrash out their differences. The council was never established.

Thieu also ignored the third force groups, a collection of non-communist opposition groups that had coalesced with the hope of forming some kind of coalition government with the communists within the framework of the Paris Peace Agreement. Rampant corruption within the Thieu government also resulted in the alienation of the Catholic Church which had been one of its strongest supporters. Nor did Thieu's narrow political structure embrace the Buddhist hierarchy or religious sects like the Cao Dai and the Hoa Hao. During the earlier years, especially under the presidency of Diem, these religious groups were principal players, operating within political structures in their own right.

With the Peace Agreement signed, the north Vietnamese increased their military activities in the Mekong delta and the border provinces of Tay Ninh and Phuoc Long. In January 1975, the entire province of Phuoc Long fell to northern control. The United States response was only the threat of possible retaliation. Encouraged, the north continued the offensive. The last great battle was the twelve-day long struggle for the control of Xuan Loc, a small town less than fifty kilometres from Saigon, in April 1975. When Xuan Loc fell, Thieu resigned and the northern troops with their southern allies finally captured control of Saigon on 30 April 1975.

The reunification of Vietnam opened the way for setting up new political structures. However, the rapidity with which Saigon fell took even Hanoi by surprise. Initially, the decision was taken to soft-pedal the reunification process. It was Truong Chinh who explained why Vietnam was still divided into two states. In November 1975, he reported:[7]

> On the State plane, although Vietnam is one country but [sic] nominally it is still divided into two states: in the North it is the state of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam while in the South it is the state of the Republic of South Vietnam. In the North, there is the Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. In the South, there is the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Vietnam. The North has a national assembly, while the South has no National Assembly but an Advisory Council besides the Government. The North has a socialist constitution and legal system, while the South has no socialist constitution and legal system but only the programme of the National Front for Liberation and a number of regulations having the character of laws promulgated by the Provisional Revolutionary Government.

However, the decision to speed up reunification was taken soon after. When the war against the United States ended, there were only a few southern cadres left who could staff the political structure of a southern state. The northern leaders (including Truong Chinh) wanted to take advantage of the southern preparedness for change soon after the fall of

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[7] Quoted in Huynh Kim Khanh, 'Year one of Postcolonial Vietnam', *Southeast Asian Affairs 1977*, Singapore, 1977, 300.

Saigon rather than allow the development of inclinations for independ-
ence. Also, the desire of the aged northern leaders quickly to realize their
dream of reunification could not be discounted.[8]

Towards this end, a Political Consultative Conference was held in
Saigon in November 1975 to discuss plans for reunification. It was decided
to conduct nationwide elections for a unicameral National Assembly which
would be the supreme organ of power, and which would write a new
constitution. The elections were duly held and the new National Assembly
met in June 1976, proclaiming the founding of the newly reunified Viet-
namese state on 12 July 1976.

What can be said of the political structure in this new state by way of
conclusion? All through the postwar history of Vietnam until the invasion
of Kampuchea (Cambodia) in 1978, the party was perceived as the 'rock of
ages' that could not be eroded. A monolithic party, an omniscient leader-
ship—these were the lodestars. Even when Ho was alive, the politburo
adhered closely to the principle of collective leadership. This continued
after his death, although in daily administration there were now two key
figures—Le Duan and Le Duc Tho. These two, together with three
others—Truong Chinh, Pham Hung and Pham Van Dong—formed the
inner circle of five. Whether it was one or two or five, the party remained
united. Yet this too could not last. The Kampuchean invasion, the economic
mess in the country, its isolation in the world, and an increasing depend-
ence on the Soviet Union which undermined the much-vaunted Viet-
namese sense of independence for which they had fought for decades to
win—all these began to coalesce in the 1980s to force upon the party
leadership acceptance of political changes.

Cambodia

Cambodia and Laos were drawn into the orbit of the revolution in
Vietnam. However, unlike the revolution in Vietnam, where nationalism
was the powerhouse, the revolution in Cambodia had to contend with
Prince Sihanouk whose monopoly over nationalism was almost unassail-
able. Before 1970, any mention of Cambodia must necessarily involve the
name of its ruler—Sihanouk. Given Sihanouk's charm and his capacity to
absorb opposition, the casual observer would be forgiven if the impression
was gained that there were no other political structures available to
Cambodia apart from that offered by the prince himself. Yet the lessons of
hindsight—especially obvious after his deposition—would demand study-
ing the alternatives to Sihanouk: only thus can any attempt be made to
understand the chaos and diversity that emerged after 1970.

A Democratic Party (Krom Pracheathipodei) had been led by Prince
Sisowath Yuthevong (1912–47). Educated in France and married to a
French lady, Yuthevong wanted to establish democratic institutions à la
France in Cambodia itself. For this, of course, independence from France
was important. The party drew its support from Son Ngoc Thanh, an

8 Ibid., 302.

erstwhile opponent of Sihanouk then living in exile, supporters of the
Issarak movement (the nationalist group based in Bangkok that fought for
independence from France), and other members of the Cambodian intel-
lectual élite. The inclusion of Son Ngoc Thanh in the party naturally did
not win the approval of Sihanouk. Nevertheless, in the September 1946
election for the Consultative Assembly to advise Sihanouk on a constitu-
tion, the Democratic Party won fifty of the sixty-seven seats. With this
mandate, the party proposed a constitution in 1947 which gave power to
the National Assembly, where the party was certain to hold the majority of
seats. However, by that time the French had returned to Cambodia and
were comfortably ensconced once more. In Phnom Penh, street names in
honour of French heroes and events were restored. Holidays to com-
memorate Sihanoukist events were cancelled. Thus the power that the
Democratic Party could amass, notwithstanding its electoral majority, was
limited to what the French were prepared to grant. Not even the aura of
Thanh's return in 1951 to join the Democratic Party helped. The intransi-
gence of the French, the opposition from Sihanouk, and the death of the
party's leaders (Yuthevong died in 1947 and his successor was assassinated
in 1949) all conspired to ensure the lack of an alternative in the political
structure in Cambodia.

Thanh himself left the Democratic Party and went underground in 1952,
setting up his headquarters in Siemreap, somewhere near the Thai border.
Within this zone, Thanh tried to establish political institutions that resem-
bled those found in prewar Japan. His shadowy existence placed him
outside the mainstream political structure throughout the 1950s and 1960s.
In fact, his political strength was drained when Sihanouk pre-empted his
nationalist appeal by a dramatic and successful 'crusade for independ-
ence'. Throughout 1953 and 1954, the population rallied to Sihanouk and
essentially reduced Thanh's support to the minimum.

Sihanouk realized that with independence, new political structures
would be necessary. In particular, the maintenance of the monarchy
would require it to be revolutionized and linked to the people. At the same
time, the prestige of the monarchy, a valuable input in the political
structure, must not be left unexploited even though, by tradition, the
throne was above politics. Therefore, in order to ensure that his political
objectives were achieved, Sihanouk abdicated on 2 March 1955 in favour of
his father, Prince Norodom Suramarit.

One of the most important contributions to the development of political
structures in Cambodia made by Prince Sihanouk was the creation of the
Sangkum Reastre Niyum (Popular Socialist Community), the mass move-
ment that was born in March 1955. The Sangkum won every single seat in
the elections of 1955, 1958 and 1962, each time with very high percentage
votes. In the 1962 election, the Sangkum won all the seventy-seven seats in
the National Assembly and garnered between 75 and 100 per cent of the
votes depending on the constituencies.

Within Cambodia, there was no other political group that had the appeal
of the Sangkum by 1955. The Sangkum was Sihanouk and his picture was
its symbol. Independent candidates were frowned upon, and opposition
to Sihanouk could mainly be found in the Sangkum. Indeed, Sihanouk

used the Sangkum to absorb his opponents in the Democratic Party. However, even by 1962, the process of assimilation had not been entirely successful. Within the Sangkum, the young educated members complained of discrimination in favour of the old and corrupt. Hou Yuon was one of the younger members who criticized the cult of personality advanced by Sihanouk. There was also rivalry between the politically conservative and the radical élites within the Sangkum. Sihanouk's original intention in including both groups was to preserve national unity and to check the dominance of any one side. However, rebellions instigated by the radicals in April 1967 led Sihanouk to suspect that the left was getting the upper hand. When he warned that the rebel leaders would be severely dealt with, the two most prominent and vociferous of the radicals, Khieu Samphan and Hou Yuon, went underground.

The consolidation of the left-wing resistance to Sihanouk was a stage in the development of an alternative political structure. The left viewed the creation of an independent Cambodian state quite differently from Sihanouk or the earlier Democratic Party. For the latter two, independence was an end with hardly any effect on the political or social structures. For the left, independence was a pause in the Cambodian revolution after which complex issues of Cambodian nationalism and Cambodian socialism would have to be accommodated, domestically as well as at the regional level, in the history of Indochina (especially Vietnam) and at the international level, within the historically-determinist laws of Marx and Lenin.

The structure that harboured the Cambodian communists was the Khmer People's Revolutionary Party, founded in September 1951 after the dissolution of the Indochinese Communist Party earlier that year. At that time, the war against the French in neighbouring Vietnam was raging, and Vietminh combatants were using Cambodia as a staging area. With the support of these Vietminh, the Cambodian communists were able to control considerable portions of territory—estimates range up to one-half of Cambodia—including the power to levy taxes and contributions. The French military command estimated that the taxes they controlled equalled half the entire Cambodian budget and three times its expenditure on national defence.[9] By the time the Geneva Conference took place in 1954, the Cambodian communists and the Vietminh were significant forces.

The same Geneva Conference was to reduce the Cambodian left to insignificance. Sihanouk insisted that the indigenous communists should not be admitted to the Geneva Conference. At the same time, the Vietminh were prepared to abandon the cause of the Cambodian communists in order to earn the best concessions for Vietnam.

Right-wing political groups and the anti-communist military gained support from the United States which wanted an active anti-left government that would allow the open destruction of communist sanctuaries in Cambodia. The right-wing coup launched by Lon Nol who toppled Sihanouk in 1970 proved, however, only an interruption in the drive to establish a left-wing government that would provide protection for the communists. Lon Nol was toppled in 1975.

[9] J. L. S. Girling, 'The Resistance in Cambodia', *Asian Survey*, XII, 7 (1972).

The fall of Lon Nol and the emergence of the new communist leader, Pol Pot, marked an important phase in the development of political structures in Cambodia, now called Kampuchea. It was Pol Pot's aim to uproot society and reconstitute anew the existing political structures. His Communist Party of Kampuchea (CPK) was compelled to draw upon radical classist and anti-traditional themes because the mildly reformist and nationalist avenues were already monopolized by Sihanouk. The CPK was founded in 1960 and launched its armed struggle only in 1968. By then, a highly nationalistic home-grown autocracy had developed under Sihanouk. Sihanouk's credentials as the national liberator were almost impeccable. The CPK therefore had to out-do the nationalism of Sihanouk in order not to be tainted as anti-national. Thus radical classism and extreme forms of nationalism were embraced.

This position distinguished the CPK from the Vietnamese communists. In practical terms also, the experience of the Cambodian communists in co-operating with the Vietnamese was not encouraging. The fall of Sihanouk and his replacement by Lon Nol should have helped to cement relations between the CPK and the Vietnamese, but this was not the case. In 1973, when the Vietnamese signed the ceasefire agreement with the United States, the CPK found itself abandoned once again in its struggle against the pro-American Lon Nol régime. When internal opposition to the rigours of Pol Pot's rule became widespread, it was easy for other Cambodian leaders like Heng Samrin to seek Vietnamese support in order to depose Pol Pot. This happened in January 1979 when Vietnamese-led forces captured Phnom Penh and installed Heng Samrin at the head of a People's Revolutionary Committee to administer Kampuchea.

The invasion by the Vietnamese forces naturally had its own impact on the political structure in Kampuchea. However, its effects were not clearly seen because the invasion was not a clean surgical action. Rather, it degenerated into protracted guerrilla warfare. There was evidence, though, of the grand design of Vietnam. In 1980, there were meetings of foreign ministers in Phnom Penh (January) and Vientiane (July) to ensure more co-operation between Vietnam, Laos and Kampuchea.

Within Kampuchea itself, the Vietnamese-supported Heng Samrin régime appeared to be ensconced in power and capable of developing its own political structures to replace those of the old Pol Pot forces. In January 1979, a People's Revolutionary Council had been established, with Heng Samrin making it clear that there was no place in the new political structure for non-communist Cambodian groups. That ended any chance of an alliance with such groups as the Khmer People's National Liberation Front led by Son Sann, an opponent of Sihanouk, on the common basis of opposing Pol Pot—at least for the time being.

Meanwhile, a flurry of activities took place among the groups opposed to Heng Samrin to establish an alternative political structure. In a situation of war, this was extremely difficult. Son Sann's faction was militarily weak. The Khmer Rouge of Pol Pot and Khieu Samphan was a political embarrassment, but was better equipped and well trained. Sihanouk himself stood aloof. What emerged in the end was a coalition that allowed the

three main opposition factions to maintain their own identity, organiza-
tion, structure and policies.

Laos

The theme of war and revolution is more difficult to pursue in respect of
Laos. There, the struggle against foreign influence—Vietnam, Thailand,
the United States—merged with an internal struggle among family-led
political structures. For the greater part of Laos' history as an independent
entity, war and revolution failed to produce the unity that would reverse
its earlier history of petty kingdoms and on-going diaspora of the Laotian
people. Seen from this perspective, the study of political structures should,
willy-nilly, start with the princely familes or Laotian élite that controlled
the kingdoms. The patterns that can be discerned should provide a picture
of the political institutions that emerged.

In the Lao political structure family-based centres were indeed promi-
nent. Most of the Lao élite were descendants of the old royal families and
courtiers of Champassak, Vientiane, Xieng Khouang and Luang Prabang.
Only a limited number came from the provinces of Khammouane and
Savannakhet. None came from Nam Tha, Phong Saly, Sam Neua, Attopeu or
Sayabouri, areas not populated by the Lao. The élite was given access to
preferential education by the French colonialists and, after independence,
members of this privileged group occupied key government positions.
They included Prince Phetsarath; his brother, the neutralist Souvanna
Phuoma; and the communist sympathizer Prince Souphanouvong.

A second characteristic worthy of note was the kinship ties between the
various leaders. The three princes—Phetsarath, Souvanna Phouma and
Souphanouvong—were half-brothers, the first two having the same mother.
These kinship ties also extended into the bureaucracy and the armed
forces. The ties were not sacrificed even though Souphanouvong was
identified with the Pathet Lao which opposed the royal family.

These similarities did not result in the emergence of homogenous
political structures over all the territory that is currently called Laos. In
fact, two different types of structures could be identified, one symbolized
by the Royal Lao Government and the other by the Pathet Lao. The first
continued to rely on the traditional sources of power—the royalty, the
military and an obedient peasantry. All these were primarily Lao institu-
tions and in fact, the royal leaders, Phetsarath and Souvanna Phouma,
were imbued with a traditional attitude of superiority toward the non-
Laotian tribal peoples. Their policy towards the latter was 'Laotianization',
though this policy was not pressed aggressively. As a result, a major
chasm existed between the Lao and non-Lao peoples under their leader-
ship. Their preference for close relations with the United States also
tended to distinguish them from the rural Lao and even the Buddhist
monkhood. The Pathet Lao, on the other hand, was different. Souphan-
ouvong operated in areas not heavily populated by the ethnic Lao, Xieng
Khoung, Phong Saly and Sam Neua. He was therefore compelled to carve
out new sources of support by appealing to the non-Lao as well as the

unorganized groups of disaffected intellectuals, youths and workers. Such different constituencies of support could not but affect the political structures of both sides.

At the same time as these different structures began to pull Laos into two main divisions, the French were led into a convention with Laos in 1949 which granted the territory autonomy within the French Union. Negotiations were therefore started to bring about a reconciliation between the Pathet Lao and the Royal Lao Government. For the latter, the problem was the method of accommodating Souphanouvong, whose dominant personality would overshadow any arrangements for co-operation. For Souphanouvong, the aim was to preserve his power base in the non-Lao ethnic areas as well as the continued control of his military units and influence over the cabinet.

The negotiations at Geneva in 1954 to settle the war in Vietnam after the French debacle at Dien Bien Phu provided the first opportunity for compromise. Laos was cast for a neutral role. The Pathet Lao was regrouped in the northern provinces of Sam Neua and Phong Saly. Plans were drawn up to integrate the armies of Souphanouvong and Souvanna Phouma. These were viewed as provisional arrangements pending an internal all-Laotian political settlement which was concluded only in 1957; but very quickly any semblance of political compromise ended in 1958 when seats for the National Assembly were contested in an election provided for under the 1957 settlement.

The pro-Pathet Lao parties won narrowly but this victory was pyrrhic because, instead of settling political differences, the prospect of communist control of Laos attracted the attention of the United States which began to interfere in the Laos political structure. The manoeuvring of the United States resulted in the establishment of the Phoui Sananikone government in Vientiane which was less accommodating than the earlier one led by Souvanna Phouma. The Sananikone government was succeeded by the pro-American Phoumi government. Prince Souphanouvong then terminated his connections with the government in Vientiane and returned to his territorial base. In 1960, in a bid to end the civil war, Captain Kong Le from the army paratrooper battalion staged a coup to bring Laos to a neutralist position. Far from achieving reconciliation, the coup segmented Laos into three parts: the neutralists joined by Souvanna Phouma in Vientiane, the pro-Americans led by Phoumi who retreated to Savannakhet in the south, and the Pathet Lao in the north.

From then on, the intrusion of foreign forces in Laos became a semi-permanent feature of the political structure. The Americans continued to supply arms to Phoumi, thereby enabling him to maintain his position in Savannakhet. At the same time, US economic aid to Vientiane continued, but Souvanna Phouma also decided to open another 'lifeline' to the Soviet Union, which soon came forward with assistance in the form of food and fuel. Such aid became even more important after Thailand imposed an economic blockade on Vientiane in protest against the neutralist coup which had ousted the pro-American Phoumi. In December 1960, the latter's military forces marched on Vientiane, forcing Souvanna Phouma to form a government-in-exile in Cambodia and pushing Captain Kong Le's

forces to the Plain of Jars, at which place he was joined by the Pathet Lao
forces and provided with Soviet military aid. The Pathet Lao, now also
actively supported by the Soviet Union, then embarked on a vigorous
campaign to capture territory controlled by Phoumi's forces.

The support given to the respective Laotian allies by the contending
external powers led to a dangerous situation that required resolution. The
result was the convening of the second Geneva Conference in 1962, where
attempts were made to form a coalition government based on the warring
factions. In June 1962, this was achieved. Foreign assistance was terminat-
ed and military personnel were ordered home. Superficially, the situation
in 1962 suggested that there was a return to the arrangements of 1957, but
in fact foreign intervention had completely altered the political structures.
The coalition government that was formed boosted the power of the pro-
American Phoumi: he was given the post of Minister of Finance in control
of foreign aid funds for the payment of salaries of civil servants and
military personnel. Souphanouvong's Pathet Lao had by 1962 become very
much a pawn in the hands of the powerful Vietnamese in the north who
needed control of the part of Laos through which their soldiers traversed
to the south. The weakest chink in the armour of the coalition government
was Souvanna Phouma, who had to balance the ambitious Phoumi and the
powerfully-backed Souphanouvong. It should be noted that Souvanna
himself did not enjoy any regional or genuine mass base of support.
However, he was able to remain as part of the political structure because
he cemented alliances with powerful families like the Sananikones of
Vientiane and Sisouk na Champassak in the south. Also, he was the
symbol of neutralism which was the anchor of the 1962 Geneva agreement.
Thus foreign derivatives were also important in strengthening that seg-
ment of the political structure in Laos.

The coalition government did not last long. In 1963, Souphanouvong
and his ally, Phoumi Vongvichit, left Vientiane abruptly. However, Sou-
vanna Phouma was still committed to retain the tripartite system that had
become frozen as a result of the 1962 Geneva agreement. He was also
desirous of keeping the door open for the return of Souphanouvong and
Vongvichit. This meant that the posts previously held by the two were left
vacant and these were the important portfolios of deputy prime minister,
minister of economy and planning, and minister of information and
tourism. Government was largely hamstrung.

Meanwhile, plans to hold elections for fifty-nine deputies to the National
Assembly proceeded apace and they took place on 18 July 1965. These
elections were important because they marked a phase of new develop-
ments that cast considerable strain on the existing political structure. While
the entire structure had previously been dominated by feudal or leading
families, the elections introduced a new middle class which had benefited
considerably from the economic aid furnished by the United States after
the 1962 Geneva agreement. A commodity import programme was started
by the United States, in which goods were made available for local
merchants to import at a low rate and sell in Laos at a high rate. The
difference represented a profitable source of new wealth which contributed
to the emergence of the middle class. Their representatives were elected to

the National Assembly as deputies in 1965 and they thus had a stake in government policy. When government became paralysed because of the differences explained above, irritation among the deputies increased. In 1966, Souvanna Phouma was forced to dissolve the National Assembly when it rejected the budget, and new general elections were called for 1967.[10]

By that time, political labels had become less important on the non-communist side. In 1967, Kong Le was compelled by his own men to go into exile in France. The right-wing leader, Phoumi Nosavan, was also forced to take refuge in exile in Thailand as his hopes for a political return faded. Laos became divided *de facto* into two roughly equal parts contested by the Pathet Lao and the Royal Lao Government. The military struggle that ensued till 1975 followed a predictable pattern: during the dry season from October to May, the Pathet Lao (backed by the Vietnamese, who probably totalled 40,000 in Laos by 1968) tended to take the initiative in order to seize tactically important positions and replenish their food supplies; during the wet season, the royalist forces appeared to have the advantage because of their greater mobility, thanks to American-supplied equipment and the use of aeroplanes.

The effect of this internal conflict on the political structure could only be guessed. Evidently, the longer the fighting, the more difficult it was to create a structure that would suit both the contenders. In fact, the Third Congress (1968) of the NLHS—the political arm of the military Pathet Lao—indicated that it planned to lay the groundwork for a broad political front having as a common programme the elimination of American influence from Laos, but it also made clear that cooperators with the United States, like Souvanna Phouma, would have no place in it. Thus the price for rejoining the coalition government that Souvanna was still trying to preserve was stated clearly.[11]

The signing of the Paris Peace Agreement on 23 January 1973 presented a new opportunity for the Laotian leaders. Article 20 of the agreement called on the signatories to abide by the 1962 Geneva agreement. This led to the signing in Vientiane on 21 February 1973 of the Agreement on the Restoration of Peace and Reconciliation in Laos. The agreement was encouraged by the Americans, the Soviets and the north Vietnamese. It provided for the establishment of a provisional government of National Union and a National Coalition Political Council. Specifically, both sides agreed that Souvanna would be prime minister of the provisional government. Each side also agreed to provide a vice-premier and five ministers. Each minister would be assisted by a vice-minister chosen from the other side. However, a minister's absence would be filled only by his own party and not by the other party's vice-minister. It was agreed that the Pathet Lao would chair the council which would operate on the principle of unanimity. Troops and the police from both sides would be used to ensure the neutralization of Vientiane and Luang Prabang. All other foreign forces would be withdrawn. However, pending an election, the date for which was not fixed, each side would retain control over its own territory. The

[10] Arthur J. Dommen, 'Laos: the troubled "neutral"', ibid., VII, 1 (1967).
[11] Paul F. Langer, 'Laos: preparing for a settlement in Vietnam', ibid., IX, 1 (1969).

careful balance that was struck ensured that only matters of consensus would be implemented.[12]

In hindsight, it is obvious that this was only a temporary arrangement. In 1975, after the fall of Saigon, the Pathet Lao seized power. Prince Souvanna Phouma, the prime minister, was appointed adviser to the government. The Lao king was deposed in December that year and the Lao People's Democratic Republic was proclaimed and ruled by leaders of the Pathet Lao.

Indonesia: The Revolution

Revolution did not occur only in the Indochina region. It also took place in Indonesia and there it shared some major similarities with that in Vietnam. Both aspired to overthrow colonial rule. Both were self-reliant and eschewed dependence on foreign aid. Both sought to unite their respective nations. Both revolutions reached a terminal point when the colonial or foreign powers made their official exit. This last feature had special meaning for the Indonesian case. The revolution in Indonesia ended in 1949 after a relatively short struggle of four years, compared to that of the Vietnamese which lasted from 1945 to 1975; the brief period of struggle meant that there was no need for long-drawn contention, agitation or dispute of the kind that would produce revolutionary dogmas. Unlike the Vietnamese revolution, the Indonesian revolution was not one phase in a series with each episode terminating on an expectant note because the continuation would unfold later. In Vietnam there was a pause in 1954 with the signing of the Geneva agreement and the division of Vietnam at the seventeenth parallel. Another pause—albeit a very short one—took place in 1973 after the signing of the Paris Peace Accords between the United States and north Vietnam. Each pause was succeeded by a renewed effort to complete the revolution. In contrast, the Indonesian revolution was completed at one go. There was no need for challenges to constituted authority to be repeated. A sovereign Republic of Indonesia— the antithesis of the Netherlands East Indies—was firmly established. Put another way, the Indonesian revolution did not require a sequel with its attendant ideological baggage beckoning towards a revolution yet to come and suggesting what form it might take.

Throughout its duration, revolution in Indonesia was almost a seamless web of political and armed struggle. Revolution imposed upon and demanded from the independent state of Indonesia a unity that was not previously possible. This unity was realized by the co-operation of two well-known leaders of the prewar nationalist movement—Sukarno and Mohammad Hatta. Together, they constituted a political structure that lasted for as long as that co-operation was required.

Sukarno was the president of the Republic of Indonesia proclaimed in 1945 and Hatta was vice-president. The 1945 constitution provided for a powerful executive president. However, during the early years of the

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[12] MacAlister Brown and Joseph J. Zasloff, 'Laos 1973: wary steps toward peace', ibid., XIV, 2 (1974).

revolution, Sukarno could not exercise his constitutional powers. He was compelled to let Prime Minister Sjahrir take precedence because, in the immediate postwar world, it was not practical for Sukarno—tainted by collaboration with the Japanese—to deal with foreign powers. Sjahrir was noted for his non-collaborationism. Symbolically, however, the co-operation between Sukarno and Hatta was a significant political structure that fashioned consensus during the revolution. Indonesian society was sorely lacking in unity because it was a matrix of communal, ethnic, religious and cultural segmentation. Broadly speaking, Sukarno represented the Javanese syncretistic religious strain; Hatta was Sumatran and more emphatically a Muslim. Sukarno was skilled at oratory, agitation and mass politics, whereas Hatta, an economist by training, was interested in restoring economic and administrative order to the chaos created by revolution.

Their co-operation provided the mechanism for driving a revolution towards its goal. On the one hand, Sjahrir and Hatta took up the task of hobnobbing with the Dutch and the post-1945 British occupation forces to negotiate international agreements, the Linggajati and Renville Agreements of 1947 and 1948 respectively. In particular, Sjahrir was publicly identified with the decision to concede many areas in the outlying territories to the Dutch as the latter's military strength increased in the islands outside Java. What Sjahrir and Hatta achieved turned out to be unpopular though necessary. On the other hand, Sukarno concentrated on propaganda, mobilization and agitation. Such a programme of activities encouraged guerrilla warfare against the Dutch, sabotage, revolutionary fervour and bravado. Sukarno was identified with the popular and attention-grabbing actions.

To be sure, the Sukarno–Hatta combination met considerable opposition. The Dutch launched two military strikes (Police Actions, 1947 and 1948) against the Republic of Indonesia. The second one resulted in the arrest of Sukarno and Hatta. Internally, the national communists carried out an unsuccessful coup in 1946. The revived Communist Party of Indonesia (PKI) launched an abortive revolt at Madiun in east Java in 1948. Carried out during the Second Police Action, it was viewed by all as a stab in the back of the republic at its hour of need. Fundamentalist Muslims (Darul Islam) led a rebellion to establish an Islamic state in west Java, an uprising that was not crushed till 1962. Again, its timing—launched as it was in 1948—was unfortunate. Moreover, it inflicted casualties on the Indonesian army and impressed upon it an extremely unfavourable image of militant Islam. The revolution also meant different things to different groups. While Hatta and Sjahrir conceived the revolution in terms of a colonial uprising, there were independent and separate attempts at social revolution, e.g. overthrowing traditional aristocrats who had previously enjoyed the support of the Dutch. These took place in northern Sumatra and parts of Java.[13]

By and large, notwithstanding the opposition, consensus prevailed.

[13] See Benedict R. O'G. Anderson, *Java in a Time of Revolution: Occupation and Resistance, 1944–1946*, Ithaca and London, 1972 ch. 15.

Apart from the Darul Islam, the Muslims made concessions in the constitu-
tional discussions just before the Japanese surrendered, and agreed not to
include the specific mention of Islam in the state ideology of Pancasila.
Instead, they settled for the Jakarta Charter, a draft prologue to be tagged
on to but not part of the constitution, enjoining those who professed Islam
to abide by Islamic laws. The Indonesian army was another political
structure that acted as an instrument of consensus uniting the diverse
population. In the dark days of 1948, during the Second Police Action, the
army was the only source of hope and national authority in the republic.

PLURAL POLITICAL STRUCTURES

In the polyglot world that was Southeast Asia, revolution as a vehicle for
consensus was not the remedy adopted by all the independent states. For
many others, revolution conjured images of agrarian radicalism, a topsy-
turvy world of political intrigue and conspiracy. A way to avoid revolution
was to forge political structures that would win the support of large
sections of a given population.

Burma: Aung San

The Burmese attempted to create political structures based on consensus of
a kind. Post-colonial Burma (called the Union of Myanmar from 1989
onwards) can be studied in terms of its leaders' attempting to forge a civil
ideology or a national culture that would provide the legitimacy needed for
a consensual political order. Consensus was a vital ingredient if Burma
was to exist as a state. In fact, Burma's independence was granted by the
British only when an amicable settlement had been reached between
Burma proper and the surrounding upland territories populated by ethnic
minorities. Negotiations between Aung San on the one hand and the Shan
saw-bwas and leaders of the Chins and Kachins on the other hand led to the
formation of a Union federal government. In 1947, the frontier areas and
the Shan states pledged their loyalty to the Union in the Panglong
Agreement. Four states were envisaged in the non-Burmese territories,
Shan, Karenni, Kachin, Karen, and also a Chin Special Division.
    The first Burmese leader, General Aung San, visualized Burma as a
plural society in which diverse political structures coexisted within a
framework of overarching consensus. He was a prewar student leader
later given military training by the Japanese. He had returned to Burma as
the leader of the Thirty Comrades, who arrived in Burma at the head of the
Burma Independence army, and whose achievements became legendary.
Aung San was careful to avoid the development of political structures that
would prove divisive in Burma. In his view, an authoritarian structure
based on a resurrected and absolutist Burmese monarchy could not attract
support. In a country where Buddhism played a central role in the lives of
individuals and in the struggle for independence, Aung San was also
noted for having argued for the separation of religion and state: 'In politics

there is no room for religion inasmuch as there should be no insistence that the president of the Republic should be a Buddhist or that a Minister for Religion should be appointed in the cabinet.'[14] On the ethnic minorities, an important subject that plagued the later years of independent Burma, Aung San's position would have won much support. Never was there a more liberal political structure for the minorities than that proposed by Aung San in May 1947. He proposed that the status of 'Union State', 'Autonomous State' or 'National Area' should be conferred on those territories that possessed the following characteristics: (1) a defined geographical area with a character of its own; (2) unity of language different from the Burmese; (3) unity of culture; (4) community of historical traditions; (5) community of economic interests and a measure of economic self-sufficiency; (6) a fairly large population; and (7) the desire to maintain its distinct identity as a separate unit. It does not require much imagination to realize that Aung San's relatively relaxed views, if accepted, would lead to considerable autonomy for the important minority communities. Fortunately or unfortunately, for reasons that are not clear, Aung San omitted such detailed provisions from a later pronouncement in June 1947 on the same subject. He died soon after, the victim of an assassin's bullet, and his vice-president, U Nu, succeeded him.

Malaysia before 1969

Like Burma, Malaysia (and before 1963, Malaya) was also a multiethnic plural society. In both cases, the British delayed granting independence until suitable arrangements were made to provide for the accommodation of the ethnic minorities in the independent state structure. In Burma, the solution was embodied in the Panglong Agreement. In Malaya, arrangements were less formal but the Alliance 'formula' proved to be a more durable structure.

The evolution of the Alliance formula was an exercise in arriving at some sort of consensus among the principal races in Malaya. Malaya was not an entirely logical grouping of territories and peoples. It inherited from its colonial order several loosely linked administrative units: the Straits Settlements, the Federated Malay States and the unfederated Malay States. In 1963, Sabah, Sarawak and Singapore were added to the political state structure to constitute the new Federation of Malaysia. There were, of course, some common denominators. All of the above-mentioned states had experienced a history of British colonial rule. There was also a core of Malay nationalism in the peninsular part of Malaysia. However, the disintegrative forces were sufficiently potent. In 1948 and 1953, secessionist movements emerged in Penang, and the same happened in Johor and Kelantan in 1955. Singapore was forced to leave Malaysia in 1965. In Sabah, the Chief Minister—Tun Mustapha—acted like an autonomous head of state till he was toppled from power. As for the population, communal conflict was always lurking near the surface. From 1948 till

[14] Cited in *The Political Legacy of Aung San*, compiled by and with an introductory essay by Josef Silverstein, Ithaca: Cornell University Southeast Asia Program, 1972, 3–4.

1960, there was also a revolt launched by the Malayan Communist Party aimed at establishing a government led by communists, principally Chinese.

This environment of discord and conflict was temporarily tamed by the development of an alliance between the Malays and the Chinese. In effect, a consensual environment evolved whereby communal issues were not debated in public but settled through compromises in private. Essentially, this consensus operated on an avoidance principle—avoidance of open, public debate. It was called the Alliance because in 1952, the principal party organs of the Malays and the Chinese—the United Malays National Organization (UMNO) and the then Malayan Chinese Association (MCA) —entered into a co-operative alliance to contest the first municipal election held in Kuala Lumpur. The contested seats were allocated on the basis of an informal agreement. In this celebrated event, the Alliance won nine out of the twelve seats contested, showing that Sino-Malay co-operation was possible under this political structure. Similar arrangements in subsequent elections brought more electoral gains. The parties were so confident of its potency that the Alliance formula of private compromise was employed to produce the informal 'bargain' that lay at the basis of the independent state structure of 1957. An independent Malaya in which Malays and non-Malays were roughly equal in numbers was not viable unless the major ethnic groups agreed on the manner of sharing political and economic power. This bargain ensured the political primacy of the Malays by entrenching the position of the Malay Rulers in the political structure; by weighting rural electoral constituencies; by favourable admission ratios in the key sectors of the civil service and educational institutions; by special allocation of licences and other privileges. All these provisions were embodied in Section 153 of the constitution in the phrase 'special position of the Malays'. In return, the Chinese were allowed to retain their economic power. Also, they could attain limited political power through generous citizenship provisions.

For the Alliance to succeed in an independent state, several conditions had to be met. Leaders had to enjoy substantial support in their respective communities. For UMNO, this condition was fulfilled during the early years of its history. As a political structure, UMNO was *the* Malay party. Its branches reached the Malay village where it was not surprising to find village elders, teachers, or religious leaders holding membership in UMNO as an example to their followers. These party branches in turn followed the dictates of the *mentri besar* (chief minister) of each state in peninsular Malaya; since most of the states had *mentri besar* who were pro-UMNO, virtual bloc votes were ensured. Until the mid-1970s, votes at the crucial UMNO General Assembly were usually cast as a bloc in accordance with the wishes of the *mentri besar*. The considerable influence of the *mentri besar* meant that the votes of each state could be delivered to support the UMNO leaders at the national level. (From 1975 onwards, the formal bloc vote was replaced by the secret ballot, but the *mentri besar* were still able to influence the way votes were cast.) The relationship between the national leaders like Tunku Abdul Rahman and the state leaders remains an important area for further research but generally the latter tended to act in accordance with the dictates of the former, at least in the case of peninsular

Malaya. This pyramid-like political structure in UMNO, with the national leaders commanding rural votes, was a veritable phalanx. The MCA leaders also enjoyed undisputed control of Chinese votes during the early years of independence. The MCA began as a welfare organization in 1949 dedicated to help the Chinese squatters who were zoned to live in New Villages as part of a programme to isolate them from the influence of the MCP. The latter was the only party then that could pose a challenge to the MCA. When it was declared illegal in 1948, the MCA enjoyed the monopoly of legitimate political recruitment among the Chinese.

This is not to suggest that support for the Alliance formula was undiluted. In fact, the partners in the Alliance network were not the only political structure of note. For example, there were Malay groups which opposed the UMNO, considering it as an organization representing largely the administrative élite, scions of the royal houses and others who were willing to accommodate multiracialism. The religious ingredient, Islam, seemed to be under-represented in their scheme of things. There was, in fact, a vibrant tradition of Malay Muslim education since the colonial period, centred on the private institutions of the Maahad Il-Ehya Assyarif Gunung Semanggul (Miagus) in the northern part of the state of Perak, and similar *pondok* and *madrasah*. The products of these educational institutions constituted a political structure that embarked on more radical politics than those represented in the Alliance network. Their religious training and their belief in God's reward for life after death contributed to the development of an altruistic and sacrificial attitude that led to radical politics. The Miagus was the educational institution which provided the seedbed for the birth of the Partai Islam se Tanah Malaya or PAS (Pan-Malayan Islamic Party or PMIP) and Partai Rakyat (People's Party). These parties formed an alternative political structure because, unlike those in the Alliance, their major characteristics were *bangsa* (race), *agama* (religion) and *tanah Melayu* (land of the Malays). The PAS, in particular, sought the establishment of a theocratic state, the recognition of Malay as the only official language and nationality, and the restriction of non-Malay privileges. The Partai Rakyat espoused an ideological amalgam of Malay nationalism, agrarian socialism and egalitarianism.

A remaining condition for the Alliance formula to work was the need for the leaders to enjoy close personal relations with one another. The Tunku was comfortable in non-Malay circles. He had a wide circle of non-Malay friends. His own mother was half Thai. It was also well known that he had adopted Chinese children. However, in the course of time and especially with the formation of the Federation of Malaysia in 1963, a more business-like and formal relationship replaced the hitherto informal and personal pattern of interaction among leaders. A whole new generation of Malays and non-Malays had grown up with no inkling of the 'bargain' struck by their elders. The formation of Malaysia in 1963 introduced new political forces into the structure that did not meet some of the conditions mentioned above. The proposal to bring Malaya, Singapore, Sabah, Sarawak and Brunei into a federation was a major change of and challenge to the political structure.

The entire sequence of events began with an almost innocuous

announcement by the then Malayan prime minister, Tunku Abdul
Rahman, on 27 May 1961, at a Singapore press luncheon:

> Malaya today as a nation realizes that she cannot stand alone and in isolation
> ... Sooner or later she should have an understanding with Britain and the
> peoples of the territories of Singapore, North Borneo, Brunei and Sarawak ...
> We should look ahead to this objective and think of a plan whereby these
> territories can be brought closer together in political and economic
> cooperation.[15]

Expanding the Federation of Malaya would seriously affect the commu-
nal nature of the political structure. The Bornean territories were populat-
ed by ethnic communities like the Iban who, apart from being 'sons of the
soil', had little in common with the Malays. Singapore was predominantly
Chinese with ideological tendencies towards the left. The nature of party
politics was also different. In Borneo, parties had an ethnic emphasis and
they were ephemeral. In Singapore, the dominant party was the People's
Action Party (PAP) which was urban, socialist, non-communal, and used
to governing a fairly homogenous island. It practised open debate on most
important issues. The Alliance, as already suggested, was communal, non-
ideological and used to private discussion of sensitive issues.[16] A political
structure founded on Malay primacy could not but feel the strains.

All the leaders were in fact aware of the changes that the political
structure would sustain, and they sought to find ways to limit the stresses.
Again, the search for a consensus among the major communities became
the main task. On the issue of representation in the House of Representa-
tives, the inclusion of two million Chinese from Singapore would mean an
allocation of some 22 seats compared to the 104 for peninsular Malaya, 12
for Sarawak and 7 for Sabah. This would boost the influence of the Chinese
in federal policy-making. In the negotiations that followed, Singapore
agreed to a reduced representation of 15 seats in return for autonomy
in matters pertaining to labour and education, the latter a core issue in
communalism. At the same time, the representation of Sarawak and Sabah
was increased to 24 and 16 seats respectively. This assuaged the fears of
the Borneans that they would be submerged or eclipsed by the Malays,
who were considered more experienced in politics.

Closely related to representation was, of course, the matter of citizen-
ship, which was a contentious issue on which consensus was difficult. The
extent to which the people in Singapore and the Bornean territories would
be accepted as Malaysian citizens would impact on the political structure,
since the communal balance under the Alliance would need readjustment.
For the Malay peninsula alone, before the formation of Malaysia, the
citizenship issue was not complicated. All persons who were citizens of
any state in the federation (mainly Malays), automatically became citizens
on independence day, 31 August 1957. In addition, all persons born in
Malaya after that date also became citizens (*jus soli*). Citizenship by

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[15] Peter Boyce, *Malaya and Singapore in International Diplomacy: Documents and Commentaries*,
Syndey, 1968, 8.
[16] John S. T Quah, Chan Heng Chee and Seah Chee Meow, *Government and Politics of
Singapore*, Singapore, 1985, 155–6.

naturalization was also available. In 1962, the provisions regarding citizen-
ship were redefined, effectively making it more difficult for non-Malays
to qualify. In addition to *jus soli, jus sanguinis* (the condition that one of
the two parents had to be a citizen or a permanent resident at the time of
the child's birth) was also required.

The negotiations leading to the formation of Malaysia complicated the
citizenship issue further. Two aims had to be satisfied, namely, Singapore
politics had to be restricted to the island so that the communal balance in
peninsular Malaya would not be upset, and Borneo had to be protected
from the flood of Malay or Chinese entrepreneurs who might want to
exploit the opportunities there. The latter aim was achieved quite simply.
Travellers to Sabah and Sarawak, as it turned out, were required to obtain
prior approval from the government of the state concerned. To achieve the
former aim, provisions were enacted to ensure that Singapore citizens
(who were mainly Chinese) could vote only in Singapore. Furthermore,
Singapore citizens could stand for federal office only in a Singapore
constituency. These features were necessary in order to make the inclusion
of a predominantly Chinese Singapore acceptable to the predominantly
Malay government of Malaya.

Money is the life blood that sustains any political structure. In penin-
sular Malaya before the formation of the Federation of Malaysia, the
federal government in Kuala Lumpur controlled all the finances and did
not hesitate to disburse funds in accordance with political criteria. With the
formation of Malaysia, it was expected that Singapore and Brunei would
contribute their revenue surplus while Sabah and Sarawak would be
deficit states. (It was the management of finances that constituted one
of the hurdles resulting in Brunei's refusal to join Malaysia. Sultan Omar of
Brunei would not concede that the central government had the right to
impose duties on Brunei's oil, while Kuala Lumpur insisted on that
prerogative.)

In the end, almost on the eve of Malaysia Day, Singapore was given the
right to collect and retain its own taxes, but 40 per cent of these had to be
remitted periodically to Kuala Lumpur. The net effect of this arrangement
was to grant considerable autonomy to Singapore within the new political
structure, while Sabah and Sarawak also enjoyed some autonomy because
they were granted the right to collect and retain export revenues on
minerals and forest products.

The financial arrangements continued, however, to bedevil relations
between Singapore and the federal government in Kuala Lumpur and
formed one of the reasons leading to the former's eventual exit from the
federation. While allocation of funds constituted a distinct area of disagree-
ment and discord, it was not totally divorced from the communal issues
because, indeed, Singapore's contribution gave the new member state a
voice in how the money would be spent. In Singapore's view, the concept
of the equality of races meant the practice of racial *laissez faire* which would
allow equal treatment for all in order for the best to emerge unaided. That
understanding of racial equality ran counter to the traditional practice of
the Alliance in general and UMNO in particular. In the communal scheme
of things, the government harboured no intention to change the heavy

investment of public funds to support the Malays, believing that such preferential treatment would help them to become the equals of the non-Malays. Singapore's views therefore posed a direct challenge to the conventional approach to communalism. That, in itself, could have been accommodated if the views were confined to Singapore. However, Singapore's PAP also considered itself the representative of the Chinese in peninsular Malaya in addition to its multiracial constituents within Singapore.

In 1964, elections were called for the peninsular states; the PAP decided to contest several selected seats, hoping that success in six or seven would convince UMNO leaders that it would be more popular with the Chinese and therefore a more appropriate alliance partner than the MCA. This attempt to poach on Alliance territory failed, and the PAP won only one seat.

Meanwhile, even before the 1964 polls, the UMNO—in an act that foreshadowed the PAP's election participation—had also decided to enter the 1963 Singapore elections in an effort to present itself as the representative of the Malays there. Although it did not win any seats, UMNO continued its campaign for Malay support in Singapore. The vehicle used by UMNO was the Jawi-script, Malay-language daily—the *Utusan Melayu*—in which the PAP was vilified as a Chinese chauvinist party led by Lee Kuan Yew. The Malays in Singapore were encouraged to rely on Kuala Lumpur as the big brother who would protect them. Such constant harping on communal issues during 1963 and 1964 resulted in racial riots in Singapore on the occasion of the Prophet's birthday celebration on 21 July 1964. The bloodshed was stopped, but this event signalled the beginning of the end. Communal tension continued to be high.

In particular, the PAP's participation in politics in Malaya in 1964 and 1965, especially its programme of 'Malaysian Malaysia' (as distinct from the implied but unstated 'Malay Malaysia'), struck at the roots of the bargain. The only sensible way to avoid racial conflict was the separation of Singapore from Malaysia on 9 August 1965. This epochal event defused the communal threat somewhat, but the opposition towards the special position of the Malays was continued by the Democratic Action Party (DAP, successor to the PAP) and in a somewhat muted form by the Gerakan Ra'ayat Malaysia.

What was the effect of the separation on Malaysia's political structure? It showed the important role of leadership because the separation was decided by the Tunku while in London without consulting UMNO. Indeed, the Tunku had not held prior discussions with UMNO when he first broached the idea of Singapore joining the Federation of Malaysia.

If anything, the separation also strengthened the central control of the federal structure. No longer were attacks on the practice of communalism launched in the halls of parliament. The leadership provided by Singapore in criticizing Malay primacy also disappeared almost as it were overnight. However, communal problems did not then disappear.

In fact, one of the greatest legacies of the early experience of Malaysia was the increase in communal discord. Many Malays felt that their interests were pushed aside in order to accommodate the Chinese. For

example, they felt that policies like the sole use of Malay as the official language by 1967 were not supported strongly enough. In fact, their demands for economic uplift could not be satisfied without affecting the non-Malays. The latter also felt discriminated against by what they discerned as pro-Malay policies. Slogans like 'Malaysian Malaysia' ignited heady visions of a new racial order. Dissatisfaction with the Tunku and the MCA leadership naturally emerged. The former was disliked for his relaxed attitude of multiracial tolerance. The MCA leaders were considered as unsuitable champions of Chinese rights. For the Malays within UMNO, opposition began to coalesce around the person of the Tunku's deputy, Tun Abdul Razak. The PAS also emerged as an alternative promoter of Malay rights. When general elections were held in 1969, opposition parties like the DAP and the PAS made significant inroads into the Chinese and Malay support of the MCA and UMNO respectively. Extremists from both races, the Chinese encouraged by the gains of the DAP and the Malays incensed by perceived Chinese betrayal of and defection from the Alliance, took to the streets on 13 May 1969 in an orgy of killing. The political structure of the Alliance was in sore need of repair.

The prospects for developing political structures designed to enhance consensus among the ethnic groups in Malaysia and Burma were not good. In both states, leaders who favoured plural structures under an overarching unity did not survive. Aung San was assassinated, while the Tunku was discredited by the 13 May riots. Future attempts at consensus-building proved to be less liberal and generous.

Burma: U Nu

In Burma Prime Minister U Nu tried to develop a political structure based on a synthesis of Buddhism and socialism, with an especially heavy dose of the former. The programme appealed to many Burmese who were Buddhists, but it also aroused the fear of the ethnic minorities who suspected that they would be marginalized since they were not Buddhists. Buddhism also opened the way to Burmanization and the demise of the non-Burman ethnic traditions. The programme also failed to receive support from the socialists.

U Nu's intended political structure of the state was therefore not akin to Aung San's. In fact, U Nu's tenure of office was marked by pressures from ethnic groups seeking greater autonomy. The ostensibly federal political structure that was granted to Burma at independence conferred statehood on the Kachin, Kayah and Shan frontier regions. In addition, Shans and Kayahs were given the right to secede after 1958. The Chins were administered in a special division, while the Karens were allowed to create a state in 1951. However, these liberal provisions for separate political structures were more form than substance. All the states or divisions were dependent on the central government for funds. Their governments were responsible not to state legislatures but to councils made up of members of the central parliament, albeit drawn from their states.

The ethnic minorities tolerated U Nu, if only because his government

was so ineffective that proper exercise of authority was not consistently applied. In part, U Nu's erosion of power was due to the challenges posed to his leadership after 1948. For example, in March 1948, the communist party (later known as White Flags) revolted. A paramilitary force, the People's Volunteer Organization, joined the communists. The communists enjoyed considerable support because they championed popular causes in order to redress peasant grievances, such as cancellation of agricultural debt (owed mainly to Indians), returning ownership of land to the cultivators, reserving exploitation of natural resources to the Burmese. The ensuing civil war between the communists and Rangoon resulted in the collapse of the central administration. In the districts, local bosses (*bo* in local parlance) emerged, exercising control with their own paramilitary bands to defend their fiefs. By the time the civil war ended, the *bo* were managing local affairs and in fact operating a government structure parallel to the centre.

A challenge to U Nu's control of the government also emerged from his own party, the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League (AFPFL). The AFPFL was the ruling party but U Nu's control over it was weak at best. Founded by Aung San, it was, in any case, not a monolith but merely an alliance of mass organizations (e.g. the All-Burma Peasants Organization, Federation of Trade Organizations), ethnic groups (e.g. Karen Youth League), independent individual members (e.g. U Nu, the prime minister) and at least one political party, called the Socialist Party. Many of the organizations were in fact the personal followings of certain leaders who jealously held tight control over them. The followers were often territorially based, and this feature and the fact that the leaders had to divide the spoils among the followers, only encouraged rivalries within the AFPFL. Cohesion as a party was lacking.

The large majority won in two national elections (1951–2 and 1956) tended to hide the fissures within the party, but these emerged at the third All-Burma AFPFL Congress in January 1958. At that meeting, U Nu declared that the AFPFL would be transformed from a coalition to an unitary party. All affiliates, henceforth, had to adhere to the party ideology and accept a status subordinate to the party hierarchy. At that time, U Nu rejected Marxism as the party ideology but opted for a form of socialism.

These developments resulted in the split of the AFPFL into two factions—the U Nu group and the Kyaw Nyein–Ba Swe group. The split led to a severe drop in the parliamentary majority for U Nu. The latter feared a vote of no-confidence in a forthcoming budget session. In an unconstitutional move, U Nu promulgated the budget without debate. An atmosphere of political tension followed. U Nu asked General Ne Win to form a caretaker government to restore order so that a climate of confidence could be created for elections to be held. Ne Win's caretaker government was in full control of the country for eighteen months. During this time, it stabilized the cost of living and increased exports and foreign-exchange reserves. It also attempted to exert central control over the various regions of Burma by eliminating the power of the *bo* and replacing them with the authority of appointed district officers and security and administrative committees.

When U Nu's faction won a resounding victory in the February–March 1960 elections and returned to power in the first peaceful transition from military to civilian rule, U Nu named his faction the Pyidaungsu or Union Party. His rivals retained the name AFPFL. The Union Party did not live up to its name. It soon succumbed to squabbling among the leaders. Two groups emerged. One called itself the Thakins, consisting of the leftist party members who had supported U Nu in the earlier 1958 split. The other group was the U Bo's who were relative newcomers and more conservative in their ideology. The internal divisions resulted in the party losing its credibility and this was in part responsible for the military takeover by Ne Win in 1962.

The parties in opposition to U Nu's earlier AFPFL (before 1958) and the later Union Party (after 1960) were not far different. Before 1958, the chief opponent of the AFPFL was the National Unity Front (NUF). It was also a coalition, but the members were almost equally strong constituent parties—ranging from the non-communist Justice Party to the Marxist Burma Workers and Peasants Party. Its only reason for cohesion rested on its opposition to the AFPFL: After its electoral failures in 1960, the coalition disintegrated leaving behind as its anchor group the Burma Workers and Peasants Party which was renamed the Burma Workers Party. By the time of the military takeover, it was clearly a Marxist-controlled coalition.

The other main political party in opposition to U Nu was the Kyaw Nyein–Ba Swe group which had retained the name of AFPFL. It never really posed a challenge to U Nu, being largely a party of personal followers of the principal leaders.

Two specific policies adopted by U Nu after 1960 were responsible for his downfall. The first was the call to establish Buddhism as the state religion. The Buddhist hierarchy was a substantial political structure because it provided a refuge from state laws but at the same time could pose as the conscience of the people. Relations between church and state could therefore be viewed in terms of contest or co-optation. Religion was a field in which U Nu appeared to have interfered most conspicuously from the 1950s. He believed that Buddhism was the means of making socialism possible because the economic system could not be changed unless human hearts were first transformed. In 1950, when the Buddha Sasana Council Act was enacted, U Nu created a state-financed agency for the promotion and propagation of Buddhism. Nu's support for Buddhism at that time was in part a programme to provide an ideological challenge to the left-wing forces. In 1954, in response to pressure from abbots, instruction in Buddhism was begun in state schools. Later, in 1961, he vowed to declare Buddhism as the state religion because of his own strong desire to perform this deed of merit, among other reasons. This move was of course opposed by the non-Buddhist minorities, and by the army which wanted the state religion to be limited to Burma proper. In essence, U Nu's proposal would have made little real difference since Buddhism was already so widely practised. However, the non-Buddhist ethnic minorities were incensed that an attempt to strengthen Buddhism was even made.

The second reason for Nu's downfall was the impact of his policies on the maintenance of the federal structure. In 1960, as an election promise,

U Nu proposed the establishment of separate states for the Arakanese and Mons. After the elections, he reneged and delayed the statehood bills, thus alienating the Arakanese, Mons and others. Insurgency increased and by the end of 1961, U Nu even admitted that the minority rebels controlled one-tenth of the country.[17]

It was the danger of the disintegration of the state structure that led to U Nu's being deposed by Ne Win in 1962. With Ne Win's accession to power, the focus shifted definitively from tolerance of plural political structures towards the creation of maximum government.

The Philippines before Marcos

Plural political structures were found in the Philippines at the inception of independence. However, the study of these structures presents a difficulty that historians must surmount, namely, the need to purge the mind of contemporary preoccupations in the analysis of the past. In the case of the Philippines, this advice is difficult to follow. In February 1986, President Marcos was overthrown in a peaceful, democratic revolution, called the 'second Philippine Revolution', in recognition of the first one that occurred in 1896 against Spanish colonial rule. On both occasions, the continuous trend of patriotism and the desire for democratic government with room for diverse political structures were the distinguishing features. The historian cannot but reflect on the similarities.

The key to understanding political structures in the Philippines is the family. Its importance had historical roots. The pre-Hispanic local settlements were kinship groups. The Spanish colonialists did not destroy the family ties but in fact strengthened them considerably. The Spanish government alienated the Filipinos because it was predatory, negative and burdensome. Without an ally in government, they had no alternative but to provide for their own welfare. The American colonial period and independence thereafter did not change this situation. The American régime gave the traditional élite opportunities for extending the family structure into politics. Aided by its economic strength, this élite was able to control the government upon independence. The result of this marriage of political leadership and economic power was the entrenchment of conservatism and family influence in government. The extended Filipino family system in which both paternal and maternal relations are considered as belonging to the family provided a made-to-order political structure.

What values did the family impart to the political structure? They included the priority given to the satisfaction of particularistic needs and the importance of personal and daily relationships. These ethics and norms were largely internalized in the individual. The head of the family therefore assumed importance as a leader with social and political clout. Members of the family and other retainers were able to share the good fortunes of the leader. A structure of dependency soon developed.

This aspect of a family-based political structure was further augmented by colonial legacies. Both Spanish and American rule bequeathed a highly

17 Quoted in Richard Butwell, *U Nu of Burma*, Stanford, 1963, 227.

unequal system of land tenure. In the agricultural sector, this meant that there was a large exploitable class of tenants susceptible to influence by a politically powerful landowning class. Such a situation promoted a client framework. Leaders were supported because they were able to satisfy the demands of their followers: the former were patrons and the latter clients. Leaders themselves had patrons and in this way the entire political structure was vertically linked from the *barrio* to the national capital.

Two features of this patron–client relationship particularly marked the political structure. First, national leaders were not generally required to maintain direct ties with the population. For election to the presidency, the most important condition was the ability to dispense rewards to command the support of the voting blocs. Second, party loyalty was not important and therefore there was no need for parties to present identifiable pro-grammes. Parties were never distinct ideological entities. They resembled fiefdoms allied together. Party leaders could not therefore campaign on the basis of programmes because these would endanger the alliances within the party. After elections, the party leaders were sustained by local voting blocs controlled by local leaders who had to be rewarded. Such a situation encouraged the formation of two grand parties, the 'ins' and the 'outs'. This two-party feature distinguished the party political structure in the Philippines and extended even into the Muslim south.

This two-party political structure was interrupted only briefly by the Japanese occupation. When the ageing Sergio Osmena returned with General MacArthur to restore the Partido Nacionalista, his claim to leader-ship was challenged by Manuel Roxas—once the lieutenant of Osmena and a much younger, prominent prewar Nacionalista leader—who remained in the Philippines through the occupation. The result was a split in the party in the run-up to the presidential election in 1946, with Osmena's faction reconstituting itself as the Nationalist Party and Roxas' supporters calling themselves the Liberal Party. The sources of party alignment, however, remained the same and what Osmena and Roxas achieved was the splitting of support in each province.

As was to be expected, the two parties did not greatly differ. Both were conservative in the defence of private property and the existing social system. Both parties tried to win the middle ground, with neither going to the extremes so as to alienate the mainstream voters. Within this broad framework, there were certain regional differences. The Nationalist Party appeared to be strong in the Tagalog-speaking coconut-growing southern Luzon and in Cebu. The Liberal Party enjoyed strong support in the rice-growing Pampanga region of central Luzon and in the Ilocos provinces of the north where the people were members of the Philippine Independent (Aglipayan) Church and employees of the extensive tobacco industry. However, these regional links were very tenuous. For the purpose of the 1965 presidential election, Ferdinand Marcos, a Liberal Party member who was also Ilocano and Aglipayan, joined the Nationalist Party. As a result, the Nationalist Party, which was previously strong in southern Luzon, overnight became a heavyweight in the north. Thus regional identification was no sure indicator of the strength or weakness of the political party structure. On the whole, regional distinctions were not important because

regional differences were slight, except for the stark but general contrasts between the Muslim south and the Christian north. Regional rivalry invariably meant rivalry for favours.

This line of analysis suggests that individual leaders could swing votes in very material ways. It should also be noted that these individuals were often heads of influential families which served as major components of the political structure. The Filipino tradition of authoritarianism probably had its origins in these hierarchically structured families. It was not uncommon to find political leaders and office-holders at the national and local levels of government wielding authority as if they were dominant patriarchs. Examples include scions of the Lopez, Aquino–Cojuangco, Osmena and Romualdez clans.

The independent state of the Philippines was therefore characterized by continuous political struggle between élite families represented in political parties which controlled votes from the *barrio* (village) through the patron–client system. The regular change of leaders in government through elections gave the impression that democracy was at work in the Philippines. In fact there was an almost monotonous political struggle between the élites. Two exceptions merit mention. The election of Ramon Magsaysay was significant because he was the first Filipino presidential candidate to employ the grassroots approach. The election in 1961 of Diosdado Macapagal was also noteworthy as the first real contest between the party machine and the grassroots. Macapagal's victory was viewed by some observers, prematurely as it turned out, as ending the domination of the upper class, not least because Macapagal was born of lower-class origin in Pampanga.

However, if democracy implies space for other political structures to exercise influence and control national policies, this was not the case in the Philippines. The political élite was small, and thus personal relations were important. Intimacy also served as a bulwark that prevented other structures from challenging the political élite families.

Of these, one that emerged as most important in the 1980s was the Catholic Church. With the population 85 per cent Catholic, it is not difficult to imagine how the Church can exercise considerable influence within the political structure of the Philippines and, indeed, be a part of it. The bishops exercised authority over the educated, the wealthy, and the masses alike. The clergy managed schools, welfare and other institutions. The Church also launched action programmes aimed at mass relief, thus providing a viable alternative to government. Above all, the Catholic Church was rich. The Archdiocese of Manila, first founded in 1579, was indeed reputed to be one of the wealthiest dioceses in the world.

During Spanish colonial rule, the church had been a partner of the state. The two co-operated to extend the empire and spread the faith. American colonial rule stressed the separation of church and state. After independence, this separation continued.

Organizationally, the Catholic leadership was centred principally in a body known as the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, an alliance of eighty-one prelates with the power to decide official policy for 5000 priests in the country. Its long-term leader was Cardinal Jaime Sin, Archbishop of Manila from 1974 and a cardinal from 1976. He held a

central moderating role between the conservatives on the one hand and the radical clergy on the other, the latter being supporters of socio-political activism. Traditionally, the bishops' conference had given its support to the government in power as long as its interests were not affected. Generally, the wealth of the Church implied that it was one of the social pillars of support of the status quo. But when martial law was proclaimed in 1972, and Marcos had suppressed all other opposition, the Church was to act as the conscience of the political structure.

Another political structure enjoying mass support was typified by the Hukbalahap. By any definition, the Huk movement was the best illustration of the widespread rural discontent in the independent period of Philippine statehood. From 1946 to 1953, the Huks were able to launch a full-scale rebellion in central Luzon, in part because the movement derived considerable support from the peasants who had been severely disadvantaged by the breakdown of the mutual support system between the upper and lower classes. According to traditional practice, the élite was expected to act as patrons, for example by contributing to community activities and providing help to their tenants in times of distress. In return, a member of the lower class was expected to show deference. In central Luzon, this two-class system was breaking down because of the increase of absentee landlords. The widespread use of the leasehold system instead of share tenancy also meant that the lower class was exposed to a less protected life. The backbone of the Huk movement was broken by President Magsaysay who offered land in the south to those Huk who surrendered. He also enacted agrarian reform legislation in 1954 and 1955.

Apart from the Huks, there seemed to be no political structure representing labour or the working class. This could be due to the reform measures of Magsaysay. The presence of strong family ties was also another explanation. In urban areas, splinter parties to woo the labour vote were not successful because the discontented among the working class tended to return to the *barrio* where relatives could provide subsistence.

Arguably, the propensity for conflict between political structures was greater in the Philippines than other Southeast Asian states. Society tended to be more adversarial than consensual. The most potent source of conflict was agrarian unrest which pitched peasants against landowners in a classic structural conflict of masses versus élite. The links between the structures in the Philippines are therefore characterized by discord. One of the principal explanations for this state of affairs lies in the failure of the élite in Philippine history to transcend its class affiliation.[18] For example, in 1896, this élite separated itself from the Katipunan, a populist movement. In 1899, many élite leaders abandoned the revolutionary government of Emilio Aguinaldo and opted for political freedom from Spain but not social or economic democracy. Later, in 1900–1, élite leaders collaborated with the United States to establish a colonial counter-revolutionary régime. The subsequent American policy of free trade meant an added economic advantage to them as producers of cash crops with open access to the

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[18] Leslie E. Bauzon, *Philippine Agrarian Reform, 1880–1965*, Singapore: ISEAS Occasional Paper no. 31, 1975, 17.

United States market. At the same time, rural grievances were left unre-
solved. This situation continued little changed in the 1950s and 1960s.
Agrarian unrest continued to loom as a major theme in government
policies. Reform measures failed because of intense opposition by the
landlords, and the lack of supporting infrastructure that should have
accompanied declarations of sincere intent, for instance provision of credit
facilities, marketing outlets, co-operatives, attacks on bureaucratic obstruc-
tion and so on. When reform measures failed, governments adopted
coercion. In the early 1950s, during the height of the Huk rebellion,
President Elpidio Quirino even suspended the writ of *habeas corpus*—a
drastic measure for a state often described as the showcase of democracy.

Indonesia: The Political Parties

There was a time after the end of the Indonesian revolution when pluralistic
political structures abounded in Indonesia. One of the conditions for the
relinquishment of Dutch sovereignty in 1949 was in fact the establishment
of a federal state structure in the republic so as to accommodate the diverse
interests of a far-flung archipelago. The federal state did not last more than
a year: each of the constituent states elected to join the unitary Republic of
Indonesia by the end of 1950. Meanwhile, a provisional constitution of
1950 was enacted to accommodate the transition from federal to unitary
structures. It was a measure of the intense dislike for colonial-inspired
schemes that led to the rapid demise of the federal state. Anti-Dutch
feelings, however, soon lost potency as a cementing force contributing to
consensus. Attention had to be given to sorting out the chaos left by the
revolution. Economic stabilization was urgent. Then, too, decisions were
needed regarding the future of the Dutch investments, the return of West
Irian (which remained in Dutch hands), the conduct of foreign relations,
the demobilization of the revolutionary fighters. These problems chal-
lenged the consensus that was achieved during the revolution.

The task of solving them was entrusted to the political structure of party-
based cabinet governments. The early cabinets were headed by Hatta and
leaders of similar outlook. Their approach to the problems facing the
independent state was technocratic. Economic rationalization was empha-
sized. Foreign investments were encouraged. Forms of extreme nationalism
were eschewed. Their actions flowed from the assumption that the revolu-
tion had ended and the task of organizing the new-born nation beckoned.
Sukarno opposed this approach because it relegated him to a back seat,
requiring skills with which he was less familiar. After 1953, he supported
cabinets that adopted a more militant approach to nationalism. This meant
renewed emphasis on foreign policy issues or the recovery of West Irian or
programmes on which consensus could be easily obtained. At the same
time, economic rationalization or courses of action that would invite
disagreement were avoided. The political élite was divided on these lines.

This division, however, was linked to more fundamental cleavages in
political structures. Many of the Hatta-type leaders were members of the
Masjumi (Federation of Muslim Organizations) representing the reform

wing of Indonesian Islam. The Sukarno-type supporters identified with the Indonesian National Party (PNI) and the Muslim Scholars' Association (Nahdatul Ulama, NU) representing the more traditional Muslims. Each of these parties was the centre of a matrix of culturally discrete groups (called *aliran*) that extended from the level of national politics to schools or organizations at the village level. The dichotomy between the two groups of leaders also tended to parallel the division between the outer islands and Java. In short, party, cultural, ideological and geographical divisions reinforced each other. The independent state that emerged from the revolution appeared to be more fragmented than ever, and consensus was nowhere to be found.

The first nationwide election held in 1955 confirmed this fragmentation. The PNI obtained 22 per cent of the vote, the NU 18 per cent; both derived their votes from Java. The Masjumi obtained 21 per cent, most of its votes coming from the outer islands. A fourth party, the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI), netted 16 per cent. The strong showing of the PKI and the concentration of its votes in Java showed that it was a strong contender for the same religio-cultural community as the PNI and NU. The election therefore failed to fashion the political structures that would provide consensus.

The next measure taken to achieve consensus was the convening of a Constituent Assembly to draft a new constitution on which common agreement on the nature of the state could be achieved. Almost immediately, the structural cleavages represented by the political parties expressed themselves in argument over the kind of state structure Indonesia should adopt. Should it continue to be based on Pancasila formulated by Sukarno in 1945, in which religion was recognized by reference to belief in one's own God? Or should it be revamped to become a state explicitly expressed in terms of Islam, ostensibly the faith of the majority? The debates lasted from 1957 to 1959. They demonstrated how difficult it would be for an ostensibly Muslim-majority state to coalesce around a single, unified political structure under the banner of Islam.

Sukarno, despairing at the cleavages represented by diverse political structures, proposed a solution, namely, the establishment of a new structure called Guided Democracy under his leadership. A non-party leader, believing that his Javanese syncretism could be usefully employed to reconcile opposing viewpoints, Sukarno felt that Guided Democracy would eliminate the fundamentally divisive character of party-based cabinet governments. The PKI and a dominant faction in the army led by the Chief-of-Staff, Colonel Nasution, supported him, each with their own motives. The Masjumi strenuously opposed any attempt to establish Guided Democracy, considering the scheme inimical to the protection of Islam and other party-sponsored interests.

The proposal to establish a new political structure under the aegis of Guided Democracy also aroused the opposition of the inhabitants of the outer islands who saw it as another ploy by Javanese leaders to impose colonialism under a new name. Fear of growing communist influence in Java was also worrying to the outer islanders who were mainly Masjumi Muslim supporters. The result was the outbreak of regional revolts in

Sumatra and south Sulawesi, led by anti-communist and anti-Javanese army officers. By 1958, the rebellion had spread to the extent that a counter-government with its own prime minister was proclaimed in west Sumatra. The Masjumi and the Socialist Party (PSI) supported the rebellion. However, with the help of Nasution, Sukarno was able to crush the rebellion quickly.

Thus by the following year, 1959, the political structure had changed considerably. Political parties either were discredited by identification with the rebellion, or had agreed to accept Sukarno's superior role in Guided Democracy. Hatta had resigned from the vice-presidency in December 1956 and was no longer available to check Sukarno. The regional revolt had been crushed and unity had been restored, albeit one that was Java-oriented. The military had once again become a major political structure when martial law was proclaimed in 1957 on the outbreak of the regional revolts. Sukarno was now in a position to apply pressure on the Constituent Assembly to produce a constitution to his liking. When this body refused, he dissolved it and proclaimed the reinstatement of the 1945 constitution in 1959, thus heralding the era of Guided Democracy. In brief, a new political structure emerged in 1959 based on the narrow foundation of power-sharing between Sukarno and the military. The hoped-for consensus of diverse political structures contending in an overarching liberal system had proved beyond Indonesia's grasp.

MAXIMUM GOVERNMENT

While revolution continued in Vietnam, the other parts of Southeast Asia experienced a period of history that coincided with an economic boom. This boom meant a broad-based economic take-off for most of the independent states. Leaders emerged to take advantage of these conditions, many of them creating new political structures or refashioning existing ones. This they believed was essential in order to benefit from the boom. By and large, the political structures that emerged tended to concentrate power in the hands of a few. The ruling élite shrank in size, but at the same time government acquired the maximum influence possible.

Maximum government, of course, had its defenders. The most articulate was S. Rajaratnam, the former Foreign Minister of the independent state of Singapore, who argued that power was essential for many purposes, including legitimizing and modernizing the régime. Suitable political structures allowing for maximum government were therefore necessary. Certain political attributes, like separation and balance of power, multiplicity of political parties, and proliferation of opposition groups, were seen as inappropriate.[19]

[19] S. Rajaratnam, 'Asian Values and Modernization' in Seah Chee Meow, ed., *Asian Values and Modernization*, Singapore, 1977, 99–100.

The Philippines under Marcos

Another important defender of maximum government was President Ferdinand E. Marcos of the Philippines. Some credence should be given to the view that Philippine political structures experienced a major transformation when Marcos was re-elected president in 1969. During his second term, in 1972, Marcos declared martial law, suspended the writ of *habeas corpus* and closed the era of pluralistic politics that had existed since 1935. The political structures that emerged allowed for maximum government. This was a major change compared to the period before 1972 when government could not help but be minimal, faced as it was with serious differences within the élite as well as divisions between the élite and the masses.

Marcos' own explanation for dismantling democratic structures so entirely was simple. When declaring martial law, he cited the constitutional provisions that supported him. Such action was sanctioned 'in case of invasion, insurrection, or rebellion or imminent danger thereof'. He went on to note that lawlessness was perpetrated by Marxist–Leninist–Maoist elements. At the same time, he accused the Muslim minority of fomenting rebellion in the south and Christian vigilantes, like the Ilagas, of contributing to insecurity in that region.

Contemporary accounts attest to increased insurgency in Mindanao from 1969. This phenomenon, however, was not new. For the past four hundred years, there had been a simmering struggle to defend the Muslim heartland of Mindanao from the control of the Christian north. The Muslims themselves numbered only 8 per cent of the total Philippine population, and were concentrated largely in Mindanao, Sulu and Palawan. Such a small minority could have been accommodated in a Philippine polity but for government policies since the 1950s that exacerbated Muslim (or Moro) and Christian relations. The Muslim grievances were an expression of opposition to the continuing Christian migration to the south. This migration threatened to christianize the south as well as posing a danger to the Muslim control of land. The local economic infrastructure also came to be heavily dominated by the local Christian sector. Thus the Muslims formed the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) with its goal of secession from the Philippines.

The MNLF was to go to war against the Marcos martial-law government in late 1972 with the support of Libya, members of the Islamic Conference and the Malaysian state of Sabah. By the end of the 1970s, this war had resulted in the deaths of thousands of Filipinos, and many had become refugees. Excesses committed by the Philippine military units sent to fight the Muslim rebels did not endear Manila to the population in the south. In 1976, the MNLF was able to force the Manila government to sign an agreement in Tripoli in which the government agreed to grant the Muslim Filipinos an autonomous region. A ceasefire was proclaimed, but it was short-lived because both sides accused each other of bad faith. In particular, the Manila government appeared to have undermined the agreement

regarding autonomy by holding plebiscites in the areas of the proposed autonomous region. War resumed in 1977.

The MNLF was not, however, able to meet the challenge. In addition to its military weaknesses, its political structure was also divided. The organization was a marriage of convenience between traditional Moro élites and Marxist-inspired radicals led by Nur Misuari who was the MNLF chairman. Ethnic antagonisms compounded the complications. When the Marcos government offered concessions as part of its autonomy programme, the MNLF split. Misuari and the radicals vowed to continue the struggle, while the traditional élite abandoned the secessionist goals in favour of working with Manila. In the end, the MNLF could not overcome the semifeudal and communal structure of the Muslim community.

At the same time as the outbreak of the Muslim rebellion there had been increased insurgency in the central plains of Luzon under the leadership of the Marxist New People's Army (NPA). Drawing on the same roots of agrarian discontent as the Huks, the NPA provided an alternative political structure that had grave implications for the future of the Philippines.[20] The insecurity motivated many Philippine families to organize their own vigilantes. Since firearms were readily available, armed clashes occurred frequently. Investors were frightened off. The economy took a dive, made worse by the unfortunate coincidence of natural disasters and the lavish use of funds in the election year of 1969. The fear of a general insurrection in Luzon was also fuelled by two huge explosions on 21 August 1971 at the Plaza Miranda (Manila), killing and injuring many at a political rally. This incident provided the occasion for Marcos to proclaim martial law.

Under martial law, Marcos wanted to create a political structure called the 'New Society'. What this meant could be understood if juxtaposed against the pre-1972 situation. In a classic statement on the need for maximum government, he said: the 'old society was individualistic, populist. It tended to gravitate around rights. Naturally it was self-centred. Society broke down on the Jeffersonian principle of concentrating on rights instead of duties. It became a popular saying that that government was best which governed the least. Well, that is no longer valid.' In the New Society, people were expected to think 'more and more of the community ... This communality of feeling and spirit does away with the individualist, the selfish, and even class interest.'[21]

The common good demanded urgent attention to land reform. Within one month of the declaration of martial law, Presidential Decree No. 27 for the emancipation of the tiller of the soil from bondage was formulated in

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[20] What would have been the nature of NPA control? Only glimpses are available from areas already under NPA authority. Peasants were allowed a share of their produce determined by the NPA. Exactions of local industries were fed into a network that transhipped food and supplies to party cadres. See the statement cited by Jose P. Magno and A. James Gregor, 'Insurgency and the Counterinsurgency in the Philippines', *Asian Survey*, XXVI, 5 (1986) 516: A lawyer whose region was subject to NPA control reported that its rule was 'terrible'. He recounted that 'when the NPA takes over an area, its control is absolute. They control thinking, behaviour, and the way of living ... At least under the military one may survive—under the NPA there is no question, they just liquidate you if you oppose them. There is no rule of law, just "people's courts" and executions.'

[21] *Asiaweek*, 1 Oct. 1976, no. 40, 17–18.

consultation between the president and a few close advisers. The decree conferred ownership of family-sized farms on all tenants on rice and corn land. However, promulgation was again not matched by implementation. The Department of Agrarian Reform charged with the task failed to clarify many points in its administrative policy. This itself raised questions on the extent to which the president, a major landowner, himself wanted to push land reform. Vagueness was also a weapon of the strong: the landlords could adopt evasive measures. The entire process of land reform — involving agricultural credit, legal manoeuvres, crop conversion to avoid land acquisition, vagaries in the compensation scheme — was also massively complicated for the tenants who simply wanted to own a piece of land for their livelihood.

In pursuit of the 'communality of feeling', Marcos also used martial-law powers to destroy the power of rival families. The fiercest opponent of martial law was Benigno Aquino. He was soon arrested and exiled. In the case of the Lopez clan, family business assets were seized. Marcos also tried to curb the powers of families which derived wealth from sugar. In this endeavour, he was assisted by a decline in world sugar prices and falling demand. He set up the Philippine Sugar Exchange to control all the marketing of sugar abroad: all sugar produced had to be sold to that authority. Land holdings exceeding 100 hectares were also purchased at low prices, resulting in huge losses to families with wealth based on land.[22]

As for the civil political structures, such as the constitution and the Philippine Congress, restructuring was the answer. Even before martial law was proclaimed, a Constitutional Convention had met in June 1971 to write a new constitution which would not contain unpopular American-inspired features found in the existing 1935 constitution. One of the most important topics discussed was executive power. The new constitution in its final approved version provided for a prime minister who shared power with a president. The precise division of powers is unimportant in this context, except to note that Marcos would continue to enjoy the powers of the presidency under the existing 1935 constitution as well as the powers of the prime minister under the new constitution during an interim period. Since the length of this interim period was indeterminate, Marcos could continue to exercise undiminished power. Given the regular change of leaders during the pre-1969 era to which people were accustomed, this marked a significant change in the nature of the political structure.

To replace Congress, Marcos organized a new political structure called People's Assembly, established in each *barangay* in the Philippines. Its membership included all citizens over the age of fifteen. It was intended to be consultative and was designed to provide a home-grown political structure that would draw its sustenance from indigenous sources. This structure would be free from the weaknesses and corruption of the liberal democratic system of the period before martial law that was modelled on the United States system. Marcos also organized his own political party, the Kilusang Bagung Lipunan.

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[22] For details, see David Wurfel, 'Elites of Wealth and Elites of Power, the Changing Dynamic: a Philippine Case Study', *Southeast Asian Affairs 1979*, Singapore, 1979, 233–45.

The establishment of new structures would not have been possible without the support of the military. Under martial law, the military extended its influence in society. It was given control of the media, public utilities, and industries like steel.[23] The field campaigns against the NPA and the MNLF inevitably meant that the army had a greater decision-making role in the political structure. However, the emergence of the military as a structure with political significance was not an overnight affair: it had historical roots. In the 1950s, the Philippine military assumed an internal peacekeeping role, in addition to its customary duty of external defence, when it became clear that the Huks would challenge the Manila government. Magsaysay allocated non-military socio-economic activities to the defence establishment. Under the name of civic action, the military embarked on projects like land resettlement. It was also used to police the electoral processes in the 1950s and counter the influence of the Huks.

However, the intervention of the military in government was not an unmixed blessing for Marcos. Its growing influence later made it a decisive factor in the overthrow of the régime.

The maximum government of Marcos' political structure seemed to be impregnable and beyond challenge. Even when martial law was lifted in 1981, that facade of power remained. All proclamations and orders issued under martial law continued in force. It was therefore a significant event when, in February 1986, a hitherto unknown homemaker, albeit the wife of the slain Senator Benigno Aquino, was able to topple Marcos in a peaceful 'revolution'. The first sign of a crack in the facade of the New Society was the assassination of Aquino in 1983 as he was returning from self-imposed exile. The inability of Marcos to contain the NPA revolt also pointed to the danger of the extension of communist influence. This was unsettling for the United States, which maintained two military bases in the Philippines. American reluctance to support Marcos wholeheartedly, coupled with dissension within the military over Marcos' policies regarding the communists, provided the encouragement for opponents of the New Society to coalesce in a common endeavour. The Catholic Church was also outspoken. It supported Marcos' contention that the NPA posed a threat to security. It also endorsed attempts to combat corruption and to restrict the illegal use of firearms. However, it felt that the implementation of martial law was immoral. The heavy-handed treatment of Marcos' political opponents and the failure to satisfy the needs of the poor were considered as violations of human rights. It soon began to condemn the abuses of the New Society and in fact publicly proclaimed its withdrawal of support from Marcos.

An analysis of the downfall of Marcos might be started by asking why he, unlike Suharto and Lee Kuan Yew, was unable to create political structures that provided lasting maximum government. The answer probably lies in the fact that Suharto and Lee were developers of structures but Marcos was a destroyer.[24] The political structure that emerged to topple

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[23] See Soedjati Djiwandono and Yong Mun Cheong, eds, *Soldiers and Stability in Southeast Asia*, Singapore: ISEAS, 1988, chs 8-9; Carolina G. Hernandez, 'The Philippines', in Zakaria Haji Ahmad and Harold Crouch, eds, *Military–Civilian Relations in South-East Asia*, Singapore, 1985, 157–96.

[24] William H. Overholt, 'The Rise and Fall of Ferdinand Marcos', *Asian Survey*, XXVI, 11, (1986).

Marcos was almost spontaneous—a Parliament of the Streets: a mass uprising that immobilized the functions of government. It disappeared as soon as its objective was attained and although Corazon Aquino rode to power on the back of this Parliament of the Streets, she no longer relied on it when she faced political challenges from the military during her presidency. While President Aquino actively tried to dismantle the objectionable political structures of the New Society, what emerged still remained fluid. Power was dispersed. Maximum government was clearly on the retreat and the emergence of private vigilante groups was indicative of a return to the old days of pluralistic political structures.

Malaysia after 1969

If 1972 was a watershed for political structures in the Philippines, the racial riots of 1969 in Malaysia also provided the occasion for a drastic overhaul of the structures in that country. The riots immediately resulted in the suspension of parliament, and in its place a National Operations Council, chaired by the deputy prime minister, was formed. The council had branches at the state level, and its membership included the armed forces. Its relationship with the cabinet was not clear but none of its decisions was ever over-ruled. With regard to the political structure, its principal contribution was the establishment of a National Consultative Council in January 1970 to examine the ethnic, political, economic and cultural problems affecting national unity. Its sixty-seven members included representatives from the trade unions, professions, religious bodies and most political parties, but it was boycotted by the Democratic Action Party and the left-wing Partai Sosialis Rakyat. It was intended as a forum for the government and other groups to discuss communal problems while parliament was suspended. Its deliberations resulted in the far-reaching decision to ban public (and parliamentary) discussion on first, the special position of the Malays and other indigenous groups; second, the use of Malay as the national language; third, the citizenship rights of any ethnic group; and fourth, the position of the Malay rulers. With this groundwork completed, parliament—now somewhat reduced in legislative authority—reconvened in 1971 as the nation's supreme law-making body. The National Operations Council was renamed the National Security Council, dealing mainly with security (principally communist) affairs. The armed forces returned to their strictly military role. The National Consultative Council was retained to discuss communal issues which parliament could not consider. A Department of National Unity was also set up to formulate a national ideology, called Rukunegara, to serve as a focus for the multiethnic population.

It was not, however, a simple return to the *status quo ante*, before 1969. It was the view of the National Operations Council that the riot originated from economic causes related to the communal distribution of wealth. One of the results of the riot was the launching of the New Economic Policy to eradicate poverty among all races and to eliminate the identification of race with occupation. Although the policy was socio-economic in orientation, it had serious implications for the political structure. Before 1969, the focus of Malaysia's economic policy was on rural development programmes that

aimed at reducing disparities of income between the Malays and the urban Chinese. After the inauguration of the New Economic Policy, the objective was transformed so as to concentrate on the large-scale uplift of the *bumiputra* (son-of-the-soil) through urbanization and the creation of a *bumiputra* middle class.

Such a policy had major effects upon the political structures. It immediately aroused the suspicion of the non-Malay middle class which was established through the colonial economic system. The strengthening of the *bumiputra* middle class could not but undermine the support previously given to the Alliance by the non-Malays. Although this did not *ipso facto* mean a switching of allegiance to non-Malay parties in the opposition, like the DAP, it tended to weaken the personal links, trust and camaraderie shared by the Alliance leaders. Moreover, the emergent middle class was wholly dependent on the government for its continued growth. The process of urbanization itself would not have been possible without government support. Furthermore, the complex technologies, the expansion and accumulation of capital, and the sophisticated marketing operations—characteristic tasks facing the middle class in the late twentieth century—all tended to point towards the need for strong government, a strong bureaucracy, and a defined hierarchy within the political structure.

In later years various other political structures began to assume greater importance. One of these was the institution of the monarchy and the sultans in each state. The Malaysian king and his colleagues in the states occupied largely ceremonial positions. Under the constitution, they were required to act in accordance with the advice of the elected prime minister. There appeared to be no occasion for this role to change from 1957 till about 1981. During that period, the prime ministers were either scions of the royal houses or closely related to them. In 1981, with Mahathir bin Mohamad as prime minister, this changed. Mahathir was the son of a commoner. He believed that there should be less emphasis on a feudal style of government which stressed loyalty, and that more attention should be paid to ability, skill and achievement.

Friction soon appeared between the state rulers and the elected government. Sultan Haji Ahmad Shah of Pahang, who later became the Yang di-pertuan Agong (king), was one example. In 1978, he opposed the appointment by the prime minister of a *mentri besar* who was not supportive of the palace. After Sultan Haji Ahmad Shah became king, his son—the regent and heir apparent—withheld royal approbation from several state bills. In Johor, relations between the sultan, Mahmood Iskandar, and the *mentri besar* were also sour. In 1980, the latter had questioned the former's right to succeed to the Johor throne. Following the state and federal elections of 1982, another *mentri besar* was appointed in deference to the sentiments of the sultan.

Such interference in the political structure invited concern. What would happen when the strong-willed sultans of Perak and Johor had their turn to become king? Reaction to that possibility came in 1983 when constitutional amendments were submitted to reduce the powers of the king. A Conference of Rulers rejected the amendments. Go-betweens were sent to find a solution to the impasse. A compromise was finally reached

without a face-to-face confrontation between the rulers and the elected government. This was entirely in keeping with Malay cultural norms because even Mahathir, a commoner, had to observe form and ritual when dealing with the rulers. After all, it was Mahathir himself who wrote in 1970, years before he became prime minister: 'Formality and ritual rate very high in the Malay concept of values. What is formal is proper. To depart from formality is considered unbecoming, rude and deserving of misfortune or punishment by God and man. This is essentially a conservative attitude.'[25]

Another political structure was the state. Constitutionally, a strong federal authority reduced the importance of the state as a political structure, but there was also sufficient diversity among the states in the whole of Malaysia to enable them to pull in different directions. Since money was often the lubricant that made a federal system workable, the viability of a state as a political structure independent of the central government depended on the revenue available. For peninsular Malaysia, subventions were critical for all the states, and offers of money for development were often used to attract votes in elections. A state like Kelantan which elected PAS-led governments might be denied federal assistance.

Unlike the other states in peninsular Malaysia, both Sabah and Sarawak joined the federation of Malaysia with safeguards which included a delay in switching to the use of Bahasa Malaysia and the control of immigration. In Sabah, the chief minister, Tun Mustapha, almost succeeded in creating a state within a state, asserting his independence to the extent of providing sanctuary as well as armed assistance to the Muslim secessionists in Mindanao, and, if the accusations of his opponents were to be believed, entertaining thoughts of secession. The central government dealt very patiently with Mustapha. It was not till September 1975 that he was forced to resign. In Sarawak, a three-tier political structure of councils ensured that a degree of state autonomy was retained. Essentially, a system of twenty-four district councils, directly elected by the population, formed the first tier. The second tier consisted of five divisional advisory councils made up of representatives elected from the district councils. The third tier was the Council Negri (State Legislative Council) in Kuching, consisting of representatives elected from the divisional advisory council. The Council Negri then proceeded to elect twenty-four representatives to sit in the federal parliament in Kuala Lumpur. This system was unlike that found in the other constituent states of Malaysia. It was established to provide training for representatives inexperienced in political practices. It ensured that the representative who finally secured a seat in the federal parliament would have served in all tiers. The structure therefore allowed local interests to be represented all the way up to Kuala Lumpur. Although that did not prevent the central authorities from interfering in the state political structure, the Sarawak case was unique. But it should be noted that, on 14 September 1966, a state of emergency was declared in Sarawak on the grounds that the political situation was being exploited by the communists. All state powers were immediately transferred to the federal

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[25] Mahathir bin Mohamad, *The Malay Dilemma*, Singapore, 1970, 157.

authority and overnight the political structure in Sarawak was refashioned. The Sarawak constitution was amended to give substantially more powers to the governor (a federal appointee) over the chief minister, the Council Negri and its speaker.

Lastly, mention must be made of more populist political structures. Communism, though significant in its own right before 1960, failed to strike roots in Malaysia because it failed to overcome obstacles like Malay nationalism and communalism. In 1975 and early 1976, after a period of inactivity, there were reports of selective assassinations by communist hit squads in urban areas. But these ended in 1976, and guerrilla warfare also appeared to be on the decline. The MCP itself had split in 1970 and 1974, and by 1976 the three factions that were left were contending among themselves as much as against the government. The late 1970s and the early 1980s were also years of active *Dakwah* movements by Muslims to intensify the spread and practice of Islam. Various pressure groups also provided alternative centres of focus, e.g. the Aliran Kesedaran Negara (National Consciousness Movement), ABIM (Malaysian Islamic Youth Movement), and the Consumers' Association of Penang. They became well known because of their outspoken comments on government policies, but whether they had the potential to emerge as political structures in their right had yet to be seen.

Indonesia from Sukarno to Suharto

The development of maximum government was also most evident in Indonesia under the rule of presidents Sukarno and Suharto. The existence of maximum government was implied by the type of political structures that allowed Sukarno to dismiss the Constituent Assembly in 1959; to dissolve the legally-elected parliament in 1960; and to ban political parties like the Masjumi and the Socialist Party (PSI). Similarly, how else did Suharto derive the power to declare the mass communist party (PKI) illegal; to declare certain influential Muslim leaders disqualified from assuming leadership of the reconstituted Muslim political party (PMI); to manipulate the leadership of other political parties; and to dismiss fellow army generals from powerful positions? While charisma could have helped Sukarno to get his way, the same could not be said of Suharto. The more likely answer lies in the power of maximum government in the political structures available to the two leaders.

Sukarno had made his first move at establishing maximum government in 1956, when he proposed a new form of democracy, which he called Guided Democracy, to replace the liberal '50 per cent plus one' democracy then existing in Indonesia. Guided Democracy was finally proclaimed in 1959. Founded on the constitution of 1945 which provided for a strong executive presidency, Guided Democracy was seen by Sukarno as a political structure which would save the nation from the drift and purposelessness that had characterized Indonesia from 1949 to 1959. As president, he would 'guide' the nation to its proper path. In a speech in 1959, he said:

It was felt by the whole of the People that the spirit, the principles and the objective of the Revolution which we launched in 1945 had now been infected by dangerous diseases and dualisms.

Where is that spirit of the Revolution today? The spirit of the Revolution has been almost extinguished, has already become cold and without fire. Where are the Principles of the Revolution today? Today nobody knows where those Principles of the Revolution are, because each and every party lays down its own principles, so that there are those who have departed from even the principles of the Pantja Sila. Where is the objective of the Revolution today? The objective of the Revolution—a just and prosperous society—is now, for persons who are not sons of the Revolution, replaced by liberal politics and liberal economics. Replaced by liberal politics, in which the votes of the majority of the people are exploited, blackmarketed, corrupted by various groups. Replaced by liberal economics, in which various groups want only to grab wealth at the expense of the People.

All these diseases and dualisms were conspicuous in this period of invest-ment, particularly the four kinds of disease and dualism of which I have several times warned: Dualism between the government and the leadership of the Revolution; dualism in men's perspective on society—a just and prosper-ous society or a capitalist society; dualism between 'the Revolution is over' and 'the Revolution is not yet completed'; and dualism as regarding democracy: Shall democracy serve the People, or the People democracy? . . .[26]

Although the opposition to Guided Democracy was weak, presidential power within the political structure was not unlimited. Sukarno depended on the military's tools of coercion. In return for its support, the military was given key positions in civil administration and economic management under the aegis of martial law. To balance the dependence on the military, Sukarno was forced to cement ties with the PKI. The latter supported Guided Democracy because it needed Sukarno's protection from persecu-tion by the military. In return for this favour, the PKI provided the mass audience as well as the encouragement for Sukarno's increasingly strident and militant campaigns. Whether it was a question of the formulation of ideology (e.g. Political Manifesto or Manipol, Usdek, Nasakom), the anti-Dutch campaign to recover West Irian, or the confrontation against the newly-formed state of Malaysia, the PKI mobilized the crowds and sup-plied the adulation that Sukarno needed. In return, the party's programme of activities was allowed to proceed almost uninhibited. For example, the PKI pressed ahead with its *aksi sepihak*, a unilateral course of action to seize land for the landless. This alienated the landowners, many of whom were supporters of Muslim parties. By late 1964, the rural scene in Java was polarized between a radical left that purported to join Sukarno in continuing the revolution and a military–Muslim alliance that was fearful of a com-munist takeover. The consensus that Sukarno thought Guided Democracy could bring was only an illusion. Guided Democracy marked one further step towards maximum government.

[26] Speech reproduced in Roger M. Smith, ed., *Southeast Asia: Documents of Political Development and Change*, Ithaca, 1974, 197–8.

The military's opposition towards the communists was not only ideo-
logical and historical, harking back to the days of the Madiun revolt in
1948. The PKI represented a departure from the structure of the other
political parties. These latter parties were élite organizations with little
mass participation: the PKI was different. Once in power, non-élite masses
were expected to succeed in redistributing political and economic privi-
leges previously available only to a relatively small cohort. The PKI's
support for Sukarno in fact doomed the latter because it alienated him
from the rest of the élite: he was hobnobbing with a mass party. When an
abortive coup took place on 1 October 1965 resulting in the murder of six
generals, enough was enough. The PKI was accused of orchestrating the
coup. Despite pressure from the military, Sukarno still refused to ban
the PKI. A relatively unknown soldier, General Suharto, was given the
task of restoring security since he was in charge of Kostrad, the military's
strategic reserve; he emerged as the leader opposed to Sukarno. In an
extended power struggle in which student and other groups participated,
Sukarno was effectively deposed on 11 March 1966. The PKI was then
banned. Suharto was named acting president in 1967, and in the following
year became president. Meanwhile, the military allowed PKI supporters in
central and east Java and Bali to be massacred by Muslims in a *jihad*. There
were estimates of half a million to a million killed.

When Suharto became acting president in 1967, the political structure
that he inaugurated came to be called the New Order. However, it shared
certain similarities with the Old Order of Sukarno's Guided Democracy.
Like Sukarno, Suharto kept political parties at arm's length. While Sukarno
used the PKI to counter-balance the military and other political parties,
Suharto employed the same tactic to play off the Muslims against the
nationalist parties. In both cases, Suharto and Sukarno betrayed their
Javanese religio-cultural bias against Islam, especially its militant version.
Suharto refused to sanction the reconstitution of the banned Masjumi,
even though its leaders quite logically expected that they would be
permitted to resume their political activities, because they were the only
ones who had dared to challenge Sukarno's Guided Democracy. In the
end, Suharto agreed to allow the formation of the PMI, but insisted that its
leaders should not be drawn from the ranks of the old Masjumi executive.

However, the differences between Suharto and Sukarno were equally
significant. When Sukarno was president, attempts were made to mobilize
the population for campaigns like the recovery of West Irian, confrontation
against Malaysia and agitation for land reform, though such mobilization
was not long-term but restricted to specific transient goals. When Suharto
was president, the watchword was political passivity. Suharto's political
structures were designed to reduce mobilization. Political parties were not
permitted to organize in the villages and sub-districts, the home of 80 per
cent of Indonesia's population. Instead, the population was conceived as a
'floating mass', free from the disintegrative pulls of party politics. To fill
the political space that political parties were required to vacate, Suharto
sponsored the organization of a functional group, popularly known as
Golkar. Organizing the population into political structures that pivoted on
parties embracing different ideologies tended to emphasize cleavages in
society. It was believed that it would be less divisive if the population was

organized in accordance with the function each sector served in society. Golkar was therefore an agglomeration of civil servants, the armed forces, intellectuals, women, youths, workers, farmers, veterans and even pedicab drivers. It was the instrument to mobilize votes in general elections. In July 1971, the country's second national election was held. With the help of some heavy-handed tactics, the Golkar won 236 seats out of the total of 360. The NU won 58 seats, making it the most important of the non-government parties. The revamped PMI followed with 24 seats while the PNI only garnered 20. In its election activities, the Golkar was no different from a political party.

The emphasis on political passivity also guided Suharto's handling of the student political structure. During the struggle to topple Sukarno, the students emerged as the moral conscience of the nation. They led demonstrations. The student organizations (KAMI, KAPPI) helped to bring down the old order. However, by 1969, the students were no longer a credible political structure. Suharto did not tolerate an independent moral authority and although students emerged again in later years to question the wisdom of some of Suharto's policies, for example in the 1974 anti-Japanese riots, they did not constitute a structure of long-term stamina and significance.

Political passivity was taken a step further in 1987 when all societies, including political parties, were required to declare as their sole guiding principle the state ideology of the Pancasila. This move was rationalized as the de-ideologization of the Indonesian political structure. Political parties were thus forcibly divorced from their primordial and traditional sources of power. Even Muslim groups, for example, had to acknowledge the Pancasila as their lodestar. The result of this move was to force all groups to subscribe to one ideology—the one approved by Suharto.

This measure was preceded by an earlier attempt to restructure the remaining nine political parties into two groups. All Muslim parties were forced to coalesce under the banner of the Development Unity Party (PPP). Similarly, the PNI was forced to co-operate with the Christian parties under the banner of the Indonesian Democratic Party (PDI). The result was more internal bickering and growing ineffectiveness. In the end the NU withdrew from the PPP and ceased to continue as a political party in 1985.

With the emasculation of the political parties, parliament—already weakened—ceased to be of major importance. During Suharto's presidency, the more important structure was the People's Consultative Assembly (MPR) which comprised the parliamentarians and appointed delegates. The assembly was empowered to elect and fire a president. It deliberated on the broad guidelines of state policy. The president was responsible to the assembly, but the latter's effectiveness was limited by the fact that it met only once in five years.

Another distinction between Sukarno and Suharto was the source of legitimacy. Sukarno's activist policies led to economic ruin. Suharto's distaste for political activism accorded with his view of the function of an independent state. He was deeply convinced that the New Order could be justified only by promoting orderly government, the rule of law, economic rationalization and internal consensus.

Given the concentration of power under Suharto, an ex-soldier, it is

relevant to examine the extent to which the military constituted a signifi-
cant political structure. The Indonesian military embraced a cohesive
ideology for the greater part of its history. During the revolution, the army
commander, General Sudirman, described the military as belonging to the
people of Indonesia. This meant that it would not participate in the power
struggle of the political parties of the day. This position was widely
accepted and was instrumental in the military's contribution to the consen-
sus achieved during the revolution.

With the end of the revolution, Sudirman's dictum was ignored. The
military became entangled in party politics. Pro-Sukarno officers intrigued
to sabotage the civilian government's attempts to demobilize soldiers. In
1952, Nasution led a group which tried to dissolve parliament for obstruct-
ing measures to professionalize the military. The divisions in the military
were not bridged till 1955. Shortly thereafter, regional revolts broke out,
with some army officers providing leadership to the rebels.

However, the dominant group of officers was opposed to the rebellion.
Led by Nasution, they realized that the military's role as a political
structure had to be accommodated in some manner. In 1958, Nasution
reinterpreted Sudirman's dictum to mean that the military would embark
on the 'Middle Way'. In his view, the Indonesian military would not follow
the path of coups widely practised by the Latin American military forces
in the 1950s. On the other hand, it would not be a lifeless tool of
the government.

In practical terms, the Middle Way could not be defined exactly. When
martial law was proclaimed, the military became a political structure in its
own right. This was also the time when the military assumed an economic
role in the country by seizing the management of Dutch investments.

The post-1965 situation provided a larger field for the expansion of the
military's political role. The term used to describe this new role was
'dwifungsi' or dual function. Army seminars constantly reiterated that the
military now had two roles to fulfil: a strictly defence role and a socio-
political role.

Perhaps the best example of an exponent of dwifungsi was Suharto
himself. By 1967, he occupied the top position in both military and civil
hierarchies. Until 1973, he was also the Minister of Defence and Security
in control of combat troops; he was commander of the armed forces too.
In themselves, the postings were not sufficient to ensure Suharto's control.
The Indonesian military had been plagued by warlordism since its incep-
tion, and top brass did not automatically exercise authority. The chain of
command had to be developed. Organizational changes were implement-
ed in 1969 and 1973–4. The overall result was the transfer of operational
control of combat troops to Suharto. Other military organizations designed
to enhance security by removing opponents to the New Order were
strengthened. These included the Operations Command for the Restora-
tion of Security and Order (Kopkamtib),[27] Special Operations Service
(OPSUS) and State Intelligence Agency (BAKIN).

In turn, military officers were given appointments in the judiciary, the

[27] In 1988, Kopkamtib was replaced by the Bakorstanas which had weaker authority.

executive branch of the civil administration, the top ranks of the diplomatic and consular corps, and business enterprises like Pertamina, the oil conglomerate. The provincial and local governments were also opened to military officers, including the post of village headman which usually went to army sergeants or policemen.

Thus benefits were allocated in exchange for control. The political structure of the military demonstrated the operations of a patron–client relationship. Its history demonstrated that as long as consensus was maintained, benefits would flow from the centre outwards.

Thailand

Not all states were rent by the same extent of communal or ethnic divisions as Indonesia or Malaysia. In Thailand, for example, there is a single tradition accepted by a unified nation, usually expressed in terms of Buddhism and the monarchy. This does not deny the existence of 'counter-structures'. The Muslims in southern Thailand represent a distinctly different tradition. Thailand is also not without its share of upland minority tribespeople. On the whole, however, these 'counter-structures' did not alter the major configurations of the Thai state.

Thailand has been called a 'consensus polity'.[28] For the greater part of Thai history, the monarchy was the focus of this consensus; it continues to be the source of political legitimacy and the reference point for national unity. The military-led revolution of 1932 displaced the political influence of the monarchy as a structure, although there was little change in the relationship between the monarch and the subject. Its incumbent since the end of World War II, Phumiphon Adulyadej, was able to mould the monarchy as an effective political tool. He ascended the throne in June 1946, after the death of his brother, the king, under mysterious circumstances. In 1950, he was crowned King Rama IX. By that time, the army was in control of the nation's political process and it was led by Field Marshal Phibun who had participated in the events of 1932 which led to the overthrow of the absolute monarchy. For the first seven years, the king distanced himself from the government.

In terms of executive power, the monarch was displaced by the bureaucracy—another political structure of note. The bureaucracy consisted mainly of ambitious civil servants and military officers. Its expansion took place under the early modernizing rulers of Thailand. A number of reasons account for its importance and continued prominence after 1945. Since Thailand was not colonized, and in fact embarked on a large-scale modernization programme under its kings, the bureaucratic élite remained in power and its influence was enhanced by its expansion. Its economic strength remained intact because its traditional role of extracting tribute on agricultural production and trade remained unaffected. Despite the commercialization of rice production, no new socio-political groups emerged to challenge the bureaucratic élite. For example, a landlord class did not

[28] David Morell and Chai-anan Samudavanija, *Political Conflict in Thailand: Reform, Reaction, Revolution*, Cambridge, Mass., 1981, Part 1.

emerge since tenancy was not a serious problem. Peasants without land did not have to seek patronage from a landlord class since there was land aplenty to exploit. The Thai political structure therefore remained in essence the same for a considerable length of time after 1945—a bureau-cratic élite lording it over a large peasant mass.

This pattern of political structures—the monarchy and the bureau-cracy—operated on the organizing principle of hierarchy. It has been said that 'Thais accept the fact that there are two categories of people: the powerful and the powerless, the important and the unimportant, the older and the younger . . .'.[29] Any analysis of political structures cannot evade the problem of authority. The sense of superordination and subordination constituted an intrinsic part of interpersonal relations. This notion of authority could even be detected in linguistic patterns of address in the Thai language.[30] It is therefore not strange that in Thailand, consensus was expressed by its leaders acting through the bureaucracy or the monarchy. Personalism remained the preferred expression of political action. What was important was not the institutionalization of new organizations or structures but the existence of leaders who could command confidence. The leader became the focal point. Such were the cases of King Chulalong-korn, Field Marshal Phibun, Field Marshal Sarit Thanarat. These leaders all fulfilled the function of a reference point in their lifetimes.[31]

Political activities were limited to a small ruling élite. The greater part of the Thai population had no share in the court intrigues or political manoeuvres. The dominance of this élite can also explain the weakness of radical alternatives to it. Because the commercialization of agriculture was confined to rice, which was the staple crop grown since time immemorial, there was little disruption to traditional patterns of political structure. This, coupled with the fact that land was relatively easily available, meant that radical intellectuals could not hope to attract the peasantry. Indeed, the Communist Party of Thailand was already formed in the early 1940s; it did not gain much support from the central plains area till the 1960s when tenancy began to pose a problem and the ratio of people to land began to worsen. Its base was confined to the northeast, which was poor and populated by people different from those in the central plains.

From 1947, it was the military group within the bureaucracy that was dominant. In that year, a coup on 8 November paved the way for the return of Phibun. The coup was a reaction against the former civilian government's concessions to the Allied war powers. These were viewed as damaging to the economy and humiliating to the monarchy. Moreover, that civilian government's recognition of the Soviet Union, the repeal of the anti-communist act, and the increased agitation in the Chinese com-munity smacked of communism with its radical agrarian tendencies.

The 1947 coup was also important because it marked the emergence of Sarit Thanarat in national politics. Sarit was then a colonel and military commander of the 1st Regiment in the army's strategic First Division,

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[29] Cited in Morell and Chai-anan, 22–3.
[30] Herbert P. Phillips, *Thai Peasant Personality: the Patterning of Interpersonal Behavior in the Village of Bang Chan*, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1966, 143.
[31] Chai-Anan Samudavanija, *The Thai Young Turks*, Singapore: ISEAS, 1982, 2.

based in the Bangkok region. Knowing that many of his fellow officers wanted to take part in the coup, he realized that he had to lend his support if he wanted to retain his popularity among them.

Sarit himself launched a coup in 1957 which put him in power. Sarit's coup of 1957 marked the start of a 'revolution' in the sense that he tried to re-examine the political concepts that Phibun had borrowed from the West and give them a Thai flavour. This was not at all surprising because the promoters of the coup were the products of indigenous training. Sarit and his colleagues had started their careers during the Great Depression of the 1930s when there were no funds for study abroad. It was only in the 1950s that military officers were sent to the United States for training.

Sarit's own view of democracy centred on the need for it to be indigenous. He made a colourful analogy: 'Let us hope that our democracy is like a plant having deep roots in Thai soil. It should grow amidst the beating sun and whipping rain. It should produce bananas, mangoes, rambutans, mangosteens, and durians; and not apples, grapes, dates, plums, or horse chestnuts.'[32] The fundamental values he wanted to protect were the three ideals of king, religion and nation.

Sarit deliberately set out to cultivate the throne. None of the coup leaders could afford to offend the monarchy but it was clear that tension existed between the king and the country's leaders at various times after 1945 until Sarit became the sole leader in 1957. Phibun had been able to sideline the king because his own credentials dated back to the 1932 revolution, and because the king was still young and inexperienced. Sarit, however, treated the monarchy differently. He had no other credentials except that there were popular demands to remove the corrupt Phibun régime. He was therefore compelled to turn to the monarch for support and, indeed, one of his stated aims in the coup of 1957 was the need to protect the throne. Under Sarit's leadership, the king was given a greater role domestically and internationally. Through this exposure, the king was made to identify with the policies of the régime and thus enhance its prestige.

Domestically, for example, Sarit tried to identify the monarch with the army. The swearing of allegiance by the troops to the throne and flag became major military occasions under Sarit. The army's 21st Regiment was transferred to palace duties, and the queen became its honorary commanding colonel. The king also accepted various honorary command positions. Traditional ceremonies associated with the monarchy and also with Buddhism, discontinued since the 1932 revolution, were revived. The royal *kathin* procession, a Buddhist monarchist ceremony, was one such example. The exposure of the king to foreign countries began in late 1959 and early 1960. Three neighbouring countries were toured, south Vietnam, Indonesia and Burma. The visits were a major public-relations success for Sarit, who was not considered as 'sophisticated' in the Western sense because, totally trained and educated in Thailand, he did not have a good command of English. On the other hand, Rama IX had grown up in many foreign countries and was used to foreign ways. His beautiful consort was

[32] Thak Chaloemtiarana, *Thailand: the Politics of Despotic Paternalism*, Bangkok, 1979, 158.

another advantage. From 1960 till 1963 when Sarit died, the king made many trips, especially to those countries with monarchies.

Religion was another pillar in the Sarit political structure. The state religion in Thailand was Theravāda Buddhism which was different from the Mahāyāna Buddhism of Vietnam, Japan and China. An estimated 93.4 per cent of the Thai were Buddhists. This meant that the network of masses, monkhood and monarchy was very strong. The layman enters the monkhood and the monarchy has been a principal supporter of the monkhood for centuries. However, while the relationship between the masses and the monkhood was based to a large extent on personal ties, that between the monkhood and the monarchy (or the constitutional government after 1932) could not be taken for granted.

The religious order could be abused and used as a place for political refuge by anyone who merely shaved his head or donned the saffron robe. For the purpose of studying the hierarchy of the Buddhist Church in the postwar period, reference must be made to the Buddhist Order Act passed earlier in 1941. Under this scheme, a Supreme Patriarch was appointed by the king. The former would preside over an Ecclesiastical Assembly, an Ecclesiastical Cabinet and the Ecclesiastical Courts, each with separate powers to balance the influence of one another. This worked well, until two sects started squabbling over the appointment of a successor to the Supreme Patriarch who died in 1958.

The quarrels started shortly after Sarit came to power. As he was trying to enhance traditional Thai values of which Buddhism was one, the discord within the Buddhist hierarchy took place at an inappropriate moment. In 1962, he initiated measures to bring the monkhood under control. He pushed through the establishment of a centralized system under a Supreme Patriarch with strong authority. He abolished the checks and balances within the structure. As the Supreme Patriarch was a royal appointee, control over the Buddhist hierarchy was ensured.

Sarit believed that the ideal was a hierarchical political structure of three segments: government, bureaucracy and people. His preference was definitely not for a system of political parties with vertical links to the constituents. The three segments that constituted his political structure were intended to be static, and Sarit's policies and programmes were designed to maintain the boundaries between the hierarchical sectors.

Government, Sarit's first-order segment, must be paternalistic, despotic and benevolent. This was his expressed view at the 1959 Conference of Vice-Governors and District Chiefs:

> The principle to which I refer is the principle of *pho ban pho muang* [father of the family, father of the nation]. The nation is like a large family. Provincial Governors, Vice-Governors, District Chiefs are like the heads of various families. So it should be engraved on the minds of all administrative officials that the people under their jurisdiction are not just other people but their own relatives.[33]

[33] Quoted in Toru Yano, 'Political Structure of a "Rice-Growing State"' in Yoneo Ishii, ed., *Thailand: Rice-Growing Society*, Honolulu, 1978, 143.

Bureaucracy, Sarit's second-order segment, was the loyal servant of his benevolent paternalism. An oft-quoted statement attributed to him illustrates this view:

> I feel all of you [the bureaucrats] are my eyes and ears and heart toward the people. I am deeply concerned for the happiness and well-being of my people and I would like you to represent my concern. I want you to offer the people love and enthusiasm. I want you to help me hear, see, and above all think ... You occupy the same position as the old *khaluang tangcai* [local governors representing the king]; in short, I want you always to remember that you are representatives of my feelings. I love the people and I intend to devote myself to them and in the same way I want you to love the people and devote yourselves to them.[34]

Concerning the people, Sarit's idea of their position in the nation was clear and simple. They should have a livelihood and a place to live.[35]

Finally, if this static political structure could not continue in existence, there was always the army as another political structure to depend upon in the last resort. By Sarit's time, the Thai army had assumed the character of an internal force to be deployed for internal security. Even in the nineteenth century, there was no need for an army to defend Thailand from external invasions.

However, the army's importance was not solely as an internal political structure. It also served as a conduit by which foreign inputs were injected into the domestic political structure. This characteristic could first be observed soon after World War II. At that time, the British recommended that sanctions be applied to the Thai armed forces for fighting with the Japanese. However, the United States viewed this as continued interference in Thailand's domestic affairs. Thus the structure of Thailand's armed force remained intact after World War II and the unreconstructed army, used to power, could be expected to demand a major share of the government. Prime Minister Phibun immediately exploited the favour shown by the United States, then the world's superpower, by aligning Thailand with the fight against international communism. The United States accepted this support because the period after 1948 was characterized by the Cold War, and by communist successes in Czechoslovakia, China, Malaya, Vietnam and elsewhere. It was important for the United States to support strong, stable régimes, and military-led governments seemed to fit the bill.

The Thai–American relationship became mutually reinforcing. In July 1950, Phibun offered to send troops and rice to support the American war effort in Korea. The Americans responded by instituting the Fulbright educational exchange agreement and the Economic and Technical Co-operation Agreement of 19 September 1950. World Bank loans were secured for Thailand and military assistance was initiated in October 1950. In 1954, Thailand joined SEATO. When Sarit became prime minister, the United States viewed him as the perfect strongman with the power to act

[34] Quoted in ibid., 143.
[35] ibid.

decisively, often in their interests. Sarit's tough no-nonsense approach to government confirmed the American opinion of him. Strikes were banned; unions were dissolved; branches of foreign corporations were permitted to purchase land, gain exemption from taxation and freely import technicians, often bypassing the existing immigration laws. In turn, the United States decided to make Bangkok its regional headquarters for various activities. This support continued after the death of Sarit. In fact, under the latter's heirs—Thanom and Praphat—Thailand became a huge American base. By 1968, there were 50,000 American servicemen on Thai soil and this visible presence generated a boom in the construction, service and other sectors.[36]

The extended discussion on Sarit[37] is necessary because the consequences of his policies had a serious impact on the political structures in Thailand in subsequent years. They helped to create a new economic bourgeoisie. One of the most important of the policies was the lifting of the existing limit of 50 *rai* (about 8 hectares) on landholding. This policy laid the basis for large-scale speculation, especially in those areas where Americans intended to build major strategic highways. Land speculators with inside information bought huge tracts of strategically located land and sold them at high profits. Subsistence farmers were turned into tenants. By the 1960s, an increasingly large number of farms in the Bangkok area were no longer owner-operated. Thailand began to experience the dislocating effects of rural indebtedness and absentee landlordism that it had escaped because it was never colonized. The dispossessed led the exodus to Bangkok where they were unemployed, underemployed, or worked in the service sectors. Simultaneously, the new prosperity originating from American and Japanese investments created a great demand for education. In 1961, there were 15,000 students enrolled in a total of five universities. By 1972, the total was to reach 100,000 in seventeen universities.[38]

By the year of Sarit's death in 1963, an increasingly volatile situation both in the rural and urban areas was bequeathed to three strongmen: Field Marshal Thanom Kittikachorn, Field Marshal Praphat Charusathien and General Kris Sivara. This triumvirate, with Thanom as the prime minister, continued Sarit's policies. However, their weakness became evident as the forces of change impinged upon Thailand. Thanom, for example, did not exercise the same degree of control over the army as Sarit had. Praphat's commercial activities led to his being tainted with corruption and shady business deals.

With Sarit's passing, opposition began to coalesce around various alternative political structures. One of these was the revolutionary insurgents in the rural areas, mainly those identified with the Communist Party of Thailand. Communism, it should be noted, had always been regarded as contrary to traditional Thai values and Buddhist principles. Sarit and his

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[36] Ben Anderson, 'Withdrawal Symptoms: Social and Cultural Aspects of the October 6 Coup', *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars*, 9, 3 (1977) 15.

[37] The discussion on Sarit is based largely on Thak, *Thailand: the Politics of Despotic Paternalism*, Bangkok, 1979, *passim*.

[38] Anderson, 'Withdrawal Symptoms', 16.

successors were strong anti-communists. However, their neglect of the territories in the northeast broadened the basis for party recruitment. By 1973 the party constituted an alternative political structure that expressed an ideology different from king, religion and nation.

Farmers in the north and central plains of Thailand also experienced greater rural indebtedness, high rates of tenancy and rocketing land rents. Low productivity, low incomes, and land fragmentation became bugbears that somehow would not disappear. To be sure, these problems did not suddenly erupt in the 1970s. However, they simmered near the surface — neglected by a Bangkok government that never considered farmers in terms of meaningful political structures.

In the urban areas, students provided the framework for another political structure. Although students were not always politically passive, they were more concerned with problems on their own campuses prior to 1972 than with national issues. In that year, the National Student Centre of Thailand, an organization that had been revived in late 1969, spearheaded a public campaign to boycott Japanese goods. This move earned the centre its nationalist credentials, because Thailand was then suffering from a trade deficit with Japan. In October 1973, against a background of rice shortages in Bangkok, rising cost of living, and graft, the students led demonstrations in Bangkok. Violence erupted, and on 14 October, the nation was stunned when the king ordered Thanom, Praphat and Narong (Thanom's son and Praphat's son-in-law) into exile.

It is not the intention here to give the impression that the military-led government could be easily demolished by student groups feeding on general dissatisfaction in the country. The pressure from the students would not have produced results if the king had not intervened on their behalf. By 1973, King Phumiphon had ruled for twenty-seven years. Meanwhile, elections had been held, constitutions had been written and discarded, and cabinets had been formed and dissolved. The king continued in office through all these political vicissitudes. When he recognized that the military-led government was unpopular because it was unresponsive, he withdrew his support and it fell.

The downfall of Thanom and Praphat and the passing of the old Sarit order marked the onset of a three-year interregnum of open politics. This period was characterized by violence and conflict, against a background of aggressive communist threats. It was also marked by a bold experiment in democracy, the like of which Thailand had never experienced before. A new draft constitution was written in 1974, and it was decidedly ultra-liberal. It provided for the removal of many institutional devices by which the bureaucracy — civil as well as military — had dominated the mainstream political structure since 1932. To approve the draft constitution, a new National Assembly was elected pending national elections for a new legislature. Members of the new National Assembly, however, turned out to be no different from the representatives of the old élite, although the number of military and police representatives that were chosen was remarkably small. The liberal provisions of the draft constitution did not survive the review of the National Assembly.

The return to conservatism showed that the downfall of the military-led

government in October 1973 was at least as much a result of internal military intrigues as of student pressure. From November 1971 onwards, the Thanom government had become faction-ridden mainly because of the likelihood that the unpopular Narong would succeed Thanom. General Kris Sivara led the faction that opposed Thanom and Praphat on this matter. The students served his faction well. In late 1973 and early 1974, they continued to attack those politicians and military leaders who supported Thanom and Praphat. This again was welcomed by Kris as a measure to enhance the power of his own faction.

The king's support for the students was also not a sign of disapproval of the military. In fact, by 1976, the monarchy was firmly in support of the military again. To a large extent, this was due to the king's perception that open politics as pursued since 1973 were tearing the fabric of the nation and undermining the monarchy. The post-1973 period was a golden opportunity for political parties—hitherto subservient to military dictates—to emerge as power brokers. Political parties of the right, left and centre proliferated. A coalition government, formed after the 1975 election, consisted of three parties—Social Action, Thai Nation, and Social Justice. However, there was no co-ordination and, in fact, three 'minigovernments'[39] existed. As a result of pressure from the military an election was called in April 1976. This turned out to be a bloody affair, augmenting the popular conviction that politics was disreputable (*'len kan muang'*, a pejorative phrase suggesting that politics was an unprofessional, dirty and treacherous game). It should be noted that Thai political parties were not mass parties but parliamentary clubs that gave prominence to personal interests and individual links. Ideology or platform did not constitute the basis of party organization. When interests changed, party affiliation also changed. Permanent attachment to a party could be ensured only if there were incentives (monetary or otherwise) to stay. One Thai cabinet minister said: 'politicians are like birds sitting on a tree. The tree is analogous to the political party. When the tree bears lots of fruits, i.e, plentiful money and privileges, MP's will leave their parties and join it.'[40] To make things worse, the period from October 1973 was characterized by widespread strike action in Bangkok. All these events occurred against a backdrop of the reunification of north and south Vietnam, the frenzied retreat from Saigon by United States forces, and the fall of Laos and Cambodia to communist control. The profound sense of insecurity and uncertainty could not but influence the nation in general and the king in particular. The message was clear: insecurity threatened, and even the Chakri dynasty might be swept aside.

The reaction to open politics encouraged rightist groups like the Nawaphon, the Red Gaurs and the Village Scouts to be active. They were supported by the military and business groups, the latter fearful that the confusion in Thailand would harm their finances. The Village Scouts even received royal patronage. In October 1976, bloody clashes took place between students and rightist groups. On 6 October 1976, military units

[39] Morell and Chai-anan Samudavanija, 261.
[40] Thak, 63.

seized power from the civilian Seni government. Thus Thailand returned to military dominance and royal legitimacy after only three years.

However, the period after October 1976 was not merely a return to the consensual polity of the monarchy and the bureaucracy. The military had become faction-ridden in the absence of strong men. Its leaders no longer served their early years in the strategic command of the Bangkok troops, as had been the case with Sarit, Thanom, Praphat and Kris. In fact, the leader of the October 1976 coup was an admiral, Sangad Chaloryu. The new prime minister who was eventually appointed, General Kriangsak Chomanand, did not have experience in army troop commands. His power base within the military was extremely narrow. The same was true of the next prime minister, General Prem Tinsulanond. He had to rely on the politicians, especially the members of the Social Action Party, for support. That made it necessary for him and for other military leaders to get entangled in the strange world of political bargaining and compromises. The machinations that abounded gave the impression that the military was weak and losing direction. Factions within the military began to manoeuvre in an attempt to save the situation. A faction known as the Young Military Officers Group (or more popularly the Young Turks) was formed to find a solution. The group argued that the executive should be given strong political power to solve the problems of social and economic injustice. Only after that could a more open and participatory political system be gradually established. In 1981, the Young Turks led a coup against the Prem government, hoping to get their viewpoint accepted. However, they failed to prevent Prem from establishing a counter-coup headquarters in Korat, 260 kilometres northeast of Bangkok, with the royal family accompanying him. From Korat, General Prem made repeated broadcasts that the royal family was safe with him. That sealed the fate of the coup leaders, and ensured Prem's continuance in power. The abortive coup demonstrated that the monarchy was confirmed as the most significant political structure in Thailand. The leader who received royal endorsement was the one accepted by the state as the ruler.

This returns the discussion to the point made earlier that Thailand was a consensual polity with the monarchy as a principal focus. The pluralistic political structures of 1973–6 were an interregnum in Thailand's history of maximum government.

Burma: Ne Win

If Sarit was in full control of a monolithic structure, the neighbouring state in Burma was in disarray when General Ne Win assumed power after the coup of 1962. Ethnic consensus was lacking. Political feuds had racked the previous government of U Nu. Ne Win considered it his task to overcome the disintegrative tendencies. In the course of establishing political structures to achieve that goal, maximum government was also developed.

While U Nu's government was partisan, sectarian and communal, Ne Win planned to recast the political structures as non-partisan, non-sectarian

and non-ethnic.[41] To a large extent, Ne Win's political models were drawn from his civil-war experience in the late 1940s.

The political structure that was created immediately after the coup of 1962 was the Revolutionary Council. The council combined all the powers of the state. It ruled by decree till 1974 when a new constitution was promulgated. The chairman was Ne Win.

Soon after the coup, the Revolutionary Council issued an ideological statement, The Burmese Way to Socialism (BWS), which served as a guide to government policies. The statement of belief read as follows:

> The revolutionary council of the union of Burma does not believe that man will be set free from social evils as long as pernicious economic systems exist in which man exploits man and lives on the fat of such appropriation. The Council believes it to be possible only when exploitation of man by man is brought to an end and a socialist economy based on justice is established; only then can all people, irrespective of race or religion, be emancipated from all social evils and set free from anxieties over food, clothing and shelter, and from inability to resist evil, for an empty stomach is not conducive to whole-some morality, as the Burmese saying goes; only then can an affluent state of social development be reached and all people be happy and healthy in mind and body.
>
>   Thus affirmed in this belief the Revolutionary Council is resolved to march unswervingly and arm-in-arm with the people of the Union of Burma towards the goal of socialism.[42]

The purpose of the statement was to focus loyalty on as well as to mobilize popular support for the political structures of the state. Generally, the BWS specified that the state rested upon the people and not on a narrow capitalist or landlord class. The anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist rhetoric was derived from the civil-war experiences of the military. The BWS was also against parliamentary democracy, noting that it had failed to achieve unity under the previous government led by U Nu. A week after the proclamation of the new ideology, Ne Win commented that 'parliamentary democracy contains too many loopholes for abuse to be of value to a country like Burma'.[43] Inherent in the plan of action was the establishment of a single party that would lead the state to socialism.

The BWS was non-partisan because its socialist roots were indigenously Burmese. Drawing on experience of the civil war from 1948 to 1949, Ne Win tried to reconcile warring factions divided on ideology. When the Burmese Communist Party revolted against U Nu's government in March 1948, army officers had been compelled to support one against the other. This tore the army apart. Although Ne Win identified himself with U Nu, he appreciated the necessity of seeking accommodation with the communists too. The BWS can therefore be viewed as an attempt to establish consensus among opposing factions. He tried to unite the three major political parties in an effort to form a single national party, somewhat

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41 Robert H. Taylor, 'Burma' in Ahmad and Crouch, eds, 36.
42 Roger M. Smith, ed, *Southeast Asia*, 134.
43 Fred R. von der Mehden, 'The Burmese Way to Socialism' *Asian Survey*, III, 3 (1963) 132.

in the image of Aung San's AFPFL of 1945. The poor response led Ne Win to create a new party in 1962 called the Burma Socialist Programme Party (BSPP), also called the Burmese Way to Socialism Party or Lanzin in Burmese. Its aim was to steer the country towards the ideological goals of the BWS. At the beginning, it was not conceived as a mass party. Its members were individual cadres drawn mainly from the police and the military. Because of its urban bias, the Lanzin did not succeed in recruiting peasants. Minorities did not join, because they favoured a multi-party system which would ensure the articulation of their own interests by ethnic-based groups. In 1971, Lanzin was reconstituted as a mass party in an attempt to project a national image in a one-party political structure, but apparently this move only brought in members less committed to the party's ideology and more interested in securing favours or positions of power.

In his search for non-sectarian political structures, Ne Win showed that even during the caretaker period of 1958–60, he was against the religious practices of U Nu by lifting the ban on cattle slaughter and *nat* (spirit) worship. In 1959, Ne Win launched the 'Buddhism in Danger' campaign to prevent communist subversion of the Buddhist Church. However, this was seen as a cynical attempt to rally the Buddhists against U Nu, since only the monks who supported U Nu's political opponents participated in the campaign. Ne Win's non-sectarian stand led to the overwhelming electoral gains of U Nu in 1960. From 1962, however, Ne Win remained undaunted in pursuing his non-sectarian goals. He was firmly convinced that U Nu's promise to make Buddhism the state religion was divisive. Thus he was most intent on restricting the political activities of the Buddhist monks. In 1962, for example, he required all monks to register. This was aimed at the individual who wished to pass himself off as a monk by merely shaving his head and donning the yellow robe. In April 1964, the Revolutionary Council decreed that all Buddhist organizations must vow not to engage in political activities, though this had to be rescinded in May after protests. In March 1965, the Revolutionary Council sponsored a Buddhist conference which, among other things, outlined a programme of religious education reform. Several monasteries and individual monks objected to the results of the conference and Ne Win had to move forcefully against them. Subsequently Buddhist clergy were excluded from voting or holding office in many kinds of organizations.

Ne Win was also intent on destroying the autonomous ethnic political structures that U Nu had allowed to develop. Again, his civil-war experience reinforced his distaste for organizations based on ethnic grouping. In 1948, the army was still organized on a communal basis, and ethnic loyalty rather than loyalty to the state was the operating principle. In December of that year, Karen and then Kachin units revolted. They even succeeded in controlling the northen town of Mandalay briefly in 1949. Ne Win was left with the task of fighting the ethnic army rebels at the same time as fighting those army units that had joined the communists in revolt.

Therefore, it was understandable that shortly after the coup in 1962, Ne Win ordered the arrest or removal of hereditary leaders, especially among the Shans. Then the state councils with their chief ministers were

abolished. In their place, state supreme councils consisting of local civilian leaders and military commanders were established, and these were linked in a hierarchy all the way up to the Revolutionary Council. The success of this administrative measure depended, of course, on whether the new leaders could displace loyalty to those who were jailed or leading the armed struggle. As well as the new administrative structure, the mailed fist was also employed as Ne Win deployed the Burmese army against the insurgents. However, military campaigns were never really successful, in part because of the difficult terrain. The continued challenge posed by the ethnic minorities can therefore be viewed as providing an alternative political structure to that of Ne Win. But the minorities were ultimately a peripheral, not mainstream, structure. They did not try to exploit the situation when the military government broke down for two to three months in 1988. The power structure ultimately lay in central Burma.

The potency of the ethnic political structures should not therefore be overstated. For example, secession especially among the Shan states was a much publicized threat to consensus in Burma. But what secession really meant is not easy to explain. True, the Shan were close linguistic relations of the Thai. In the nineteenth century, some Shan princes were sent to Bangkok to be raised and trained. However, the Shan ethnic and political identity also depended historically on the claim that the Shan system of principalities was connected with the Burman kingdom of Pagan. Shan Theravāda Buddhism was more akin to the Burmese style rather than the Thai. Much of the Shan language was influenced by Burmese, which made it less understood in Thailand.[44]

Despite the facade of non-partisanship, non-sectarianism and non-ethnicity, the enigma of Ne Win remained. Until the coup of 1962, Ne Win portrayed himself as a reluctant leader. Yet it was clear that Ne Win was the Revolutionary Council. Although there was a small military oligarchy in the council, it was Ne Win who called the shots. At the beginning, Ne Win's closest advisers were Brigadiers Aung Gyi and Tin Pe. However, when Aung Gyi disagreed with Ne Win over the pace and direction of socialism in Burma, he resigned in 1963 and was retired from the army. When the economic policies of Tin Pe failed, he too resigned in 1968. The next confidant until 1974 was Brigadier San Yu. Some civilians like U Ba Nyein and Dr Maung Maung were also appointed to the Revolutionary Council. The ease with which Ne Win dropped an individual from the council and supported another suggested the power he exercised. Even though he retired from the military in 1971 and entrusted the civil administration to a prime minister in 1974, he was still acknowledged as the leader in control. Ne Win himself did not promote a personality cult. Though his portrait was hung in government offices, it was always next to Aung San's. Indeed, it could be conjectured that a principal political structure in Burma was the Aung San–Ne Win complex. Ne Win was one of the Thirty Comrades and, indeed, a syndrome akin to that of China's Long March had been created in Burma, drawing upon the reputation of Aung San. This reservoir of legendary exploits was a major source of legitimacy for Ne

[44] F. K. Lehman, ed., *Military Rule in Burma since 1962*, Singapore, 1981, 2.

Win's political structures. When Ne Win established the Revolutionary Council in 1962, the inspiration was attributed to Aung San:

> The correctness and sagacity of the action of the Revolutionary Council will be fully appreciated if we consider only for a moment what the Founder of our Independence *Bogyoke Gyi* Aung San himself would have done in the situation that has just obtained if he were alive today. *No sane person would have doubted that the same steps would have been taken by that indomitable leader.*[45]

In the same vein, the BWS, the 'Revolution' (Ne Win's name for his period of rule) and the Lanzin were all attributed to the inspiration of Aung San. In fact, the Socialist Republic of Burma was the greatest tribute to Aung San. Since 1962, Aung San had also been cast as the fourth Great Unifier of Burma (after Anawrahta, Bayinnaung and Alaungpaya), and since Ne Win's portrait was often posted in government buildings in the company of Aung San, it could be argued that, by extension, Ne Win was identified with Aung San as a unifier.[46]

The power that Ne Win exercised in the political structure was, of course, backed by the Burmese army. The latter was a very confident group. It had overcome factionalism within itself. At the same time, it saved the civilian government of the day from the threats of the communist and ethnic rebels. With no or little foreign help, Ne Win's army was forced to rely on its own resilience to discharge its duties. The civilian politicians had little to offer by way of assistance. This accounted for the substantial claims throughout the 1950s on the national budget for internal security, one-third or even half of the total amount. The army budget was not challenged[47] and the army remained well-treated and well-provided compared to the rest of the population.

The Burmese army, however, was not impervious to change, even though the political leadership remained unchanged. Since 1962, the population in Burma had doubled. Large sectors of the official economy had disintegrated — a testimony to Ne Win's preference for self-reliance. In its stead a black market flourished. Opposition groups within Burma proper — principally students[48] — proliferated in an inchoate mass. Amidst all these changes, one thing became clear: Burma under Ne Win had hardly begun to address the economic issues that neighbouring Southeast Asian countries had tackled years before. Questions about Ne Win's leadership emerged.

In 1988, students launched massive demonstrations in Rangoon in a bid to topple Ne Win. For a period, Burma's government was paralysed or disintegrated. Ne Win resigned but in September 1988, the military made

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[45] Jon A. Wiant and David I. Steinberg, 'Burma: The Military and National Development' in Soedjati Djiwandono and Yong Mun Cheong, eds, 301.
[46] ibid.
[47] Taylor, 'Burma', in Ahmad and Crouch, eds, 27.
[48] Students posed the strongest urban challenge to Ne Win. In 1974, students combined with workers to protest against inflation and food shortages. In the course of ending the protests, schools and universities were closed. Protests occurred again in December 1974 at the funeral of the former United Nations Secretary-General, U Thant, and again in 1975 when students camped at the Shwedagon Pagoda in protest.

a come-back and formed a Council for the Restoration of Law and Order. The events of September 1988 were likened to the military's taking over from the U Nu government in 1958. In both cases, the military intervened to re-establish political and economic order so that elections could be held.[49] However, the military in 1988 was no longer the same as that of 1958 or even 1962. The events in 1988 revealed that the military as a political structure was not the monolith of the earlier years.

In 1962, the Revolutionary Council comprised military officers who had forged bonds during the days of the Thirty Comrades. There was also a common desire to consolidate political power. These factors bound the Revolutionary Council together as a solid political structure.

However, as the years progressed, old comrades died, and the shared experience in the independence struggle disappeared as a bonding agent. Current issues also overshadowed history. After 1962, the Burmese military was required to second officers to new party organizations and government postings. Commanders who were then concentrated on fighting the insurgents took the opportunity to transfer their unwanted officers to administrative and party positions. This practice turned out to be a mistake. When the BSPP was transformed from a cadre to a mass party in 1971 and the First Party Congress was convened, combat officers found that their seconded party officers were now in charge. Much of the political manoeuvring in the subsequent party congresses was a reflection of this contest between combat and party officers, culminating in the victory of the combat officers after 1973. The latter, after all, commanded the field units and they would be pivotal in determining policy.[50]

In 1988, effective power lay with the combat officers. They had earned their spurs fighting against ethnic insurgents, not against British or Japanese soldiers as in Ne Win's generation. Many of these officers had observed that the old BWS had contributed to the economic mess that led to the student riots from the mid-1970s. Observers did not, however, rule out Ne Win's continued influence.

Singapore

Singapore shares with some other Southern Asian states political structures which allow for maximum government. However, while states like Indonesia, Burma, and the Philippines under Marcos fashioned their political structures in accordance with domestic needs, Singapore's political structures were shaped to a large extent by the external environment. Because the population was overwhelmingly ethnic Chinese, the communal pressure to identify Singapore with nearby China—a legitimate regional power—was very strong. Yet Singapore had always been located in a Malay world. Close affinity with China could interfere with the search for a consensus and arouse the suspicion of minorities. More cogently, it would definitely colour the perception of neighbouring states of what nationhood in Singapore meant.

[49] See Robert H. Taylor's article reprinted in the *Straits Times* (Singapore), 13 Feb. 1989, 20.
[50] Jon Wiant, 'Tradition in the Service of Revolution: the Political Symbolism of Taw-hlan-ye-khit', in Lehman, ed., 70–1.

The choice of a merged political structure within Malaysia was com-
pelled, in part, by this external environment. There were, of course,
domestic economic reasons why Singapore chose to join Malaysia. How-
ever, equally if not more important was the need to correct the leftward
drift of communal politics among the Chinese-educated in Singapore. The
most vibrant pre-Malaysia political structure of Singapore consisted pri-
marily of the masses—students and workers—mobilized by the commun-
ist united front acting within the People's Action Party. Overt communist
activities were declared illegal in 1948 and remained outlawed. It was
hoped that with membership in a Malay-led Federation of Malaysia, the
radical agitation of the Chinese-educated left wing would be circumscribed
and even reduced to manageable proportions by a government in Kuala
Lumpur which had fought communism since 1948. The Malaysia strategy
was pushed by the English-educated Chinese leader, Lee Kuan Yew,
together with non-Chinese colleagues in the moderate wing of the PAP.
Even before Malaysia was formed, there were detentions without trial
under the draconian Internal Security Act in 1961 with the connivance
of the Kuala Lumpur government; these were harbingers of what could
happen once Singapore entered the federation and internal security
became a federal concern.

The Malaysian experience had a considerable impact upon the political
structures of Singapore. First, for the PAP—the dominant political party—
the emasculation of the left-wing resulted in the consolidation of a more
cohesive political structure controlled by the English-educated moderates
alone. Second, the confrontation between the communal structures of
peninsular Malaya and the non-communal 'Malaysian Malaysia' group
convinced Singapore leaders that multiracialism was the key to consensus.
Third, it confirmed that Singapore's political structures could not be
isolated from the external environment. Singapore joined Malaysia with
restrictions on the rights of its Chinese citizens to vote other than in
the island only. Despite this, Malay extremists in UMNO attempted to
discredit Lee and participated in the Singapore general elections of 1964
to win the support of the Malay minority, thereby gaining a foothold in the
political structure. Also, the structure of Singapore as a member state in a
federal entity was challenged by Sukarno's *konfrontasi* (confrontation). The
confrontation was a mixture of issues like neo-colonialism, ethnicity,
hegemony and leadership in Southeast Asia, and Chinese dominance over
trade. Thus it seemed that even changes in the political structure of
Singapore could not be implemented without the endorsement of regional
neighbours. Finally, with Singapore's exit from Malaysia, the issue of
survival became imperative. In a crisis of that magnitude, political struc-
tures that stressed consensus and agreement on broad common goals
found a fertile field for development. The economic security that statehood
in Malaysia had conferred evaporated overnight. Yet Singapore had to
make a living. Its only recourse was to plug into the global network
of trade and investments. This meant further entanglement in an external
environment that its political structures would not be able to control. The
most it could do was to put its own house in order. Thus the management
of its domestic political structures was crucial.

Lee began a programme of action to ensure that the dissent that characterized the 1950s would not be repeated. In the end, the measures adopted were so thorough that Singapore as a whole resembled a mono-lithic political structure in support of the leadership of Lee. Lee's no-nonsense style of government gave the structure an effectiveness that would not be possible under another kind of leadership. He stressed that there must be a core group within the cabinet to take tough and immediate decisions. In an interview with the *International Herald Tribune*, Lee had this to say about decisiveness: 'If you like good, you've got to oppose bad. If you want honesty, you fight and kill corruption. If you want men with principles, you must destroy men without principles. There are no half-way houses.'[51] Lee's use of the Internal Security Act to nip in the bud dangerous sources of opposition that would undermine the existing politi-cal structures was likened to a karate chop—clean, specific, direct and, of course, effective.

Parallel with this management style was the extension of Lee's control over parapolitical and parastatal structures.[52] One group of parapolitical bodies was the trade unions. In the 1950s, it was the control of the trade unions by the left-wingers within the PAP that gave them such great influence within the party. By 1965, the PAP-supported National Trades Union Congress (NTUC) had gained control over the trade unions from the left-wing Singapore Association of Trade Unions. The NTUC's main platform was to call upon the trade unions to discard their narrow self-interest and to 'modernize' by working towards accommodating rather than confronting government and the employers. Thereafter, with the support of the PAP, the NTUC leadership—which itself was drawn from the PAP ranks—reduced emphasis on its collective bargaining role and expanded upon its social role to provide members with educational, recreational and business opportunities. In 1972, the government set up the National Wages Council which was a tripartite wage-negotiation body consisting of labour, employers and the government. This further eroded the collective bargaining role of the trade unions. Thus, by 1972, the trade unions assumed a role within the political structure in which industrial relations were not the only concern.

Lee was emphatic that new forms of mass organizations be formed. He insisted that all members of parliament be faithful in conducting their weekly meet-the-people sessions which provided constituents with the opportunity to voice their problems. This also allowed the MPs to get a 'feel' of people's concerns. The exercise constituted a major component of the political structure. Cabinet ministers were also instructed to conduct 'walkabouts' in all constituencies on Sundays to provide a further channel between people and the government. MPs were required to chair resi-dents' committees and management committees in community centres. All these links ultimately became more important than the formal structures that could be identified.

[51] Quoted in *Straits Times*, 14 Sept. 1988, 1.
[52] The terms 'parapolitical' and 'parastatal' were used in Seah Chee Meow, 'Parapolitical Institutions', in Jon S. T. Quah, Chan Heng Chee and Seah Chee Meow, eds, *Government and Politics of Singapore*,, Singapore, 1985, ch. 8.

What of the political structures within the government itself (the legislature and the bureaucracy)? The civil service was a parastatal institution that Lee thought should be integrated into the political structure in order to facilitate the achievement of government objectives. In 1959, the groundwork had been established by setting up the Political Study Centre to impart political education to civil servants and to raise their understanding of the problems of the people. After 1965, the importance of the civil sevice was further increased by a system of recruitment which emphasized talent and qualifications. Coupled with salaries and benefits that approximated those in the private sector, this served to promote the civil service as an important component of the political structure. The civil service also became a vital training ground for future members of parliament on the PAP ticket. The link thus established could not but enhance the role of the civil service within the political structure.

Extending maximum government controls through political structures, however, was not the same as building the structure of a nation. Nation-building was a particularly urgent task because of the abrupt circumstances in 1965 that surrounded the birth of an independent state. Singapore's exit from Malaysia left a residue of Malays who now found themselves a minority community in the Malay archipelago. Although the Malays constituted less than 10 per cent of the population, their existence made it probable that any fissures in a multiracial society would occur along ethnic fault lines. Notwithstanding the image of monolithism that Singapore's political structures portrayed, the Malay community contained the seeds of dissent and separation. An important issue relevant for the study of political structures had always been the representation of Malay interests in parliament.

As the dominant party in parliament, the PAP was always careful to field a sufficient number of Malay candidates. The experience of Lee and his senior colleagues in the communal politics of Malaysia and the importance they placed on the external environment demonstrated to them the crucial need to preserve multiracialism. However, various conditions emerged to threaten the continuance of this parliamentary tradition. The housing policy of the national Housing and Development Board tended to promote non-Malay residence in hitherto Malay-majority areas. In other words, there were no more electoral constituencies that could deliver block votes for a Malay candidate. At the same time, an increase in the number of younger non-Malay voters with no memories of the 'Malaysia' experience tended to place a premium on parliamentary candidates with professional skill, education and technocratic abilities, qualifications with which Malays were less equipped.

Such a situation could lead to a decline in the number of Malay representatives in parliament. In a political structure with elections based on one-person-one-vote and the first-past-the-post principle, there were very real dangers for the representation of the Malay community. If not resolved, these could render Singapore's position in a Malay archipelago untenable.

Indeed, results from several consecutive elections showed that the number of votes that Malay candidates could command was dropping

compared to Chinese candidates in the same constituency. Chinese voters tended to vote for Chinese candidates. As a result, there was a trend towards a non-Malay parliament or a parliament with disproportionately low Malay representation. In short, Singapore's political structure was moving towards one in which the Malay minority would be marginalized and, of course, alienated. Given the geopolitical factors, this would send the wrong signals to Singapore's neighbours.

There were, of course, safeguards within the existing political structure to rectify the situation. In December 1965, soon after separation from Malaysia, a Constitutional Commission was appointed to provide for multi-racialism within the constitution. Generally, Article 89 recognized the 'special position' of the Malays. The commission also recommended the creation of a non-elected advisory body called the Presidential Council on Minorities. With members appointed at the discretion of the president, it was expected that this body would be able to check on any adverse impact of legislation in respect of racial issues.

Another solution was the Team-Member-of-Parliament concept and the creation of the Group Representation Constituency (GRC) in 1988. Under this scheme, certain constituencies were designated as GRCs. This meant that contestants for those electoral wards must include a member of the minority race (Malay or Indian as the case may be) as one of the candidates. This ensured that there would be a minimum number of representatives in parliament from each minority group. The GRC scheme was duly adopted in the amended constitution. In this way, multiracialism was legislated into the political structure. At the same time, all political parties, including the small or weak ones, were required to field at least three candidates on a single slate in order to contest the designated constituencies. This could be construed as a step towards the further development of maximum government, because only the stronger parties could fulfil the conditions.

Earlier, to ensure that all the measures taken to develop suitable political structures were not in vain, Lee had ordered the formation of the Singapore Armed Forces to defend the achievements that had been registered. The first decisive moves in this direction came soon after Singapore separated from Malaysia. When the July 1969 racial riots took Kuala Lumpur by storm and threatened to spill over into Singapore, Lee ordered the armed forces to display their tanks at the August national day parade in a show of force designed to instil confidence that the political structures in Singapore were sufficiently resilient to withstand any external pressure. Subsequently, in November 1972, in a move to pre-empt any attempt at merger with Malaysia which would change the political structures in Singapore, Lee persuaded the Parliament to amend the constitution so that thereafter any merger or any surrender of sovereign power over the police and the armed forces would require a referendum with two-thirds majority of the people voting. After that, the armed forces became an important component of the political structure, with 'bridges' linking them to the civilian segments. The stress on a citizen army, total defence, and the creation of a conduit by which high-ranking officers could cross over to participate in national politics or be seconded to the bureaucracy, all

ensured that the armed forces would have a major role in the political structure but not a dominant one.

Brunei

Discussion on independent Brunei can best begin with the official view that the tiny state had never been colonized by the British. It had always been a protectorate. Hence, Britain's grant of independence to Brunei on 1 January 1984 was not similar to the independence experienced by its other colonies. It was in order to fulfil diplomatic requirements that Brunei needed a formal proclamation of independence.

This perspective provides for a 'longer view' of Brunei's political structures, in respect of which the year 1984 was not a watershed. Of these, the most important was of course the Malay Islamic sultanate.

An indication of the sultanate's importance was already revealed before Brunei became independent when it was negotiating with the Federation of Malaya on the terms of admission into the new state of Malaysia. The question of precedence of the Sultan of Brunei in the Conference of Rulers was evidently a major cause of the disagreement that brought about the breakdown in the Malaya–Brunei negotiations. Precedence, however, was not only an issue of protocol and ceremony. The sultanate of Brunei was one of the oldest in the Malay world and naturally the sultan thought it would be justified to claim a degree of pre-eminence in the line-up for the post of Yang di-Pertuan Agong, the titular head of state in the proposed Malaysia. The existing provisions stipulated that the incumbent should, generally, be selected on the basis of precedence. This in turn was determined by the date of accession to the throne. The Sultan of Brunei would have to wait his turn. The proceedings of the negotiations were not made public, but it was likely that the sultan asked for a position higher than his due in the hierarchy. When objections were raised, the discussions faltered.

The negotiations suggested that the sultan recognized the crucial importance of protecting the sultanate at all costs. Indeed, the history of modern political structures in Brunei was almost a history of the work of two sultans, the late Sir Omar, who was the twenty-eighth ruler of Brunei, and his son Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah.

In 1959, when a constitution was drafted to confer internal autonomy on Brunei, the decision was made to strengthen the sultanate by ensuring that power was transferred not to the people but to the ruling dynasty. For Sir Omar who negotiated the constitution, that was the principal way to replace the influence of the British resident with his personal rule. In his view the Islamic sultanate was the only political structure that could protect the non-Islamic ethnic groups. In an independent Brunei, the 1961 Citizenship Regulations would continue in force, allowing non-citizens (principally the Chinese who formed 23 per cent of the population) to enjoy residence rights and to travel on papers of identity after 1 January 1984. Moreover, applications for citizenship would continue to be entertained.[53]

[53] Roger Kershaw, 'Illuminating the path to independence: Political themes in *Pelita Brunei* in 1983', *Southeast Asian Affairs 1984*, Singapore, 1984, 69.

Maximum government in a political structure centred on the person of the ruler was the principal feature in Brunei. However, to counter criticisms against the accumulation of absolutism, measures were taken after 1984 to develop political structures apart from the sultanate and thus a ministerial cabinet was formed. But the substance remained the same. Sultan Bolkiah held a tight grip on the entire structure by assuming the offices of Prime Minister, Home Affairs and Finance. He appointed his father Minister of Defence, and two brothers also held important ministerial positions. When his father died on 7 September 1986, Sultan Bolkiah assumed the post of Minister of Defence. A new revised constitution was also promulgated. Based on the earlier 1959 document, it consolidated royal power further because it abolished the Legislative Council. Under the 1959 constitution, there were four other councils: the Council of Ministers, the Privy Council, the Religious Council, and the Council of Succession. There were also village and district councils linked with these councils. Such formal structures aside, it is also important to note that after 1980, the sultan made personal visits to the villages to hear grievances and this was an important political structure, albeit an informal one.

Since the granting of independence was not conditional on either elections or representative government, there was a limited role for the Legislative Council to play in the political structure. Up to 1962, this council had been controlled by the Party Ra'ayat, the party that formed the majority in fifty-four of the fifty-five district councils. In 1962 the party leader, A. M. Azahari, led a revolt against the sultan in order to launch his programme of re-establishing the former glory of Brunei. Azahari's action contributed a great deal to the monarchical distaste for such representative institutions as the Legislative Council. In theory, this council could exercise some powers. According to the 1959 constitution, all revenues were paid into the Consolidated Fund and the council must give its approval before monies could be spent. With the abolition of the council, state finances and reserves could in fact be treated as the personal wealth of the sultan.

There was some limited toleration of parties within the political structure, even after the Azahari revolt. In May 1985, the Brunei National Democratic Party was registered. The chairman was related to the sultan. In late 1985, a second party—a splinter group from the first—was registered as the Brunei National United Party. Despite these signs of change, Brunei's political structure remained essentially a modernizing autocracy.

An alternative political structure was therefore difficult to identify. If one existed at all, it was the Brunei Armed Forces, but even this institution was so closely associated with the sultan that it formed an extension of his authority.

CONCLUSION

The reference to the Sultan of Brunei returns the discussion to the importance of the leaders within the political structures in the independent states of Southeast Asia. It is submitted that in many instances, the

exercise of power by several individuals, separately and independently of each other, gave meaning to the political structures.

In practically all the Southeast Asian states, leaders emerged to assume control of the political structures. Many of them were institution-builders. As creators rather than destroyers, they developed structures which endowed the societies they led with form, continuity and predictability. The study of Southeast Asian political structures cannot but mention the relatively long tenure of many leaders of governments whose extended role in office gave life and vigour to the structures. Indeed, leaders and the governments they led constituted a political structure of primary importance, sometimes to the exclusion of other structures, but endeavouring to absorb the diverse peoples in each of their states to achieve the elusive goal of nation-building.

Ne Win was credited with having said: 'There is no miracle worker. But a willing man with a stout and true heart can accomplish a lot. Placed in bad conditions, he can make them good. Placed in good conditions, he can make them better. With a few hundred of such men we can push the revolution through.'[54] Lee Kuan Yew, reminiscing about the past, spoke of the need for at least three persons who would not be moved under pressure.[55]

The study of political structures in Southeast Asia can therefore justifiably deal with the leaders who shaped the political structures almost in an *ad hoc* manner in response to problems and situations that emerged. A cursory survey of these leaders, by way of conclusion, reveals various interesting features that validate the need to study them in order to understand the political structures.

Of that breed of 'founding fathers' of the independent states in Southeast Asia, attention here focuses on four who were still alive at the end of the 1980s. The doyen of these must be Lee Kuan Yew of Singapore, who argued: 'I belong to that exclusive club of founder members of a new independent country ... Those who believe that when I have left the Government as Prime Minister, that I've gone into permanent retirement, really should have their heads examined.'[56]

Then there was Ne Win, who ruled Burma for twenty-six years (from 1962 to 1988, not including the short caretaker government that lasted from 1958 to 1960). Although he had resigned from the presidency of Burma in the wake of student-led unrest and riots, he was allegedly the *eminence grise* who appointed Sein Lwin as his successor and then, after eighteen days of further violence and killing, removed him from office. It was still believed that he was calling the shots even after the military coup of September 1988 although erstwhile close associates like Maung Maung thought that he had really retired.[57]

The third 'founding father' who still hankered after some degree of influence was Tunku Abdul Rahman, the first prime minister of Malaya and later Malaysia. Although wheelchair-bound and advanced in age, he

[54] Maung Maung, *Burma and General Ne Win*, Rangoon, 1969, 300.
[55] *Straits Times*, 16 Aug. 1988, 10.
[56] ibid., 15 Aug. 1988, 1.
[57] Seminar given by Maung Maung, 28 Feb. 1990, National University of Singapore.

flew from Penang to Johor (the southernmost state of peninsular Malaya) to campaign on behalf of a candidate who opposed the UMNO Baru (or New UMNO) party in a 1988 by-election. The Tunku, of course, was a strenuous opponent of the decision by Dr Mahathir, the incumbent prime minister, to replace the old UMNO (the Tunku's party which he led from 1955 till 1969) with the new UMNO. The outcome of the by-election is irrelevant to this discussion: the action of the Tunku suggested the strong determination of founder-leaders to exercise influence over the shape of political structures.

The last 'founding father' of note is, of course, the mercurial Prince Sihanouk. At the time of writing, this leader was still working towards a resolution of the Cambodia conflict despite many threats of retirement.

This survey of recent activities of the early leaders of independent Southeast Asia demonstrates their attachment to those political structures they had so painstakingly created. As Lee Kuan Yew said at a Singapore National Day rally on Sunday, 14 August 1988, 'And even from my sick bed, even if you are going to lower me into the grave and I feel that something is going wrong, I'll get up.'[58]

Not all the Southeast Asian leaders, of course, thought on the same wavelength as these men. Aung San, the Burmese leader who led the nationalist struggle against the British, was one of these. Shortly after the end of the Japanese occupation, he spoke on leadership:

> No man, however great, can alone set the wheels of history in motion, unless he has the active support and cooperation of a whole people. No doubt individuals have played brilliant roles in history, but then it is evident that history is not made by a few individuals only. I have already mentioned to you ... how history develops as the cumulative creation of generations of men responding to the demands of ever growing logical events. I am well aware that there is such a great craving in mind for heroism and the heroic and that hero-worship forms not a small motif in his complex. I am also aware that unless man believes in his own heroism and the heroism of others, he cannot achieve much or great things. We must, however, take proper care that we do not make a fetish of this cult of hero-worship, for then we will turn ourselves into votaries of false gods and prophets.[59]

It is not necessary to evaluate this view held by Aung San, save to say that its importance compared to the ones expressed by the other leaders was diminished because Aung San was assassinated while the others lived to establish structures of consensus.

What then were the circumstances that permitted the dominance of leaders and governments as a political structure? The low levels of political institutionalization in Southeast Asia allowed leaders, defined as those responsible for the orientation of their respective polities, to concentrate unto themselves influence and patronage by means that bore relatively little relationship to the formal political structures provided by the consti-

tution of each state.[60] The environment also increasingly made it easier for leaders to concentrate power in their hands. In the decades after the Southeast Asian states became independent, the pace of change was intense. One of the transformations that took place was the emergence of an international economy that was closely interdependent and becoming more and more integrated. The genesis of this transformation could be sensed even before the Southeast Asian states became independent. The colonial economies were meshed with the metropolitan economy. Various parts of Southeast Asia had already been drawn into the world system. However, this interdependence became more pronounced as the independent states grappled with the immense problems of heavy capital flows, demographic changes, commodity imbalances and unemployment problems. National markets increased in size. Transnational business corporations became prominent. In short, there was a change in scale, and only those political structures that could match the scale or forge links with other structures were big enough to adjust. Government power in Southeast Asia increased in every area because governments were placed in an advantageous position to adjust to the changes taking place in the world.[61] Leaders were thus provided with opportunities for amassing power.

However, this is not to suggest that the process was inexorable, sweeping everything to the side as leaders became more prominent. As Southeast Asia moved into an era in which states and their economies became more integrated, the role of the leaders could well be dwarfed by a change in scale. The narrow nationalism of the early leaders and the political structures they helped to shape may well have to adjust to the fit the globalization of the new era.

BIBLIOGRAPHIC ESSAY

The knowledge explosion has unleashed a torrent of publications on contemporary Southeast Asia history. Not all of them deal directly with political structures—the focus of the preceding pages—but collectively, they succeed in delivering a picture of the composition and dynamics of those structures. What is the basis of selection for mention in this bibliographic note? Standard works in English are cited and the new materials that have emerged in recent years are mentioned, especially those that can contribute to the quantum of primary sources.

Few authors have attempted on their own an encyclopaedic coverage of Southeast Asia. In the few instances where the whole of Southeast Asia is the subject, e.g. John F. Cady, *The History of Post-War Southeast Asia*, Athens, Ohio, 1974, the approach tends to settle along the fault line of a country-by-country analysis. Primary documents sourced from each country can be found in Roger M. Smith, ed., *Southeast Asia: Documents of*

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[60] See Mohammed Ayoob and Chai-Anan Samudavanija, *Leadership Perceptions and National Security: The Southeast Asian Experience*, Singapore: ISEAS 1989, ch. 11.
[61] Daniel Bell, 'The World in 2013', *Dialogue*, 81, 3 (1988) 2–9.

Political Development and Change, Ithaca, 1974. Those who attempt comparative regional studies usually seize upon a theme that could be pulled thread-like across Southeast Asia. Examples include Fred R. von der Mehden, *Politics of the Developing Nations*, Englewood Cliffs,. 1964; Lucian W. Pye, *Southeast Asia's Political Systems*, 2nd edn, Englewood Cliffs, 1967; Milton Osborne, *Region of Revolt: Focus on Southeast Asia*, Rushcutters Bay, NSW, 1970; Michael Leifer, *Dilemmas of Statehood in Southeast Asia*, Singapore, 1972; Lucian W. Pye with Mary W. Pye, *Asian Power and Politics: the Cultural Dimensions of Authority*, Cambridge, Mass., 1985.

Collective efforts have more often been the norm. Useful contributions include John T. McAlister, Jr, ed., *Southeast Asia: the Politics of National Integration*, New York, 1973, which has a section on national political leadership.

Unavoidably, the student of contemporary Southeast Asia, whether of political structures or other topics, is invariably referred to country studies of which there is an abundant and exciting growth.

Vietnam

The continuing conflict in Indochina has spawned numerous publications. Scholarship on Vietnam has developed far beyond the circle of writings delimited by Paul Mus, Bernard B. Fall, P. J. Honey or Dennis J. Duncanson. On the impact of international dimensions of war on domestic structures, see R. B. Smith, *An International History of the Vietnam War*, London, 1983. An useful analysis of how a revolutionary movement was able to gain ascendancy, albeit in one province only, is Jeffrey Race, *War comes to Long An: Revolutionary Conflict in a Vietnamese Province*, Berkeley, 1972. Since the village is such an important unit in the political structure, one useful reference is Gerald Cannon Hickey, *Village in Vietnam*, New Haven, 1964. An extremely arresting account of events in Indochina after 1975 can be found in Nayan Chanda, *Brother Enemy: the War after the War*, San Diego, New York, London, 1986.

Vietnamese writers have also published in English. Reading them will give an impression, however superficial, of the workings of the political structures in Vietnam. The writings of Vo Nguyen Giap are well known. There are also *Ho Chi Minh: On Revolution. Selected Writings, 1920–1966*, edited and with an introduction by Bernard B. Fall, New York, 1967; Nguyen Cao Ky, *Twenty Years and Twenty Days*, New York, 1976; *No other road to take. Memoir of Mrs Nguyen Thi Dinh*, Ithaca: Cornell University Southeast Asia Program, 1976; Vo Nguyen Giap, *Unforgettable Days*, Hanoi, 2nd edn, 1978; Nguyen van Canh with Earle Cooper, *Vietnam under Communism, 1975–1982*, Stanford, 1983; Truong Nhu Tang, *Journal of a Vietcong*, London, 1986; Tran Van Don, *Our Endless War: Inside Vietnam*, San Rafael, 1978; Bui Diem with David Chanoff, *In the Jaws of History*, Boston, 1987. There are interesting articles of tangential interest to political structures written by Vietnamese in *Vietnamese Studies* (Hanoi), a review founded in 1964.

Laos and Cambodia

For Laos and Cambodia, the offerings are as few as their respective territories are small. For Laos, the field is no longer confined to the writings of Fall, Langer and Zasloff. Significant contributions include the following: Martin Stuart-Fox, ed., *Contemporary Laos: Studies in the Politics and Society of the Lao People's Democratic Republic*, St Lucia, 1982; Martin Stuart-Fox, *Laos: Politics, Economics and Society*, London, 1986; MacAlister Brown and Joseph J. Zasloff, *Apprentice Revolutionaries: the Communist Movement in Laos, 1930–1985*, Stanford, 1986. Because much information readily available in respect of most countries is difficult to come by in the case of Laos, any contribution is welcome.

On Cambodia, a reliable account is Milton Osborne, *Politics and Power in Cambodia: the Sihanouk Years*, Camberwell, 1973. See also Ben Kiernan and Chanthou Boua, eds, *Peasants and Politics in Kampuchea, 1942–1981*, London, 1982: David P. Chandler and Ben Kiernan, eds, *Revolution and its aftermath in Kampuchea: Eight Essays*, New Haven, 1983; Michael Vickery, *Cambodia: 1975–1982*, Boston, 1984; Ben Kiernan, *How Pol Pot came to Power: a History of Communism in Kampuchea, 1930–1975*, London, 1985; finally, an account by a journalist, William Shawcross, *The Quality of Mercy: Cambodia, Holocaust and Modern Conscience*, London, 1984.

Few native Laotians or Cambodians have written about their respective countries, but Prince Norodom Sihanouk has published a defence of his role as leader in *My War with the CIA: the Memoirs of Prince Norodom Sihanouk*, New York, 1972, and *War and Hope: the Case for Cambodia*, New York, 1980.

Burma

In order to understand Burma's leadership as a core political structure, there are a number of useful publications by Burmese themselves, some of which must be read with care: Maung Maung, *Burma and General Ne Win*, London, 1969; U Nu, *Saturday's Son*, New Haven, 1975; Maung Maung Gyi, *Burmese Political Values: the Socio-Political Roots of Authoritarianism*, New York, 1983; Chao Tzang Yawnghwe, *The Shan of Burma: Memoirs of a Shan Exile*, Singapore, 1987.

However, the seminal contributions are still made by Western scholars, and their writings include those of Josef Silverstein who has published widely e.g., ed., *The Political Legacy of Aung San*, Ithaca: Cornell University Southeast Asia Program, 1972; ed., *The Future of Burma in Perspective: a Symposium*, Athens, Ohio, 1974; *Burma: Military Rule and the Politics of Stagnation*, Ithaca, 1977; *Burmese Politics: the Dilemma of National Unity*, New Brunswick, 1980. Others have also made substantial contributions, e.g. Frank N. Trager, *Burma: From Kingdom to Republic: a Historical and Political Analysis*, London, 1966; and Robert H. Taylor, *The State in Burma*, London, 1987.

Malaysia

One outstanding feature about publications on Malaysia is the recent prolific output of reminiscences and other accounts by former leaders and participants in the political process. These are led by Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra, the first prime minister: *Looking Back: Monday Musings and Memories*, Kuala Lumpur, 1977; *Viewpoints*, Kuala Lumpur, 1978; *As a Matter of Interest*, Kuala Lumpur, 1981; *Lest we Forget: Further Candid Reminiscences*, Singapore, 1983; *Something to Remember*, Singapore, 1983; *Contemporary Issues in Malaysian Politics*, Petaling Jaya, 1984; *Political Awakening*, Petaling Jaya, 1986; *Challenging Times*, Petaling Jaya, no date; *May 13 Before and After*, Kuala Lumpur, 1969. Except for the last three, most of the aforementioned were reproductions of articles previously published in the *Star* newspaper in Penang. The following are also worthy of note: *Strategy for Action: the Selected Speeches of Tun Haji Abdul Razak bin Dato Hussein Al-Haj*, Kuala Lumpur (?), 1969; Mahathir bin Mohamad, *The Malay Dilemma*, Singapore, 1970; Abdul Aziz Ishak, *Special Guest: the Detention in Malaysia of an ex-Cabinet Minister*, Singapore, 1977; Lim Kit Siang, *Time Bombs in Malaysia*, Petaling Jaya: Democratic Action Party, 1978; Tan Chee Khoon, *Malaysia Today: Without Fear or Favour*, Petaling Jaya, 1985; *Rukunegara: a Testament of Hope, Selected Speeches by Ghazali Shafie*, Kuala Lumpur, 1985; Lim Kit Siang, *Malaysia in the Dangerous 80s*, Petaling Jaya, 1982 and the later *Malaysia: Crisis of Identity*, Petaling Jaya: Democratic Action Party, 1986; A. Samad Ismail, *Journalism and Politics*, Kuala Lumpur, 1987. The writings of Chandra Muzaffar, winner of the 1989 Henry J. Benda Prize in Southeast Asian Studies, can also be included in this genre of participant-observer, e.g. *Protector? An analysis of the concept and practice of loyalty in leader-led relationships within Malay society*, Penang, 1979; *Freedom in Fetters: an analysis of the state of democracy in Malaysia*, Penang, 1986; *Islamic Resurgence in Malaysia*, Petaling Jaya, 1987.

Several doctoral dissertations have recently been revised and published. These include one on non-Alliance radical parties, one on centre–state relations, and one on the MCA, respectively: Firdaus Haji Abdullah, *Radical Malay Politics: its origins and early development*, Petaling Jaya, 1985; B. H. Shafruddin, *The Federal Factor in the Government and Politics of Peninsular Malaysia*, Singapore, 1987; Heng Pek Koon, *Chinese Politics in Malaysia: a History of the Malaysian Chinese Association*, Singapore, 1988.

Useful insights on political structures from a more narrow focus include Harold Crouch, Lee Kam Hing and Michael Ong, *Malaysian Politics and the 1978 Election*, Kuala Lumpur, 1980. Apart from Muzaffar's contributions, two of the few publications on Islam are Judith Nagata, *The Reflowering of Malaysian Islam: Modern Religious Radicals and their Roots*, Vancouver, 1984; and Mahathir Mohamad, *The Challenge*, Kuala Lumpur, 1986.

The standard reference works include K. J. Ratnam, *Communalism and the Political Process in Malaya*, Kuala Lumpur, 1965; James C. Scott, *Political Ideology in Malaysia: Reality and the Beliefs of an Elite*, New Haven, 1968; R. K. Vasil, *Politics in a Plural Society: a study of non-communal political parties in West Malaysia*, London, 1971; Mohamad Noordin Sopiee, *From Malayan Union to Singapore Separation: Political Unification in the Malaysia Region*,

1945–65, Kuala Lumpur, 1974; James P. Ongkili, *Nation-building in Malay-sia, 1946–1974*, Singapore, 1985, with important contributions on Sabah and Sarawak.

Indonesia

Western scholarship has contributed immensely to an understanding of the political structures of Indonesia after 1945. The standard references must be repeated here: Herbert Feith, *The Decline of Constitutional Democracy in Indonesia*, Ithaca, 1962; Ruth T. McVey, ed., *Indonesia*, rev. edn, New Haven, 1967; Herbert Feith and Lance Castles, *Indonesian Political Thinking, 1945–1965*, Ithaca, 1970; J. D. Legge, *Sukarno: a Political Biography*, New York, 1972; Rex Mortimer, ed., *Showcase State: the Illusion of Indonesia's 'Accelerated Modernisation'*, Sydney, 1973; and Oey Hong Lee, *Indonesia facing the 1980s: a Political Analysis*, Hull, no date, for alternative views; C. L. M. Penders, *The Life and Times of Sukarno*, London, 1974; J. A. C. Mackie, *Konfrontasi: the Indonesia-Malaysia Dispute, 1963–1966*, London, 1974; Karl D. Jackson and Lucian W. Pye, eds, *Political Power and Communi-cations in Indonesia*, Berkeley, 1978; Clifford Geertz, *Negara: the Theatre State in Nineteenth-Century Bali*, Princeton, 1980, which provides fascinating insights into political structures.

In particular, the cultural dimensions of political structures are studied in Claire Holt, ed., *Culture and Politics in Indonesia*, Ithaca, 1972.

More recent publications on very contemporary events include: Tengku Hasan M. di Tiro, *The Price of Freedom (The Unfinished Diary)*, Norsburg, Sweden, 1981; Heri Akhmadi, *Breaking the Chains of Oppression of the Indonesian People: Defense Statement at his Trial on Charges of Insulting the Head of State*, Ithaca, 1981; David Bourchier, *Dynamics of Dissent in Indonesia: Sawito and the Phantom Coup*, Ithaca, 1984; David Jenkins, *Suharto and his Generals: Indonesian Military Politics, 1975–1983*, Ithaca, 1984.

There continue to be major gaps in the literature on political structures. Standard references on Islamic and non-Islamic political structures are few. Studies of political parties include that of J. Eliseo Rocamora, *National-ism in Search of Ideology: the Indonesian Nationalist Party, 1946–1965*, Quezon City, 1975. There is one recent publication on Golkar, David Reeve, *Golkar of Indonesia: An Alternative to the Party System*, Singapore, 1985. The political structure of communism has been studied by various scholars, but the one published with the hindsight of the PKI debacle was Rex Mortimer, *Indonesian Communism under Sukarno: Ideology and Politics, 1959–1965*, Ithaca, 1974. A major contribution on the military as a political structure is Harold Crouch, *The Army and Politics in Indonesia*, Ithaca, 1978.

Philippines

The events of martial law and the subsequent overthrow of President Marcos in 1986 have tended to affect the selection of materials to read on the Philippines and overshadowed political biographies of those leaders (e.g. Jose V. Abueva, *Ramon Magsaysay: a Political Biography*, Manila, 1971)

who were dwarfed by the cataclysmic events from 1969 onwards. Pre-1972 books (e.g. Jose Veloso Abeuva and Raul P. de Guzman, eds, *Foundations and Dynamics of Filipino Government and Politics*, Manila, 1969) and materials published between 1972 and 1986 (e.g. David A. Rosenberg, ed., *Marcos and Martial Law in the Philippines*, Ithaca, 1979) therefore must be read in conjunction with those publications that used hindsight to advantage when discussing political structures. These include those collected in Carl H. Lande, ed., *Rebuilding a Nation: Philippine Challenges and American Policy*, Washington, 1987, and P. N. Abinales, *Militarization in the Philippines*, Quezon City: Third World Studies, 1982.

However, some of the standard studies remain reliable despite the political shifts: Carl H. Lande, *Leaders, Factions, and Parties: the Structure of Philippine Politics*, New Haven: Yale University Southeast Asia Studies, 1964; Onofre D. Corpuz, *The Philippines*, Englewood Cliffs, NJ, 1965; Jean Grossholtz, *Politics in the Philippines*, Boston, 1964. Various journals remain a valuable source of materials on political structures, e.g. *Philippine Studies* (Quezon City) and *Solidarity: Current Affairs, Ideas and the Arts* (Manila).

It should also be noted that the excitement of the 1986 overthrow of President Marcos resulted in the appearance of a number of publications providing personal accounts of martial law experiences. A most significant contribution was Benigno S. Aquino, *Testament from a Prison Cell*, Manila: Benigno, S. Aquino Jr Foundation, 1984. Not to be omitted from mention is Marcos' own defence of martial law: *Notes on the New Society of the Philippines*, 2 parts, Manila(?), 1973.

Thailand

Any attempt to study political structures in Thailand cannot ignore the following publications: John L. S. Girling, *Thailand: Society and Politics*, Ithaca, 1981; David L. Morell and Chai-Anan Samudavanija, *Political Conflict in Thailand; reforms, reaction, revolution*, Cambridge, Mass., 1981; Chai-Anan Samudavanija, *The Thai Young Turks*, Singapore, 1982; David K. Wyatt, *Thailand: A Short History*, New Haven, 1984.

Singapore and Brunei

Both Singapore and Brunei suffer from a lack of materials that can be recommended in a bibliographic essay of this nature.

In recent years, with the passage of time, the first-generation leaders of Singapore have become the source of publications, e.g. *Not by Wages Alone: Selected Speeches and Writings of C. V. Devan Nair, 1959–1981*, Singapore: National Trades Union Congress, 1982; and Chan Heng Chee and Obaid ul Haq, eds, *S. Rajaratnam: The Prophetic and the Political*, Singapore, 1987. Only one biography has been attempted: Chan Heng Chee, *A Sensation of Independence: a Political Biography of David Marshall*, Singapore, 1984.

Since 1970, when Thomas J. Bellows completed his study on the PAP, others have been published, e.g. Chan Heng Chee, *The Dynamics of One Party Dominance: the PAP at the Grass Roots*, Singapore, 1976. More survey-like accounts of the dominant structures in Singapore are Raj K. Vasil,

Governing Singapore, Singapore, 1984 (based, in part, on interviews with Lee Kuan Yew and S. Rajaratnam); and Jon S. T. Quah, Chan Heng Chee and Seah Chee Meow, eds, *Government and Politics of Singapore*, Singapore, 1985.

For Brunei as well as the rest of Southeast Asia, the reader is referred to the annual essays of *Southeast Asian Affairs* (Singapore) and *Asian Survey*. These publications rank with those which publish materials on Southeast Asian political structures occasionally: *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* (Singapore), *Contemporary Southeast Asia* (Singapore), *Journal of Asian Studies* (Ann Arbor), *Modern Asian Studies* (Cambridge, Mass.).

One promising source of materials on political structures in Southeast Asia is the various publication series produced in the newer centres of regional studies in Australia and Southeast Asia. Examples include the Southeast Asian Studies Program of the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies in Singapore which produced three relevant books on Singapore (mentioned above), Malaysia and Thailand; the institute's Field Report Series (e.g. Lee Ting Hui, *The Communist Organization in Singapore: its Techniques of Manpower Mobilization and Management, 1948–66*, Singapore, 1976); and the Research Notes and Discussion Papers Series (e.g. R. William Liddle, *Cultural and Class Politics in New Order Indonesia*, Singapore, 1977; Ismail Kassim, *The Politics of Accommodation: an Analysis of the 1978 Malaysian General Election*, Singapore, 1978; Leo Suryadinata, *Political Parties and the 1982 General Election in Indonesia*, Singapore, 1982; Harold Crouch, *Malaysia's 1982 General Election*, Singapore, 1982; Albert D. Moscotti, *Burma's Constitution and Elections of 1974: A Source Book*, Singapore, 1977).

In Australia, the Centre of Southeast Asian Studies at Monash University has a series called Working Papers, e.g. Robert S. Newman, *Brahmin and Mandarin: a Comparison of the Cambodian and Vietnamese Revolutions* (1978) and Ivan Molloy, *The Conflicts in Mindanao. 'Whilst the Revolution Rolls on, the Jihad falters'* (1983). Another series is entitled the Monash Papers on Southeast Asia, e.g. Ken Ward, *The 1971 Election in Indonesia: an East Java Case Study* (1974). James Cook University of North Queensland also has an active Occasional Paper Series which has provided, for example, W. F. Wertheim, *Fissures in the Girdle of Emeralds* (1980); W. F. Wertheim, *Moslems in Indonesia: Majority with Minority Mentality* (1980); Ernst Utrecht, *The Military and the 1977 Election* (1980); R. Kreutzer, *The Madiun Affair: Hatta's Betrayal of Indonesia's First Social Revolution* (1981); Peter Burns, *The Decline of Freedom of Religion in Indonesia* (1985).

The Centre of South-East Asian Studies at the University of Kent at Canterbury also has an Occasional Paper series and a relevant publication is C. W. Watson, *State and Society in Indonesia: three papers* (1987).

Although many of the occasional papers appear to be preliminary expositions published in formats that are far from slick, they are useful accounts for those who wish to augment their knowledge on particular aspects.