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### BACKGROUND PAPER

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State of  
Democracies in  
Asia: Lessons from  
Indonesia,  
Philippines,  
Malaysia, Myanmar,  
Thailand and  
Cambodia

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Harukata Takenaka

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**Emerging  
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# State of Democracies in Asia: Lessons from Indonesia, Philippines, Malaysia, Myanmar, Thailand and Cambodia

*Harukata Takenaka*

## Abstract

In recent years, there is a growing concern about reduction in the number of democracies in the world and the worsening of the quality of governance in democratic countries.

In the light of such concern, this paper provides an assessment on the state of three different political regimes, namely, democratic, semi-democratic, and authoritarian regimes in Asia. Compared with the average of the world, the share of democratic regimes is smaller. In recent years, the share of semi-democratic regimes has expanded from the beginning of this century.

It also examines changes in the nature of political regimes in six Asian countries: Indonesia, Philippines, Malaysia, Myanmar, Thailand and Cambodia. The natures of these regimes have experienced major changes in the past 25 years. Some countries have made significant progress toward democracy from a long-term perspective. However, in recent years, political regimes in some countries have been unstable and there have been significant deteriorations in the quality of governance in some countries. The civil-military relationship is a major impediment for democratization in most of these countries. In addition, corruption and reduced leverage of the Western democratic countries have been behind the changes in the natures of the political regimes in some of the six countries.

Given the current state of political regimes in Asia, democratic countries and IFIs should continue to be attentive to the state of governance in the other countries and should implement policies which contribute to the expansion of democratic elements in the governance of various countries.

## I. Introduction

In recent years, many scholars have been showing concern about the reduction in the number of democracies in the world and the worsening of the quality of democratic governance in countries which can be still defined as

democracies.<sup>1</sup> Some scholars call this trend “democratic recession.”<sup>2</sup>

The debates center on the following two issues. The first is on whether the number of democratic regimes has gone down or not. Some scholars argue that the number has in fact gone down.<sup>3</sup> Other scholars contend that the claim that the number of democratic countries has gone down exaggerates the state of political regimes in the world.<sup>4</sup>

The second is on the quality of governance in traditional democracies. Concerns have grown regarding the erosion of democratic norms in countries where a democratic regime has been considered to be firmly established such as in the United States or United Kingdom. President Trump’s open denunciation of mass media and Prime Minister Johnson’s closure of the Parliament in September 2019 are such pieces of evidence. As regard to the second issue, it is hard to find arguments which dispel such a concern.

In the face of the rising concern about the state of democracy in the world, this paper provides an evaluation on the state of different political regimes in Asia. More concretely, this paper pursues two objectives. One is to give a concise outlook on the state of different political regimes, relying on the dataset provided by the Freedom House. This paper compares the state of different political regimes in Asia with the state of political regimes in the world. The other is to examine the state of political regimes in some countries in Asia. This paper focuses on six countries which have experienced significant changes in the nature of their political regimes from the mid-1990s. They are Indonesia, the Philippines, Myanmar, Malaysia,

1. Bermeo, Nancy. “On Democratic Backsliding.” *Journal of Democracy*, no. 1 (2016): 5-19. Diamond, Larry. “Facing Up to the Democratic Recession.” *Journal of Democracy*, no. 1 (2015): 141-55. Diamond, Larry. 2019. *Ill Winds*. New York: Penguin, 2019. Levitsky, Steven, and Daniel Ziblatt. 2018. *How Democracies Die*. New York: Crown, 2018. Schenkkan, Nate, and Sarah Repucci. “The Freedom House Survey for 2018: Democracy in Retreat.” *Journal of Democracy*, no. 2 (2019): 100-14.

2. Diamond, *Ill Winds*, 54.

3. For example, Diamond, “Facing Up to the Democratic Recession.”

4. For example, Levitsky, Steven, and Lucan Ahmad Way. “The Myth of Democratic Recession.” *Journal of Democracy*, no. 1 (2015): 45-58.

Thailand and Cambodia. The cases include democratization, seesawing between a democratic regime and a semi-democratic regime, a democratic breakdown and so on. To help understand changes in the nature of political regimes in the six countries, this paper refers to factors which have been considered relevant in causing regime changes in the previous research on political regimes.

So far, this paper has stated its objectives. This paper proceeds as follows. In the second section, it introduces definitions of different political regimes: a democratic regime, a semi-democratic regime, and an authoritarian regime.

In the third section, it highlights three sets of factors which are relevant in analyzing developments related to different political regimes. While there is almost no consensus on the factors which can explain changes in and stability of different political regimes this paper focuses on factors which existing literature considers important. The first group is relevant to democratization. The second relates to the weakening and breakdown of a democratic regime as well as a semi-democratic regime. The third is associated with the persistence of authoritarian regimes. Although this paper does not examine countries which have had stable political regimes, it introduces the third group as a reference.

In the fourth section, it provides an overview on the long-term trends of political regimes in the world as well as in Asia. Then, it reviews the state of governance in the aforementioned six countries, referring to factors introduced in the third section. Every case has unique causes. Yet, some factors this paper introduces capture some aspects of regime changes.

In the last section, it discusses the implications of the arguments so far made for the democratic countries and international financial institutions in the world.

## II. Definitions and Important Factors

### Definitions

This section introduces definitions of three political regimes. Democratic regimes, semi-democratic regimes, and authoritarian regimes. It begins with referring to a classic definition of democratic regimes by Robert Dahl. He gives the following eight conditions for democratic regimes:<sup>5</sup>

1. Freedom to form and join organizations;
2. Freedom of expression;
3. The right to vote;

4. Eligibility for public office;
5. The right of political leaders to compete for support;
6. The availability of alternative sources of information;
7. Free and fair elections;
8. Institutions for making government policies depend on votes and other expressions of preference.

Dahl emphasizes that the development of democratic regimes consists of two dimensions—the increase of public contestation and the expansion of participation. While these two aspects are important, there is another important element, the electoral control over political offices as pointed out by Philippe C. Schmitter and Terry Lynn Karl.<sup>6</sup> Even when fair and free competition is secured and the people have voting rights, if some political offices with significant power remain not accountable to the electorate, government cannot be responsive to the people.

Thus, this paper adopts the following conditions as the definition of democratic regimes:

1. Competition exists among political offices, and the people select political offices through free, fair, and regularly held elections. Civil rights that are necessary to make political competition and elections free and fair, such as freedom of expression and association and equality among the votes, are protected.
2. All effective political offices are held accountable, either directly or indirectly, to the electorate through elections. In other words, there are no “reserved domains,” and no political offices can project significant political power if they are not held accountable to the electorate, either directly or indirectly.
3. A significant portion of the population (normally all adults) has the right to participate in elections.

Semi-democratic regimes are political regimes which do not fully meet these conditions. This paper defines a semi-democratic regime as follows:

1. Even when competition among political offices exists, and elections are held regularly to select political offices, they are not fully free or fair. Civil rights that are necessary to make political competition and elections free and fair—such as freedoms of expression and association—are not sufficiently protected.
2. Not all effective political offices are held accountable to the electorate through elections. In other words, even when free and competitive

5. Dahl, Robert, *Polyarchy*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971.

6. Schmitter, Philippe C. and Terry Lynn Karl. “What Democracy Is. . . and Is Not.” *Journal of Democracy* no. 2 (1991): 75 - 88.

elections are regularly held, there remain “reserved domains”—political offices that are not accountable to the electorate that can project significant political power.

3. Only a portion of the population has the right to vote.

Lastly, political regimes which do not fulfill these three conditions at all are considered as authoritarian. Instead of creating own terminology of this paper, it relies on the definition which has been widely referred by Juan Linz. He defines the authoritarian regime as follows:

*“... political systems with limited, not responsible, political pluralism: without electorate and guiding ideology (but with distinctive mentalities); without intensive nor extensive political mobilization (except some points in their development); and in which a leader (or occasionally a small group) exercises power within formally ill-defined limits but actually quite predictable ones.”<sup>7</sup>*

In essence, in authoritarian regimes, political offices are not held accountable to the people through elections. Yet, there exists competition among different political groups.

### **What Causes Transitions to Democracies?**

There is extensive literature on democratization. This paper introduces some factors which are considered to trigger transitions from authoritarian regimes to democratic regime or semi-democratic regimes. It focuses on three important factors, which contribute to democratization: economic crises and defeat in war, split among the ruling elites, and external elements.<sup>8</sup>

Economic crises spread dissatisfaction with the regime and spread opposition against the regime. Military defeats cause weakening of the regime or direct downfall.<sup>9</sup> In democratic regimes, governments change when they make policy failures. There is a distinction between the fall of a government and the fall of a democratic regime. The change of a government prevents the democratic regime from collapsing. In authoritarian regimes, it is more difficult to change the government alone. The fate of the

government and the regime is often united. In particular, this is the case when it is a personalized regime or a military regime. Thus, a loss of support for a government often leads to the collapse of the regime as a whole.

The second is a division among ruling elites.<sup>10</sup> When political conflicts cannot be solved among themselves, some groups may seek to align with those outside the ruling coalitions of the regime. This opens the room for opposition groups to project influence and makes a regime transition a possibility. Of course, it is only an opportunity. The division does not necessarily lead to democratization. The groups who want to sustain the authoritarian regime may win the struggle.

Thirdly, external elements are important.<sup>11</sup> First is assistance to democratizing countries. The US, EU and other countries have provided assistance to countries which have begun democratizations. Second is economic sanctions. Again, Western countries have often imposed economic sanctions on authoritarian regimes for suppressing opposition or for carrying out unfair elections. Third is a connection with Western countries. Countries deeply connected suffer high costs from economic sanctions. Further, Western countries have easier time monitoring the behavior of the governments in these countries because of dense human interactions. Fourth is diffusion. Democratization in neighbor countries spreads norms of democracy and signals weakening of the authoritarian regimes. All of these contribute to democratization.

### **What Triggers Breakdown of Democratic and Semi-Democratic Regime?**

Some democracies and semi-democracies break down even after they have been established. Why do democratic and semi-democratic regimes collapse? There are three important factors: Legitimacy, semi-loyalty, and political institutions.

While there can be several definitions for legitimacy, as a minimum definition, Juan Linz has defined it as “the belief that in spite of shortcomings and failures, the existing political institutions are better than any others that might be established.”<sup>12</sup> Legitimacy of the democratic regime and semi-democratic regime can be undermined by such

7. Linz, Juan J. “An Authoritarian Regime: Spain.” In *Cleavages, Ideologies and Party Systems: Contributions to Comparative Political Sociology*, edited by Erik Allardt and Yrjö Littunen, Helsinki: Academic Bookstore, 1964, 297.

8. Huntington, Samuel Phillips. *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century*. Norman, Okl.: University of Oklahoma Press, 1993. O'Donnell, Schmitter and Whitehead point to military defeat as one important factor. O'Donnell, Guillermo, Philippe C. Schmitter, and Laurence Whitehead. *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule. Southern Europe*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986. Haggard and Kaufman consider economic crisis as a driving factor in some case. See Haggard, Stephan and Robert R. Kaufman. *Political Economy of Democratic Transitions*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995.

9. Huntington, *The Third Wave*, 54.

10. Brownlee, Jason. *Authoritarianism in an Age of Democratization*. Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2009, 40-41. O'Donnell, Guillermo, Philippe C. Schmitter, and Laurence Whitehead. *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule. Southern Europe*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986.

11. Huntington, *The Third Wave*, 84-86. Levitsky, Steven and Lucan Way, *Competitive Authoritarianism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010, 38-45.

12. Linz, Juan Crisis, Breakdown, and Reequilibration, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978, 16.

factors as poor economic performance and corruption. In democratic regimes, as this paper has already emphasized, it is normally possible for the citizens to differentiate regime performance from government performance. When citizens see some policy failures or political scandals, citizens usually perceive it as a problem of a particular government and not one of the democratic regime or the semi-democratic regime. Yet, when not much time has passed after a country has made a transition from an authoritarian to a democratic or a semi-democratic regime, the people may associate poor performances of a government with the regime performances and thus regime legitimacy may be undermined. Further, when a number of governments continue poor performance for a long time, regime legitimacy may be damaged as well.

Juan Linz advocated the concept of semi-loyalty. He defines it as “a willingness to encourage, tolerate, cover up, treat leniently, excuse, or justify challenges against the democratic regime.”<sup>13</sup> It is an act taken by those who have stake in maintaining the regime such as legislators or civilians. They often do so because they seek to enhance their own power or short-term interests without clearly realizing the long-term consequences of their actions. They do not necessarily intend to overthrow the regime nor do they wish to see its collapse.

Semi-loyalty of some political actors severely undermines the strength of the regime when there are attempts to bring down the regime. The issue of semi-loyalty is particularly important when we consider military involvement in politics. Often democratic regimes breakdown as a result of military intervention. Many scholars point out that the military intervenes when politicians go “to knock on the door of the barracks”.<sup>14</sup> Namely, the military does not intervene in politics when party politicians and civilians are united to support the democratic regimes or semi-democratic regimes. It is encouragement or expectations on the military by some legislators or civilians which bring the military into politics and in the end the democratic regime or the semi-democratic breaks down.

The third important factor is the political institution. Some political institutions are more prone to create political paralysis. This is especially true of the presidential system.<sup>15</sup> Presidential systems often lead to paralysis because of its two characteristics. One is the issue of dual legitimacy.

Namely, the two institutions, the executive and the legislature are elected directly from the people. When two offices are dominated by different political parties, then politics often enter gridlock. Second, the tenure of the president is often fixed and it is very hard to remove the president. While impeachment is often provided as a means to remove the president, it is a lengthy process which stagnates politics after all. The stagnation of politics often prompts some politicians to remove the president by extra-legal means. They sometimes encourage the military to intervene in politics to remove the president.

Carey and Shugart find that democratic regimes with presidents who have strong powers are more likely to breakdown.<sup>16</sup> Presidents with strong powers cause problems when they do not respect democratic practices and thus other political actors have stronger incentives to remove him/her even resorting to extra-constitutional means.

### *Why Do Authoritarian Regimes Persist?*

Today, many authoritarian regimes succeed in maintaining themselves. What are factors which contribute to the persistence of authoritarian regimes? It is possible to point out three important factors: economic development, political parties, and cost of making a collective movement. Let's start with economic development. For a long time, scholars have considered that economic development likely contributes to the development of democratic regimes. Yet, economic development is now considered to make it easier even for an authoritarian regime to sustain itself. Authoritarian regimes with high levels of economic development are less likely to collapse than less developed authoritarian regimes.<sup>17</sup> Authoritarian regimes which have achieved high level of economic development likely draw support from the people.

The second factor is the cohesion of political parties.<sup>18</sup> If an authoritarian regime can create a cohesive political party, the party helps the regime to sustain control. Political parties contribute to incorporating diverse interests in society and also encourage the regime elites to have a long-term horizon.<sup>19</sup> Also, the authoritarian regime can dis-

13. Linz, *Crisis, Breakdown, and Reequilibration* 32.

14. O'Donnell, Guillermo A. *Modernization and Bureaucratic-Authoritarianism*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973, 152. See also Stepan, Alfred. *Rethinking Military Politics*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988 128.

15. Linz, Juan. “Perils of Presidentialism,” *Journal of Democracy*, no 1(1990), 51-69

16. Shugart, Mathew and John Carey. *Presidents and Assemblies*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992: 154-158.

17. Using a data set created from countries between 1950 and 1990, Przeworski, Alvarez, Cheibub, and Limongi demonstrate that chances of authoritarian regime to collapse become lower as the level of economic development become higher. See Przeworski, Adam, Micael E. Alvarez, Jose Antonio Cheibub, and Fernando Limongi. *Democracy and Development: Political Institutions and Material Well-Being in the World, 1950-1990*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.

18. Brownlee, Jason. *Authoritarianism in an Age of Democratization*. Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2009. Geddes, Barbara, Joseph Wright, and Erica Frantz. *How Dictatorships Work: Power, Personalization, and Collapse*. Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2018.

19. Brownlee, 32-42.

tribute benefits to supporters, monitor citizens and gather information about local conditions through party organizations.<sup>20</sup> Also, organized parties can institutionalize the rule of change of leadership and can avoid personalization of political rule. When the authoritarian regime looks invincible, the organized party can also recruit and coopt talented people who dare not challenge the regime and become more inclined to climb the social ladder through promotions in the party.

The third factor is the cost and benefit of mobilization of opposition. There is one inherent problem which opposition movements have to be faced with in confronting an authoritarian regime. That is a collective action problem.<sup>21</sup> If a challenge against an authoritarian regime succeeds and a democratization takes place, those who did not take any part in opposition movements can receive benefits from the democratization as a democracy is a collective good. Thus, it becomes important for an authoritarian regime to raise prices of and reduce rewards from participating in the opposition. These include severe penalties, increased difficulties for communication among the opposition, and an increase in rewards for support of the regime.

### III. Overview

#### *Global Trend at a Glance*

In this section, this paper provides a more detailed picture on changes in various regimes in the world.<sup>22</sup> The number of democracies has expanded in the world since 1970s in what Samuel Huntington calls “the third wave of democratization,” starting with the collapse of the authoritarian regime in Portugal in 1974. Democratizations took place in other parts of Southern Europe. In the same year, Greece turned democracy with the collapse of the military authoritarian regime and then Spain became democratic with the general election in 1977 as well as the introduction of new constitution in 1978. Then, democratizations spread to South America in 1980s. For example, Argentina made a transition to a democracy in 1983 and Brazil in 1985. Then, with the collapse of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the end of cold war in early 1990s, many Eastern European countries made transitions to democracy from 1989.

It is possible to detect contagion effects in the three areas in Southern Europe, South America and Eastern

Europe as a democratization in one country affected developments in other countries. While it may be difficult to detect such contagion defects, a number of democratic countries expanded in Asia as well. Philippines and South Korea democratized in 1986 and 1987 respectively. Then, Taiwan became democratic in 1996 with the direct election of its president. In the aftermath of Asian Financial Crisis, Indonesia was democratized in 1999 following the collapse of the Suharto regime in 1998.

Then, how did overall number of different political regimes change since 1970s? The Freedom House offers such data. It evaluates the state of political rights and civil liberties of the countries in the world, providing scores between 1 and 7 to both elements.<sup>23</sup> Then, it takes the average of the two scores to provide the rating for each country. They classify countries with 1.0 to 2.5 as free, with 3.0 to 5.0 as partly free, and with 5.5 to 7.0 as not free nations. This paper treats free nations as almost equivalent of countries under democratic regimes, partly free nations as countries under semi-democratic regimes, and not free nations as countries under authoritarian regimes.

The research of Freedom House demonstrates that there was a dramatic shift in the proportion of political regimes in the world. In 1970s, countries under authoritarian regimes constituted the most dominant group in the world. In the first decade of the 21st century countries under democratic regime came to form the most numerous group in the world.

The number of democratic regimes was 40 in 1975, which accounted for 25.3% of the total countries in the world. It increased to 75, which shared 40.3% in 1992 after the end of the cold war. It reached 90 between 2005 and 2006, counting about 47% of the total countries in the world.

The number of authoritarian regimes declined from 65 to 45 between 1975 to 2006. The share dropped from 41.1% to 23.3%. The number of semi-democratic regimes increased from 53 to 58 in the same period. The share, on the contrary, lowered from 33.5% to 30.1%.

While democratic regimes continue to be the dominant group, the number plateaued from the end of the first decade of this century. Examples are China and Russia. In the heyday of the third wave and the euphoria of democratization, there were expectations that China would become democratic one day. In 1996, Henry Rowen expected China to be a democratic regime by 2015.<sup>24</sup> In

20. Geddes, Wright, and Frantz 129-136.

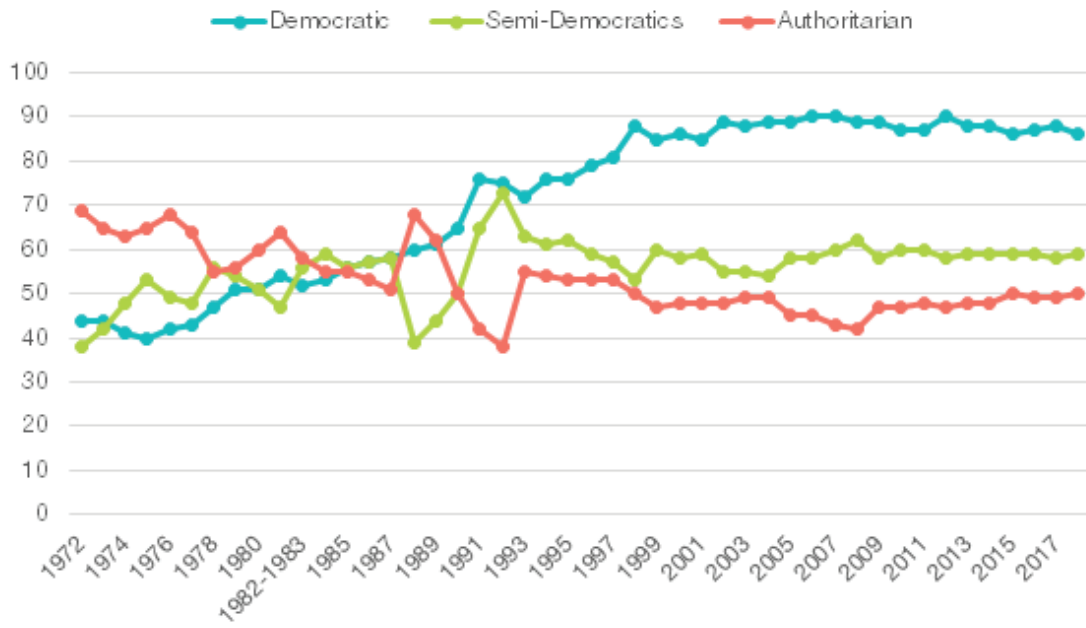
21. Lichbach, Mark Irving. *The Rebel's Dilemma*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1995: 15-34.

22. For more detailed overview of a general trend in the state of democratic and authoritarian regimes, see Diamond, *Ill Winds*, 41-58. I owe very much to his description while I have made distinctions among three different regimes instead of dichotomous distinctions.

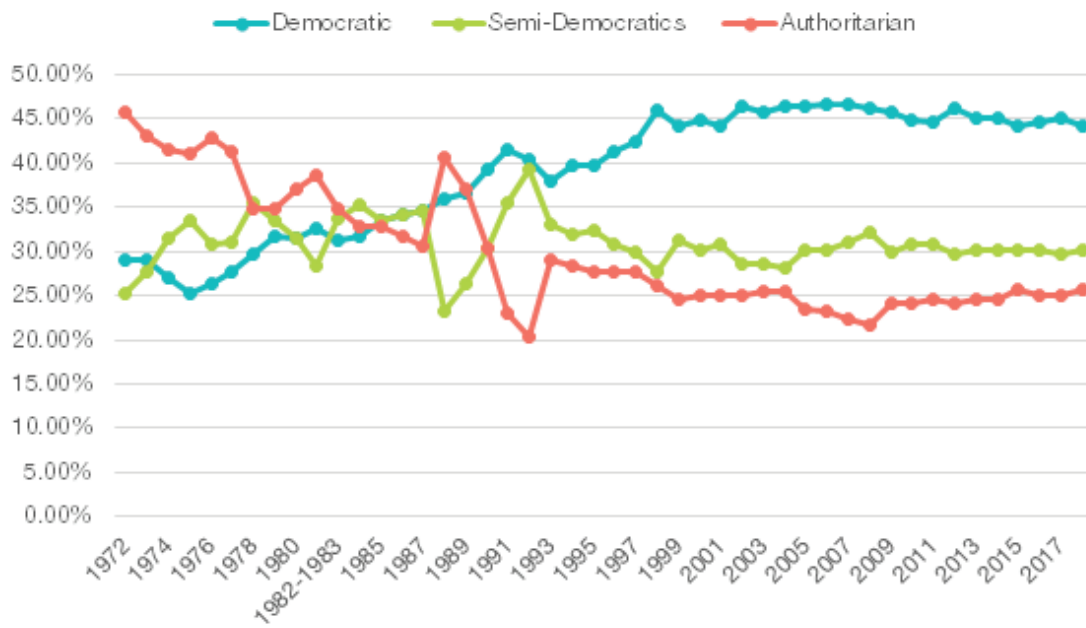
23. For the detailed “Methodology 2019.” <https://freedomhouse.org/report/methodology-freedom-world-2019>.

24. Rowen, Harry. “The Short March: China’s Road to Democracy,” *National Interest*, September 1, 1996.

**Figure 1: Number of Different Political Regimes in the World**



**Figure 2: Share of Different Political Regimes in the World**



1999, Michael McFaul evaluated Russia as an electoral democracy and expressed a hope for Russia to be a liberal democracy although with some reservations.<sup>25</sup> Yet, these two countries are not democratic regimes today. A stable authoritarian regime has been sustained in China. The Freedom House has never classified Russia as a free country. It, however, was semi-democratic until 2002. Yet, Russia then became an authoritarian country.

Far from witnessing a further growth of democratic regimes, we observe the decline in the number of democratic regimes and the growth in the number of authoritarian regimes in past a few years. In 2018, the number of democratic regimes declined to 86 while the share decreased to 44.1%. In the meantime, the number of authoritarian regimes has slightly increased to 50 in 2018, counting 25.6% of all countries. The number of and the share of countries under a semi-democratic regime has not changed much.

25. McFaul, Michael "Want Went Wrong in Russia," *Journal of Democracy* 2(1999). 4-18.



To give some examples of regime changes, Mexico changed its status from democracy to semi-democracy in 2011, as did Hungary and Serbia in 2018. Democracy broke down in Thailand in 2005 and it became an authoritarian regime in the following year.

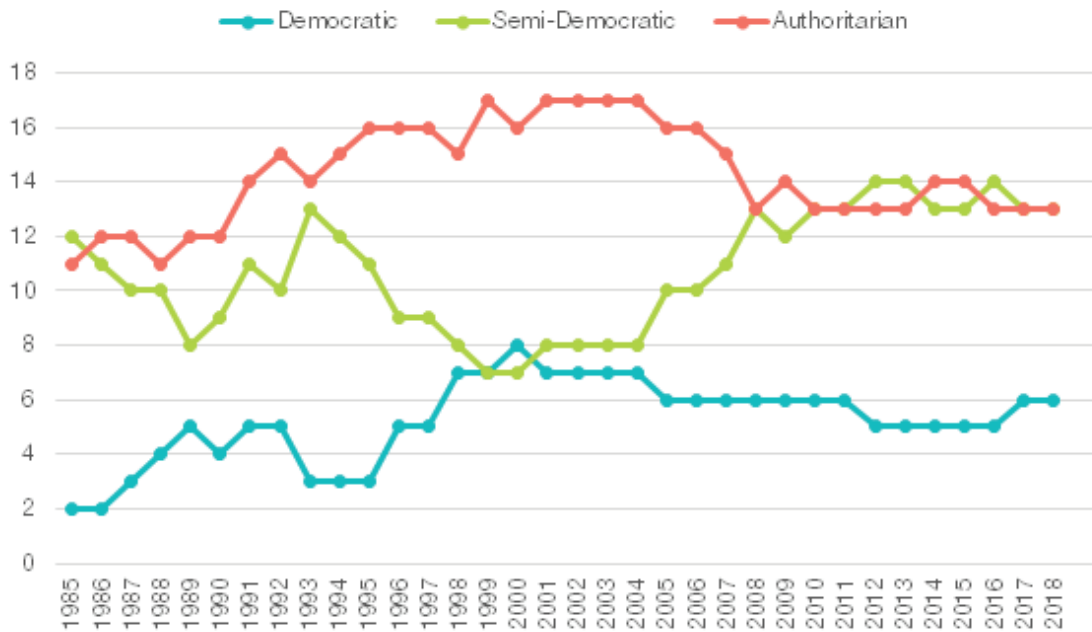
1980s Japan and India were the only democratic countries in Asia. Since 1990s, however, the number has expanded and Japan, India, South Korea, Mongolia and Taiwan have been solidly democratic. The growth in the number of democratic countries parallels the trend in the world.

Yet, the situation in Asia is different from the rest of the world. First, the ratio of democratic regimes is lower than the world. Today, it is still below 20%. Second, from the beginning of this century the number as well as the ratio of

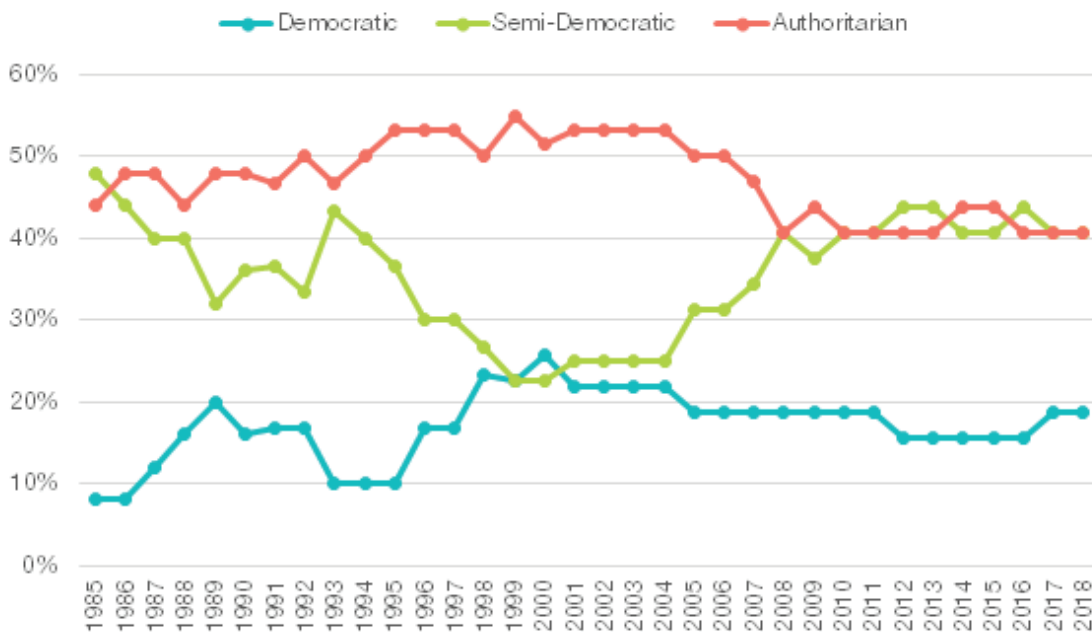
**Political Regimes in Asia**

Now, let's turn to situation in Asia. From 1980s, the number of democratic regimes has steadily grown. In mid

**Figure 3: Number of Different Political Regimes in Asia**



**Figure 4: Share of Different Political Regimes in Asia**



authoritarian regimes have gone down while the number as well as the ratio of semi-democratic regimes have expanded. Currently, the ratio of authoritarian regimes is about 40% and so is the ratio of semi-democratic regimes. This means democratic elements in governance have expanded over the long term.

**IV. Six Cases from Asia**

**Regime Changes**

The discussion in the previous does not mean, however, that there has been a steady increase in the number of democratic regimes and semi-democratic regimes. Some authoritarian and semi-democratic regimes have been very stable such as China and Singapore. Also, there have been some cases where democratic and semi-democratic regimes broke down. In this section, this paper introduces cases where countries have experienced dramatic changes in the nature of their political regimes in the past 25 years. There are several patterns.

The first is a case of democratization. This is the case of Indonesia. The second, similar to the first, is a case of semi-democratization in which an authoritarian regime becomes a semi-democratic regime. This applies to Myanmar.

The third is a case of an unstable political regime which goes back and forth between a democratic regime and a semi-democratic regime. This is the case of the Philippines.

The fourth is a case of an unstable semi-democratic regime, the case of Malaysia. The fifth is a case of democratic breakdown, namely, Thailand. The sixth is a case of a semi-democratic regime transformed into an authoritarian regime. This is the case of Cambodia.

For each case, this paper first evaluates the nature of the current regime. Second, it provides description on how the nature of political regimes changed in each country. Then, it refers to factors which can help us understand regime changes in each country in the lights of various

factors relevant to regime changes and regime stability introduced in the previous section.

**Indonesia: A Democratic Regime with Remaining Concerns**

**Nature of Regime**

Today, under the current political system Indonesia is a democratic regime. Indonesia adopts a separation of power system as a result of the four amendments of the 1945 constitution between 1999 and 2002.<sup>26</sup> The power is divided by the President, the DPR (Dewan Periacinal Rakiyat), the national assembly, as well as MPR (Majelis Perwakilan Rakiyat), the People’s Consultative Assembly and the supreme court as well as the constitutional court. The DPR is the legislature. The MPR (People’s Consultative Assembly) is a unique institution in Indonesia, which has power to amend the constitution and to remove the president. The MPR consists from the members of the DPR and the members of the DPD, Regional Representative Council. The DPD does not have power on the legislation. It has only power to propose legislations as regard to the relationship between the central government and provinces.

The president is directly elected from the people. The president and the vice president are elected as a pair and they have to be proposed by the political parties which have seats in the DPR or have received votes in the general election above certain threshold. The Constitution stipulates that the pair of the presidential and the vice-presidential candidates have to receive more than 50% of the votes as well as at least 20% of the votes from more than half of the provinces to win the election. The term is five years and re-election is possible just for the second term.

The president can be impeached. With the two third majority, the DPR can propose impeachment of the President to the MPR. The constitutional court has to examine if the proposal is appropriate and if it considers the proposal

26. Kawamura, Koichi. "Indonesia no Daitoryo sei [Presidential System of Indonesia]" in *Ajia ni okeru Daitoryo no Hikaku Seijigaku [Comparative Politics of Presidential System in Asia]*. Mineruba Shobo. Kyoto.2010, 135-175.

**Figure 5: Direction of Changes in Six Countries**

	Patterns of Changes
<b>Indonesia</b>	Authoritarian ---> Democratic
<b>Myanmar</b>	Authoritarian ---> Semi-Democratic
<b>Philippines</b>	Authoritarian ---> Democratic ---> Semi-Democratic ---> Democratic ---> Semi-Democratic
<b>Malaysia</b>	Semi-Democratic ---> ?
<b>Thailand</b>	Democratic ---> Authoritarian
<b>Cambodia</b>	Semi-Democratic ---> Authoritarian

appropriate, then the MPR takes a vote on the impeachment. When the two third who are present in MPR support the impeachment, the president will be impeached.

The president's power over the legislature is not strong. He/she does not have power to dissolve the DPR. He/she does not have power to veto legislations passed by DPR. Yet, the president can participate in the bill deliberation in the DPR and all bills have to receive approval from the President before being legislated. It is possible to consider that the president has virtual veto power.<sup>27</sup> The president has power to issue decree which has the same effect as a law. Yet, the decree has to be approved by the DPR.

### Developments

Indonesia, however, was an authoritarian regime under the two presidents, Sukarno and Suharto from 1950s. In 1998, the Suharto regime collapsed amid the economic crisis caused by the Asian financial crisis and mass protest against President Suharto. President Suharto resigned in May 1998 to be succeeded by the Vice President Habibbi.

President Habibbi announced in June 1998 that the general election and presidential election would be held respectively in May 1999 and December 1999.

The general election was conducted in June 1999. The number of seats of the National Assembly, the DPR, allocated to the military was reduced from 75 to 38 and 462 seats were elected under the proportional representation system. In the election, the PDI, Indonesian Democratic Party of Indonesia, led by Megawati Sukarnoputri, a daughter of former President Sukarno, came first. The Golkar Party, the ruling party under the former authoritarian regime, came second.

The presidential election was held in December 1999. The MPR elected, Abdurrahman Wahid, a moderate religious leader and a leader of the PKB, the National Awakening Party, as the new president. Megawati, who was considered to be the most promising presidential candidate until the election, decided to run for the vice president and was elected the vice president.

President Wahid only had a weak support base in the DPR as his National Awakening Party was the fourth largest in the DPR. At the onset of his administration, he accepted ministers from the major political parties. Yet, he soon replaced many ministers including ministers from the two largest parties with people who were personally close to him.<sup>28</sup> Such an appointment policy worsened his rela-

tionship with the political parties, which had dominated the DPR and the MPR. In addition, he was suspected of being involved in corruptions.<sup>29</sup>

The deterioration of his relationship with the DPR and the MPR led to his impeachment by the MPR in July 2001. As President Wahid was removed, Vice President Megawati became the new president.

Under the Megawati presidency, the democratization further progressed. The MPR amended the constitution in August 2002 so that the president would be directly elected from the people. Further, in 2003, the electoral reform eliminated seats allocated for military officers in the DPR. Thus, the political institutions became more democratic than before and transition to democracy had become complete.

In May 2004, the first truly democratic elections in terms of seat allocations was conducted. The Golkar came first while the PDI-P finished second. In the presidential election held between July and September 2004, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, a former military officer and former minister of coordinating politics, social and security of Indonesia in the Megawati administration, defeated the incumbent, President Megawati, in the run-off election.

Given that in 2004 all political offices came under control of the electorate, it is fair to say that Indonesia has finished transition to from an authoritarian regime to a democratic regime.

President Yudhoyono became re-elected in 2009 and served two full terms. Under the Yudhoyono administration, politics of Indonesia became stable. In the 2014 presidential election, Joko Widodo, Jokowi, the governor of Jakarta, was elected as the president with the support from the PDI-P in a competition against Prabowo Subianto. Prabowo, the former military commander and was once married to a daughter of President Suharto, run from the Gerindra Party and made a commitment to re-adopt the 1945 constitution, which was very authoritarian.<sup>30</sup> In April this year, President Joko Widodo competed once again with Prabowo, who again made the same commitment to return to the 1945 constitution<sup>31</sup>, and was re-elected.

It is fair to say that Indonesia maintains democracy today. Yet, there are two concerns. One is the rise of some conservative Islamic groups which are intolerant of other beliefs and the polarization between them and those

27. Kawamura, 145.

28. Kawamura, Koichi and Yuri Sato, "Nisennen no Indonesia [Indonesia in 2000]" in *Ajia Doko Nenpo* [Almanac of Current Affairs in Asia] 2001. Ajia Keizai Kenkyujo. Tokyo. 2002, 382-412. See also R William Liddle, "Indo-

nesia in 2000: A Shaky Start for Democracy" *Asian Survey* 41:1, 208-220.

29. Liddle "Indonesia in 2000." Michael S. Malley *Indonesia in 2001: Restore Stability in Jakarta* Asian Survey. 42:1, 124-132.

30. Aspiall, Edward and Mercus Mietzner, "Indonesian Politics in 2014: Democracy's Close Call." *Bulletin of Indonesian Economic Studies*, 50:3, 352-353.

31. *New York Times*, April 11, 2019.

who support diversity.<sup>32</sup> The governor election of Jakarta between February and April 2017 is one example. The conservative Islamic group raised the issue of religion in the election as the incumbent was a Christian. In the runoff, the incumbent lost the election. The other concern is a politician such as Prabowo can run on the platform of authoritarian nature in presidential elections.

### **Relevant Factors**

As has been pointed out by various scholars, the direct cause which led to the rise of opposition against the regime was the Asian financial crisis in 1997. As a result of the financial crisis in 1997 the GDP growth rate recorded negative 13% while the inflation rate skyrocketed to 58% because of depreciation of Indonesia rupiah. Such an economic condition first led to the spread of students protest against the regime and the movements expanded to include ordinary citizens.<sup>33</sup> The spread of the mass protests triggered the collapse of the regime.

The developments toward a full democracy might have involved personal attributes. Yet, there is one more factor we have to bear in mind. The Indonesian constitution is carefully designed to avoid the pitfalls of the presidential system. First, the electoral system prompts candidates to receive wider support from the citizens by making it necessary to win at least 20% of the votes in more than half of provinces. Second, the constitution is designed in such a way to avoid severe confrontation between the president and the national assembly. The president cannot exercise veto after the legislation. The constitution encourages the president to engage in the deliberation in the assembly.

### **Myanmar: From an Authoritarian Regime to a Semi-Democratic Regime**

#### **Nature of Regime**

Today, Myanmar is a semi-democratic regime. It adopts a presidential system with a bicameral legislature. The president is elected by the members of the legislature. As large as 330 members of the House of Representatives are elected from constituencies which are determined by townships and population.<sup>34</sup> Up to 110 seats at maximum

are allocated to military officers. For the upper house, at most 168 members are elected from provinces while up to 56 members can be appointed by the military. Recent elections have been fair and competitive. Yet, all political offices are not held accountable as one quarter of seats in the Lower House and the Upper House are reserved for the military officers.

### **Developments**

Myanmar was a military authoritarian regime for nearly 25 years as it was under the control of the military government since 1988. Democratization began in 2008. The military government announced in February 2008 that it would hold a national referendum to introduce a constitution and hold a general election by 2010. Accordingly, the military drafted the semi-democratic constitution. The constitution adopted the bicameral system. The upper house was designed to represent the provinces while the lower house was intended to represent the public. Yet, the two chambers were not fully democratic as the military held the right to appoint a quarter of the total members of both chambers.

The constitution stipulates that the president would be the head of the state and lead the government. The president is to be elected from the candidates by the members of both houses. One candidate is selected from the members of the upper house elected from the voters, one from the members of the lower house elected from the voters, and the third from the members appointed by the military. The military inserted a clause on the eligibility for the president stipulating a person, whose spouse or children are foreign nationals, an obvious regulation intended to prevent Aung San Suu Kyi, whose husband and children are British.

Further, the military provided itself with a veto to amend the constitution. This is because it is necessary to obtain more than 75% of the members of both chambers, providing the military the veto power to amend the constitution.

The military held a national referendum in May 2008 on the draft constitution. While the military government announced that more than 90% of the voters approved the draft, the national referendum was not free as the voting was carried out in such a way that the government could detect the voters who casted opposing votes.

The military government held the first national election in November 2010. The military created a pro-military party, the Union Solidarity and Development Party, for the election. On the other hand, the National Democratic League, led by Aung San Suu Kyi, boycotted the election. In the

32. Kawamura, Koichi and Miki Hamada, "Nisenyujunananan no Indoneshia [Indonesia in 2017]" in *Ajia Doko Nenpo [Almanac of Current Affairs in Asia] 2018* (Ajia Keizai Kenkyujo. Tokyo. 2018), 390-407. Edward, and Marcus Mietzner. "Southeast Asia's Troubling Elections: Nondemocratic Pluralism in Indonesia." *Journal of Democracy*, no. 4 (2019): 104-18.

33. Bird, Judith. "Indonesia in 1998" in *Asian Survey*, 39:1, 27-37. Kawamura, Kohichi "Senkyujuhachinen no Indoneshia [Indonesia in 1998]" in *Ajia Doko Nenpo [Almanac of Current Affairs in Asia] 1999*. Ajia Keizai Kenkyujo. Tokyo. 1999, 385-426.

34. "The Pyithus Hluttaw Electoral Law."

election, the USDP obtained more than 70% of the seats in each chamber. After the election, in February 2011, Thein Sein, who served as the prime minister under the military government, became the new president.

The NDL participated in the second general election held in November 2015 and won 255 seats in the Lower House and 135 seats in the Upper House, obtaining majority in both chambers. President Sein accepted the defeat and promised peaceful transfer of the power to NDL.

Htin Kyaw, a government former official and a close aide to Aung San Suu Kyi, became the president in March 2016. Aung San Suu Kyi herself became the State Counsellor of Myanmar and the foreign minister.

The new government faces two major problems. One is how to deal with the situation in which thousands of Rohingya people became refugee and fled from the Rakhine State to Bangladesh since August 2017. There existed discrimination against the Rohingya people in Myanmar for a long time. It is often considered that the suppression became intensified after the clash between the Rohingya militants and Myanmar security forces in the Rakhine State.<sup>35</sup> Yet, UNHCR reports that suppression had begun even before the clash.<sup>36</sup> Suppression intensified after the clash, destroying the villages to the point that “the possibility of the Rohingya returning to normal lives and livelihoods in the future in northern Rakhine almost impossible.”<sup>37</sup>

The other problem is continuing conflicts with minor ethnic groups in near the borders. The government keeps armistice only with half of the minority militants and confrontation with some militant groups such as Kachin Independence Army.

### **Relevant Factors**

It is fair to say that Myanmar began to make transitions to a semi-democratic regime in 2008 when the military announced in February 2008 to hold the national constitutional referendum. There were several factors which contributed to this transition.

One is an economic crisis. One event which prompted the military government hold the national referendum was the spread of mass protest against the government in September 2007.<sup>38</sup> The direct policy decision which triggered this protest was the raise of the price of fuel in August

by the government.<sup>39</sup> A more fundamental cause was the growing inflation, in particular, the increase in the price of rice and cooking oil, which were indispensable for ordinary people. The monthly rate of inflation exceeded more than 40% in April 2007.<sup>40</sup> This spread dissatisfactions among the people against the government.

There were additional factors which drove the government to initiate and complete the transition. They were external factors. There were of two kinds. One was the pressure from the Western countries. The government suppressed the protest in September 2007 within several days by force. In response, the United State, EU and other Western countries tightened economic sanctions.<sup>41</sup> The other was fear of overreliance on China, which also relates to sanctions by the western countries.<sup>42</sup> The Western countries had long imposed sanctions on Myanmar since 1990s and as a result Myanmar came to economically rely on China. The leaders came to be concerned about overreliance and came “to wish to reengage with the West.”<sup>43</sup>

### **Malaysia: Any Chances for Democratization from a Semi-Democratic Regime?**

#### **Nature of Regime**

Today, Malaysia is a semi-democratic regime. Malaysia is a constitutional monarchy with a parliamentary system. The prime minister selected from the Dewan Rakyat, the Lower House. It has the bicameral system, with Lower House superiority over the Dewan Negara, the Upper House. The Lower House has 222 members who are elected by the first past the post system. The Upper House has 70 members with 26 members elected from 13 provinces and 44 members appointed by the king.

General elections for the Lower House have to be held every five years. The prime minister can ask the King to solve the Lower House before the tenure of the Lower House expires. There has been competition among the political parties. Yet, the Barisan Nasional (BN), the National Front, consisting from the United Malay National Organization (UMNO), Malaysia Chinese Association (MCA) and Malaysian Indian Congress (MIC), controlled the government from 1957 to 2018, including the time of its predecessor, the Alliance Party. It could maintain its rule

35. For example, New York Times, August 25, 2017. Asahi Shimbun, August 26, 2017.

36. UNHCR, “Mission report of OHCHR rapid response mission to Cox’s Bazar, Bangladesh.”

37. UNHCR, “Mission report of OHCHR rapid response mission to Cox’s Bazar, Bangladesh,” 1.

38. Seekins, Donald. “Myanmar in 2007,” *Asian Survey* 49:1, 170.

39. Toshihiro Kudo, “Nisennananen no Myanma [Myanmar in 2007]” in *Ajia Doko Nenpo [Almanac of Current Affairs in Asia] 2008 (Ajia Keizai Kenkyujo, Tokyo, 2008)*, 419-420.

40. Kudo, “Nisennananen no Myanma [Myanmar in 2007]”, 424-425.

41. Kudo, “Nisennananen no Myanma [Myanmar in 2007]”, 428-429.

42. Zin, Min and Brian Joseph “The Opening in Bruma: The Democrats’ Opportunity,” *Journal of Democracy* 23:4, 107-111.

43. Zin and Joseph “The Opening in Bruma,” 111.

through the government control of mass media, prosecution of opposition leaders and unfair distribution of seats in favor of the BN.<sup>44</sup> Thus, elections have not been completely fair and free.

### Developments

In recent years, the BN power has gradually eroded. It first became clear in 2008. In the election of 2008, although the BN sustained majority in the Lower House, it could not obtain two third majority, which it used to secure over many years. There were two factors. For one, the BN lost seats because the UMNO could not retain support from the voters with Chinese and Indian origins, who came to be wary of the Bumiputra policies which the government favored native Malays and indigenous minorities.<sup>45</sup> The other is the urban middle class, which was against the corruption of the government, came to withdraw support from the BN.<sup>46</sup>

The opposition bonded under the Pakatan Rakyat (PR), the People's Alliance, consisting from different opposition political parties, succeeded in obtaining more than one third of the seats in this election. Former Deputy Anwar bin Ibrahim did lead the PR. He had served as the deputy prime minister under Prime Minister Mahathir but was ousted and arrested for the allegation of his personal orientations in 1990s. In 2008, he again had been arrested for his personal orientations and at the time of the election he was in the process of trials.

The result of the election weakened the power of the Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi. He stepped down from the president of UMNO in March 2009 and resigned from the prime minister's position in April. Najib Razak, then the deputy prime minister, became the successor and the prime minister in April 2009. He implemented some liberalization as his government had eliminated of the National Security Act (NSA) and replaced it with the Security Offenses (Security Measures) Act in 2012. Under the NSA it was possible for the government to imprison suspects without judicial process as long as two years. He also tried to modify the pro Bumiputra policies.

Yet, the PR continued to increase its support. In the 2013 general election, although Prime Minister Najib managed to obtain majority of the seats for the UMNO thanks

to the unequal distribution of seats, the PR obtained more votes than the UMNO.<sup>47</sup>

Although Prime Minister Najib maintained his position after the election, in July 2015, the political landscape drastically changed when a scandal involving the prime minister was reported.<sup>48</sup> Wall Street Journal reported that financial resources were channeled through from 1 Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB), a government managed investment fund, to the prime minister's personal bank account.<sup>49</sup> Protests spread requesting the resignation of the prime minister. Former Prime Minister Mahathir also began criticizing the prime minister. In February 2016 Mahathir left the UMNO and in September formed a new political party, the PPBM, the Malaysian United Indigenous Party.

In the meantime, after the general election of 2013, inner disputes took place among opposition parties, which had caused the reorganization of the PR into Pakatan Harapan (PH), the Alliance of Hope, PH in 2015.<sup>50</sup> It decided in January 2018 that they would present the Mahathir as the untied candidate for the prime minister in the next general election.

In April 2018, Prime Minister Najib banned activities of Mahathir's PPBM for one month and dissolved the Lower House. In May, the general election was held and the opposition parties composing PH succeeded in obtaining the majority. Following the election, Mahathir was appointed as the prime minister and the change of the government took place for the first time in more than 60 years.

This is a progress toward democracy yet it is not so clear if the democratization advances further in Malaysia as there are many political uncertainties. One is if Prime Minister Mahathir keeps the promise he had made to transfer his premiership to Anwar. In addition, if the PH government will terminate the mal practice of political prosecution is in question.

### Relevant Factors

It is possible to point out a factor common to the democratization in a recent change in Malaysian politics. It is the division among the political elites. Former Prime Minister Mahathir's dissent with the Prime Minister Najib

44. Freedom House, "Country Report Malaysia 2018"

<https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2018/malaysia>

45. Nakamura, Masashi. "Nisenhachinen no Malaishia [Malaysia in 2009]" in Ajia Doko Nenpo [Almanac of Current Affairs in Asia] 2009 (Ajia Keizai Kenkyujo. Tokyo. 2009), 311-340.

46. Case, William "Malaysia in 2013: A Beneighted Election Day," Asian Survey, 54:1, 56-63

47. Iga, Tsukara. "Nisenjyusannen no Malaishia [Malaysia in 2013]" in Ajia Doko Nenpo [Almanac of Current Affairs in Asia] 2014 (Ajia Keizai Kenkyujo. Tokyo. 2015), 363..

48. Kaneko, Nao. "Nisenhachinen no Malaishia [Malaysia in 2015]" in Ajia Doko Nenpo [Almanac of Current Affairs in Asia] 2015 (Ajia Keizai Kenkyujo. Tokyo. 2015), 350-374.

49. Wall Street Journal July 2, 2015. <https://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10130211234592774869404581083700187014570>

50. Kaneko. "Nisenhachinen no Malaishia [Malaysia in 2015], 355-356.

and his creation of a new party were decisive in causing the election of 2018.

Yet, Malaysian political development fits well with the traditional theory of the democratic development, which this paper has not fully addressed. The traditional literature takes a structural approach focusing on changes in society to explain democratization.<sup>51</sup> They usually argue that the economic development expands the middle class. The middle class then asks for more freedom and political rights and eventually achieves democratization.

The recent change in the government took place on the backbone of the long-term evolutionary changes in Malaysia as demonstrated by the gradual decline in the power of the BN. It reflects the long-term consequence of socio-economic development, in particular, the rise of the middle class in Malaysia and its alienation from the UMNO. Such development is more similar to the experiences of the Western countries, which have achieved democratic development over many years.

### ***Philippines: Between a Democratic Regime and a Semi-Democratic Regime***

#### ***Nature of Regime***

Today, the Philippines is a semi-democratic regime. Philippines is a presidential system with a bicameral system. The president is directly elected from the people. The most members of the Lower House are elected under the first past the post system. The Senators are elected through a multi-entry ballot system. President Duterte, though popularly elected, does not respect democratic rules. First, he allows abuses of power of the police without legal process against drug dealers and those who are addicted to drugs. Thus, human rights are abused. Second, he does not respect freedom of speech suppressing mass media which is critical of the president. Third, he does not respect the rule under the separation of power system. He discharged the Chief of Supreme Court through an extra constitutional mean in May 2018.

#### ***Developments***

After the Marcos regime had collapsed in 1987 and Corazon Aquino had become the president in 1987, the Philippines became democratic. Yet, since then democracy in the Philippines has been unstable. The process in which María Gloria Macaraeg Macapagal-Arroyo had

become the president in 2001 revealed the fragility of democracy in the Philippines.

Joseph Estrada, a movie star and the vice president of the previous government, won the presidential election and became the president in June 1998. In the fall of 2000, a scandal that President Estrada received profits from illegal gambles surfaced. In response, public movements requesting the resignation of President Estrada spread in the Philippines. The impeachment trial began against the president in November. As it had become clear that the trial might not be able to impeach the president in January 2001, movements against the president had intensified. Finally, President Estrada accepted that he would resign after important ministers had resigned and the military had demanded his resignation. The military's decision was decisive. This fact means that democratic institutions did not function to cause change in the government.

Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, then the vice president, became the new president in the same month. The rule under President Arroyo was unstable. She was re-elected in May 2004 but in June 2005 the electoral fraud, in which the President ordered illegal counting of votes for herself, came to be suspected, undermining the legitimacy of the administration. Again, public movements against the president spread and anti-president sentiment spread in the military as well. In July 2005, some leaders of the military requested the resignation. Further, in February 2006 coup d'état plan by the military was disclosed. In response, the President declared the state of emergency, arresting the opposition leaders without due process. President Arroyo managed to complete her tenure but it is hard to see the democratic norms were respected in her administration. Given the military involvement in the installation of the Arroyo presidency and the lack of civilian control over the military during her tenure, Philippines under her administration was semi-democratic.

Benigno Aquino III, a son of President Aquino, became the next president in June 2010. President Aquino reduced corruption and improved fiscal condition through the more effective collection of taxes. The Aquino administration was stable and it is fair to say that the political regime under this administration was democratic. Yet, the election of Rodrigo Duterte, the mayor of the Davao City, in May 2016 as the next president has made the Philippines semi-democratic.

President Duterte while intent on development on the Philippines through more development of infrastructure and on decentralization has begun so called "Drug War." He has been trying to eliminate drug dealers and reduce drug addicts. While the purpose may be appropriate, the

51. Lipset, Seymour Martin. *Political Man*. Doubleday. Garden City, N.Y. 1960. Moore, Barrington. *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*. Boston: Beacon Press. 1967.

means he uses is questionable when valued against democratic norms. He overtly disrespects due process and allows killing of drug dealers and drug addicts without taking appropriate legal procedures. As a result, allegedly more than 12000 people were killed without judicial process between July 2016 and December 2017.<sup>52</sup> Further, President Duterte gives threats to the freedom of speech and information as he increases pressures on the mass media critical against the mass media. For example, in February 2019, Maria Ressa, the CEO of Rappler, an internet media, which had been critical of the current administration, was arrested by the National Investigation Bureau for violating the cyber libel law and for defaming a business person. Also, the independence of the supreme court is now under threat under the current government. In May 2018, the supreme court judges decided to remove the chief justice who was critical of President Duterte, despite the fact that the constitution allows the chief justice could be only removed through impeachment by the Senate.

### **Relevant Factors**

It is possible to point out one underlying element behind the instability of the political regime in the Philippines. It is the nature of the presidency in the Philippines. It is hard to remove the president of the Philippines. Further, the Pilipino president has relatively strong power. It has veto power against the legislation. It has power to propose budget and can refuse changes which increase the size of the budget. Such a nature of the Philippine president likely made people less susceptible to unconstitutional pressure from the military on President Estrada to resign. The difficulties to remove the president also make presidents less constrained to resort to undemocratic practices as President Duterte. The Arroyo presidency and the Duterte presidency confirm the previous findings on the relationship between the nature of the presidency and stability of democratic regimes.

### **Thailand: Military Strikes Back with Authoritarian Regime**

#### **Nature of Regime**

Thailand has just adopted a new constitution in 2017. It is a constitutional monarchy. It adopts a bicameral system. The Senate consists from members selected from different social groups. The candidates are chosen from different groups in society and the members are elected by voting

among the candidates.<sup>53</sup> The members of the Lower House are elected the electoral system combining the first past the post system and the proportional representation system. The Senate has power to delay legislations approved by the Lower House. It adopts a parliamentary system as the Lower House has the power to nominate the prime minister. Yet, the prime minister does not have to be a member of the national assembly. Further, the constitution has interim clause stipulating the way to nominate the prime minister for first five years have the introduction of the constitution.<sup>54</sup> During the interim period, the prime minister has to be nominated by a caucus consisting from the members of the Lower House and the senators.

Prayuth Chan-ocha, the supreme commander of the military, made the coup d'état in 2014 and became the prime minister. His government finally held the general election in March 2019. The military government rigged the general election to assist the military backed political party, inflating the number of total votes casted, pressuring the voters to vote for the pro-military party, and invalidating many votes. After the election, Prime Minister Prayuth stayed in power with support from artificially forged majority in the Lower House and from the members of the Upper House, who in essence were appointed by the military government. Given the lack of accountability of the prime minister to the people, the military dominance in politics, and lack of protection of political rights in election, today, Thailand is an authoritarian regime.

### **Developments**

In this century, political regimes in Thailand have been very unstable. Thailand has experienced all three types of political regimes. Currently, Thailand is an authoritarian regime. It was democratic at the beginning of this century but the democratic regime broke down in 2006. Since then Thai regime has been seesawing between a military authoritarian regime and a semi-democratic regime.

In the middle of the financial crisis hit by the Asian Financial crisis, under the Chavalit Yongchaiyudh administration, the caucus of the Thai assembly adopted the new constitution of 1997. This was the most democratic constitution in Thai history. It had adopted a bicameral system with members of the two houses were elected from people. It adopted the parliamentary system and the Prime Minister

52. Freedom House. "Country Report Philippines 2018" <https://www.facebook.com/events/2527154824182421/>

53. Imaizumi, Shinya "Nisenjyunananen Kenpo no Gikai Senkyo Seido kara no Kento [Examination of the 2017 Constitution as regard to the assembly and the electoral system], IDE Skuea [IDE Square], February 2019, 1-6.

54. Imaizumi, Nisenjyunananen Kenpo no Gikai Senkyo Seido kara no Kento [Examination of the 2017 Constitution as regard to the assembly and the electoral system].



was nominated by the Lower House from the members of the Lower House.

The first general election under the new constitution was held in January 2001, the Thai Rak Thai Party led by Thaksin Sinawatra won 248 seats out of 500 seats in the Lower House. Thaksin, a former police officer and a billionaire leading an IT conglomerate, the Shin group, created the Thai Rak Thai Party in July 1998. He became the prime minister in February 2001. He introduced such policies as a system in which people can receive medical service with 30 baths, creating funds worth of million baths per villages and rescheduling debts payments for farmers. Such policies contributed to sustaining popularity for the cabinet. In the general election held in February 2005, the Thai Rak Thai Party obtained 377 seats.

While Prime Minister Thaksin was successful in keeping popularity, he was inclined not to respect democratic norms. For example, he tried to expand control over the media. Shortly after the inauguration of the Thaksin government in 2001, the reporters of ITV, a company in which the prime minister's family, held a large share, were fired for making disadvantageous report for the prime minister's party during the election.<sup>55</sup> He also sued a number of mass media companies criticizing the government.

In January 2006, when the prime minister's family sold the equity of the Shin corporation to a foreign company, the Temasek Holdings of Singapore, a question arose if he and his family evaded tax payments from profits his family had made.<sup>56</sup> In fact the prime minister's family carefully designed the transaction so that it could avoid paying taxes and skirt amount the restrictions on foreign investment in Thailand.<sup>57</sup> After the sale of the equity had become apparent, a strong opposition movement took place against the government. In response, Prime Minister Thaksin dissolved the Lower House and held a general election in April. Thai Rak Thai Party won 460 seats. Yet, the major opposition parties boycotted the election, undermining its legitimacy. The constitutional court judged the election unconstitutional in May and demanded the government to hold a general election again.

While politics paralyzed, the military made a coup d'état in September 2006. The military junta, the Council for Democratic Reform, installed a former supreme commander, Surayud Churanont, as the prime minister. The government drafted a new constitution in July 2007 and

the new constitution was approved by the national referendum in August.<sup>58</sup> Under the new constitution, the half of the senate had to be chosen from different groups in society through appointment by the selection committee consisting from judges of the constitutional court and supreme court as well as other officials. The members of the Lower House were to be elected under the Complete Serial System and Proportionate Representation System. The constitution adopted a parliamentary system with the prime minister nominated from the members of the Lower House.

In the meantime, the constitutional court disbanded the Thai Rak Thai Party under the pretext of making illegal campaigns in the general election of 2006 in May 2007.<sup>59</sup> The government held a general election in December 2007. The People's Power Party which was the successor party to the Thai Rak Thai Party won the election, obtaining 233 seats out of 480 total seats. In January 2008, the People's Power Party agreed with small political parties to form a coalition and its president, Samak Sundaravej became the prime minister.<sup>60</sup>

The PPP governments, however, were obstructed by the constitutional court. In September 2008, the constitutional court first sentenced Prime Minister Sundaravej guilty for appearing in a TV show for violating the constitutional clause which prohibited the prime minister undertaking a part time job.<sup>61</sup> After Prime Minister Samak had lost his position, Somchai Wongsawat, brother in law of Thaksin, became the prime minister and lead the coalition.<sup>62</sup> The constitutional court, however, banned the PPP as a whole in December 2008 for violating electoral regulations in the 2007 election.<sup>63</sup> After the collapse of the PPP government, Abhisit Vejjajiva, the head of the Democratic Party, which consisted from politicians opposed to Thaksin, became the prime minister of a coalition government.

In May 2011, Abhisit government dissolved the Lower House and called for a general election. Before the dissolution, the constitution was amended to re-introduce the electoral system combining the FPTP system and the PR system as the electoral system for the Lower House.<sup>64</sup> The general election was held in July. In the election, the Pheu

58. Aizawa, Nobuhiro and Keiichiro Oozumi. "Nisennananen no Tai [Thailand in 2007]" in *Ajia Doko Nenpo [Almanac of Current Affairs in Asia]* 2008, Ajia Keizai Kenkyujo. Tokyo. 2008, 272-273.

59. Aizawa and Oozumi, "Nisennananen no Tai [Thailand in 2007]" 270-271.

60. *Nihon Keizai Shimbun*, January 29, 2008.

61. *Nihon Keizai Shimbun*, September 10, 2008.

62. *Nihon Keizai Shimbun*, September 18, 2008.

63. *Nihon Keizai Shimbun*, December 3, 2008.

64. Imaizumi, Sinya. "Nisenjuichinen no Tai [Thailand in 2011]" in *Ajia Doko Nenpo [Almanac of Current Affairs in Asia]* 2012. Ajia Keizai Kenkyujo. Tokyo. 2012, 265-266.

55. *Asahi Shimbun*, November 18, 2003.

56. *The Nation (Thailand)*, January 24, 2006.

57. Aoki, Maki and Shinichi Shigetomi. "Nisenrokunen no Tai [Thailand in 2006]" in *Ajia Doko Nenpo [Almanac of Current Affairs in Asia]* 2007. Ajia Keizai Kenkyujo. Tokyo. 2007, 285-286.

Thai Party, the successor party to the People's Power Party, obtained 265 seats out of 500 seats. Yingluck Shinawatra, who was put on the top of the PR list and Thaksin's sister, became the prime minister and formed a coalition cabinet with other parties.

In 2013, the Yingluck government radicalized opposition movement against the cabinet as the Pheu Thai Party submitted the bill to pardon those who were sentenced guilty for getting involved in political activities.<sup>65</sup> During the process of the bill deliberation, the Pheu Thai Party amended the bill to expand the eligibility of the bill to political leaders including Thaksin. As a result, strong opposition movement occurred against the Yingluck government. The bill passed the Lower House but was rejected in the Senate in November.<sup>66</sup>

Then, in May 2014, Prime Minister Yingluck was expelled from her position by the constitutional court as it judged her appointment policy on the National Security Council was unconstitutional.<sup>67</sup> This decision was followed by another military coup d'état in the same month. The military imposed the martial law and then announced the dissolution of the Lower House as well as the suspension of the constitution of 2007 while setting up a military junta, National Council for Peace and Security. The commander in chief and the chairman of NCPS, Prayuth Chan-ocha, became the prime minister in August. The interim national assembly, the National Legislative Assembly (NLA), was set up with its members appointed by the NCPS. The interim constitution was issued in the same month and Prayuth obtained the national emergency prerogative with which he could issue any legal, administrative and judicial order.<sup>68</sup>

The drafting committee of the new constitution, appointed by the military junta, proposed a draft of the new constitution by March 2016. The national referendum approved the draft in August 2016. Although the request by the king Vajiralongkorn to revise the constitution to strengthen his discretion caused some delay,<sup>69</sup> the constitution came to be enforced in April 2017. In the meantime, the military government continued to suppress the Pheu Thai Party. In January 2015, the NLA impeached Yingluck and suspended her political activities for five years.<sup>70</sup>

The military government held a general election in March 2019. It officially announced the result of the election at the beginning of May. The PTP came first with 136 seats, while the Phalang Pracharat, a political party set up by the military junta in March 2018,<sup>71</sup> obtained the second largest seats, 115. The military rigged the election, through such means as vote buying,<sup>72</sup> making ballots invalid,<sup>73</sup> pressure on the voters to vote for the promilitary candidates<sup>74</sup> and inflating the total number of votes.<sup>75</sup> Prime Minister, Prayuth Chan-ocha, forged a support from the majority of the Lower House after the rigged election and from all members of the Senate and succeeded in maintaining power in June 2019.

### Relevant Factors

Thailand once experienced a democratic regime at the beginning of this century. Yet, it turned into a military authoritarian regime. There are two major factors which contributed to this transformation. They are corruption under the Thaksin government, which undermined the legitimacy of the democratic regime and semi-loyalty of some political actors which encouraged the military intervention into politics.

Besides the selling of the equity of the Shin Corps. Prime Minister Thaksin was suspected of being involved in a number of corruptions. Other scandals include his evasion of proper report of his assets and favoring his company in making assistance to Myanmar.<sup>76</sup> Such corruption deprived legitimacy from the regime.

Further, semi-loyalty of the intellectuals and political actors, who justified or even encouraged military intervention, contributed to the breakdown of a democratic regime and the rise of an authoritarian regime. Following the coup d'état in 2006, public opinion polls demonstrated about 80% of the Bangkok citizens welcomed the coup.<sup>77</sup> A Thai newspaper published a number of opinions from the readers supporting the coup.<sup>78</sup> Further, a political editor criticized views of the "Westerners," who were critical of the coup d'état, and was very tolerant of the military intervention, condemning the corruption of the Thaksin administration.<sup>79</sup>

65. For this bill, see Aizawa, Nobuhiro. "Nisenjyusannen no Tai [Thailand in 2013]" in *Ajia Doko Nenpo* [Almanac of Current Affairs in Asia] 2014. *Ajia Keizai Kenkyujo*. Tokyo. 2014, 306-307..

66. *Nihon Keizai Shimbun*, November 12, 2013.

67. Okabe-Aoki, Maki. "Nisenjyuyonen no Tai [Thailand in 2014]" in *Ajia Doko Nenpo* [Almanac of Current Affairs in Asia] 2014. *Ajia Keizai Kenkyujo*. Tokyo. 2015, 328-329.

68. Aoki, Maki and Shinya Imaizumi. "Nisenjyuhachinen no Tai [Thailand in 2018]" in *Ajia Doko Nenpo* [Almanac of Current Affairs in Asia] 2018. *Ajia Keizai Kenkyujo*. Tokyo. 2019, 284-285.

69. *Nihon Keizai Shimbun*, April 7, 2017.

70. *Nihon Keizai Shimbun*, January 1, 2015.

71. Okabe-Aoki, Maki. "Nisenjyuyonen no Tai [Thailand in 2014]" in *Ajia Doko Nenpo* [Almanac of Current Affairs in Asia] 2014. *Ajia Keizai Kenkyujo*. Tokyo. 2015, 328-329.

72. *Independent*, May 10, 2019.

73. *The Guardian*, March 25, 2019.

74. *The Guardian*, May 8, 2019, *New York Times*, May 9, 2019.

75. *Nihon Keizai Shimbun*, April 9, 2019.

76. *Nihon Keizai Shimbun*, September 22, 2004.

77. Aoki, Maki. "Nisenrokunen no Tai [Thailand in 2006]" in *Ajia Doko Nenpo* [Almanac of Current Affairs in Asia] 2006. *Ajia Keizai Kenkyujo*. Tokyo. 2007, 281-282.

78. *Nation*, September 23, 2006.

79. *Nation*, October 4, 2006.

In case of the more recent coup d'état of 2014, Suthep Tahgsuban, who lead the opposition movement against Thaksin and his supporters as a leader of People's Democratic Reform Committee, seduced the military to intervene into politics. In December 2013, Suthep asked Prayut to make a decision on which side the military should take.<sup>80</sup> In June, he admitted that he had been "consulting" Prayuth how to topple Thaksin regime.<sup>81</sup>

### ***Cambodia: From a Semi-Democratic Regime to an Authoritarian Regime***

#### ***Nature of Regime***

Today, Cambodia is also an authoritarian regime. Under the current 1993 constitution, Cambodia adopts a constitutional monarchy with a parliamentary system. The person who commands support in the national assembly becomes the prime minister and forms the cabinet. The cabinet rests on the confidence of the national assembly. It adopts a bicameral system consisting from the national assembly and the upper house. The national assembly is superior to the upper house. Although it holds elections, election no longer is free and fair because of political prosecution of opposition leaders as well as banning of a major opposition party, the Cambodia Rescue Party in December 2017. After the election of 2018, the ruling party, Cambodia People's Party, has installed one party dictatorship, holding all seats in the Lower House.

#### ***Developments***

Cambodia experienced a long civil war following the collapse of the Pol Pot regime in 1979 between the Kampuchea People's Revolutionary Party government supported by Vietnam and the Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea (CGDK). The CGDK consisted from three political groups, the group lead by Pol Pot, the one headed by Son Sann, a former prime minister, and FUNCINPEC (the National United Front for an Independent, Neutral, Peaceful and Cooperative Cambodia) under Prince Sihanouk. In October 1991, the four parties signed the peace agreement in Paris. They agreed to the cease fire, to delegate various administrative functions to the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) to set up the constitutional assembly and hold a general election under multi-party system to elect the members

for the constitutional assembly. The UN security council decided to set up the UNTAC in February 1992.

The UNTAC organized a general election in May 1993. In the general election, FUNCINPEC obtained the largest number of seats, winning 58 seats and Cambodia People's Party (CPP), the successor party of the People's Revolutionary Party came second, acquiring 51 seats. The CPP initially refused to accept the result of the election, implicating grim prospects of political actors accepting democratic norms.

In the end FUNCINPEC and PP agreed to set up a coalition government with two prime ministers. Ranarit, who came to lead the FUNCINPEC from 1988, became the first prime minister. Hun Sen, who had been the prime minister of the KPRP (and later the CPP) government since 1983, became the second prime minister.

The constitutional assembly approved the new constitution in September 1993. The constitution adopted a constitutional monarchy and Prince Sihanouk came back to the throne. Cambodia became the Kingdom of Cambodia.

Inner disputes in the government between the FUNCINPEC and CPP grew, however, and led to the military confrontation between the two groups in July 1997. The Second Prime Minister Hun Sen ordered the troops under the CPP attack military installments and officers under the FUNCINPEC.<sup>82</sup> The CPP troops defeated the troops under the FUNCINPEC. Prime Minister Hun Sen disclosed that he would seek the resignation of the First Prime Minister Ranarit, who was abroad at the time. In effect, Prime Minister Hun Sen succeeded in expelling Ranarit as FUNCINPEC agreed to install Ung Huot, then the foreign minister, as the first minister. In August, Ung Huot was elected as the first prime minister in the national assembly. In the meantime, the military court issued the order to arrest Ranarit.<sup>83</sup>

In July 1998, the general election was held and the CPP obtained 64 seats while FUNCINPEC won 43 seats.<sup>84</sup> Before the election in face of international pressure Prime Minister Hun Sen consented to provision of a pardon to Ranarit, who was sentenced guilty in the military court, so that he could participate in the election.<sup>85</sup> After the election, in November, the CPP and FUNCINPEC agreed to set up a coalition government. Hun Sen became the sole

82. Nihon Keizai Shimbun, July 6, 1997. Sorpong Peou, "Cambodia in 1997: Back to Square One?" *Asian Survey* 38:1, 69-74.

83. Asahi Shimbun, August 12, 1997.

84. Amakawa, Naoko. "Senkyujuhachinen no Kanbojia [Cambodia in 1998]" in *Ajia Doko Nenpo [Almanac of Current Affairs in Asia]* 1999. Ajia Keizai Kenkyujo. Tokyo. 1999, 227.

85. Amakawa, "Senkyujuhachine no Kanbojia", 226.

80. Okabe-Aoki, Maki "Nisenjuyonen no Tai [Thailand in 2014]" in *Ajia Doko Nenpo [Almanac of Current Affairs in Asia]* 2015. Ajia Keizai Kenkyujo. Tokyo. 2015, 329.

81. Bangkok Post, June 23, 2014.

prime minister while Ranarit became the chairperson of the National Assembly.

In March 1999, the CPP and FUNCINPEC amended the constitution to install the Upper House. The introduction of the Upper House was one of the conditions agreed by the two parties to form the government. The Upper House would consist from 61 members. Most members of the Upper House would be selected through indirect election. Chia Shim, the head of the CPP, became the president of the Upper House.

Since then, the CPP gradually consolidated political power until the 2008 election. In the general election of July 2003, The CPP obtained 73 seats.<sup>86</sup> In the general election of July 2008, it expanded its seats to 90.<sup>87</sup>

Dominance of the CPP was not the result of fair competition because the CPP often threatened members of other parties through political prosecution. For example, Prime Minister Hun Sen sued Sam Raincy, the leader of an opposition party, Sam Raincy Party for undermining his reputation and Raincy was sentenced guilty in December 2005.<sup>88</sup>

In March 2006, the national assembly amended the constitution to lower the seats necessary for the cabinet to maintain confidence from two thirds majority to a simple majority. This put Prime Minister Hun Sen even in a stronger position vis-a-vis other parties.

The political dominance of the CCP waned in the general election of 2013. In October 2012, Sam Raincy Party merged with the Human Rights Party created by Kem Sohka, a human right activist, to form the Cambodia National Rescue Party(CNRP). In the election, the CNRP performed well, obtaining 55 seats against the CPP, which could win 68 seats. Thanks to the amended constitution, the CPP could form the one-party government for the first time.<sup>89</sup>

Being threatened, the CPP government suppression against the opposition expanded after the election. In November 2015, the order to arrest Sam Raincy was issued and his status as a representative was made void by

the national assembly dominated by the CPP.<sup>90</sup> In February 2017, the national assembly amended the law on political parties to prohibit a person who has committed serious crimes and to allow the ministry of interior to petition the supreme court to dissolve the political party, which violated the law on political parties.<sup>91</sup> In February, Sam Rainsy resigned from the position of the CNRP president after the bill was submitted, to prevent the dissolution of his party.

The CPP, nonetheless, achieved dissolution of the CNRP by arresting the new leader, Kem Sohka, under the allegation of the national treason.<sup>92</sup> The supreme court ordered the dissolution of the CNRP and prohibited CNRP politicians to be engaged in political activities for 5 years in November 2017.<sup>93</sup>

In the general election held in July 2018, the CPP obtained all seats in the national assembly, establishing one party dictatorship.

### **Relevant Factors**

In the case of Cambodia, the gradual transformation of the regime into an authoritarian regime may be attributed to Prime Minister Hun Sen's personal management. He first cracked down FUCINPEC by force and then gradually deprived power away from opposition parties through political prosecutions and obstructing their political activities.

Still, it is possible to relate the political developments to factors commonly emphasized in the democratization literature, namely, external factors. After the end of the civil war, external influences from the West were enormous. The control of the UNTAC contributed to holding a fair and free election in 1993 under which FUCINPEC managed to win. The assistance from Western countries likely restrained the Fun Sen government from going too extreme in suppressing opposition parties. Yet, the West came to lose leverage over the Fun Sen government as the Fun Sen government came to be able to rely more on China for financial resources. This can be a major factor the regime has become more authoritarian than ever by fully banning a major opposition party, the CSRP.

86. Amakawa, Naoko. "Nisensannen no Kanbojia [Cambodia in 2003]" in *Ajia Doko Nenpo [Almanac of Current Affairs in Asia] 2003*. Ajia Keizai Kenkyujo. Tokyo. 2004, 235.

87. Amakawa, Naoko. "Nisenhachinen no Kanbojia [Cambodia in 2008]" in *Ajia Doko Nenpo [Almanac of Current Affairs in Asia] 2008*. Ajia Keizai Kenkyujo. Tokyo. 2009, 214-232.

88. Naoko Amakawa "Nisenyononen no Kanbojia [Cambodia in 2004]" in *Ajia Doko Nenpo [Almanac of Current Affairs in Asia] 2004*. Ajia Keizai Kenkyujo. Tokyo. 2005, 255. Amakawa, Naoko. "Nisengonen no Kanbojia [Cambodia in 2005]" in *Ajia Doko Nenpo [Almanac of Current Affairs in Asia] 2004*. Ajia Keizai Kenkyujo. Tokyo. 2006, 261.

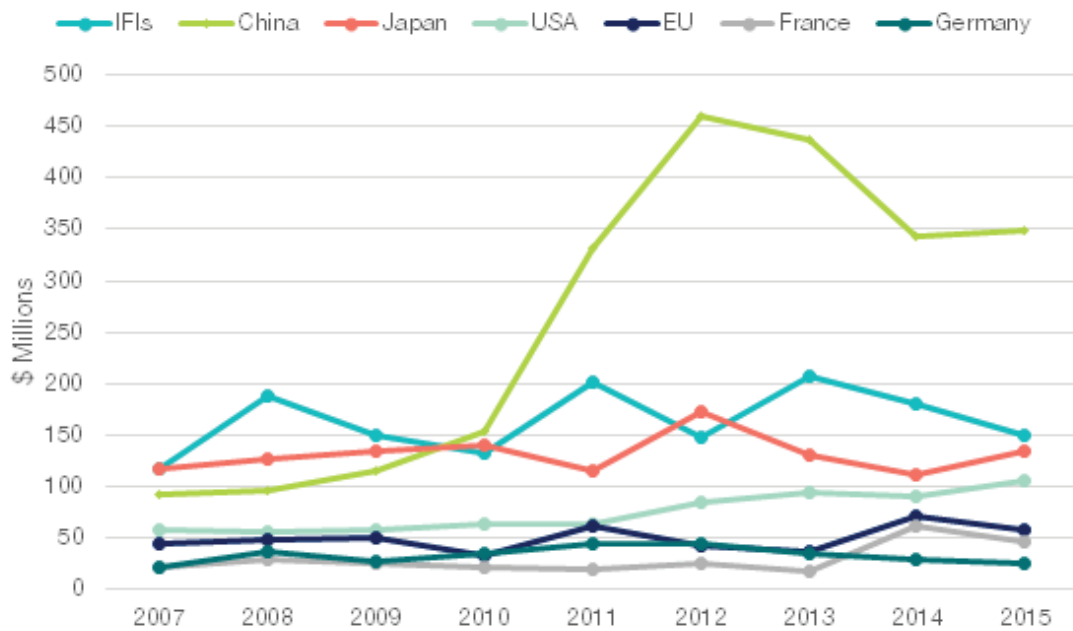
89. Hatshukano, Naomi. "Nisenjyusannen no Kanbojia [Cambodia in 2013]" in *Ajia Doko Nenpo [Almanac of Current Affairs in Asia] 2013*. Ajia Keizai Kenkyujo. Tokyo. 2014, 260.

90. Hatshukano, Naomi. "Nisenjyugonen no Kanbojia [Cambodia in 2015]" in *Ajia Doko Nenpo [Almanac of Current Affairs in Asia] 2015*. Ajia Keizai Kenkyujo. Tokyo. 2016, 260.

91. Hatshukano, Naomi "Nisenjyugonen no Kanbojia [Cambodia in 2017]" in *Ajia Doko Nenpo [Almanac of Current Affairs in Asia] 2017*. Ajia Keizai Kenkyujo. Tokyo. 2018, 248.

92. Hatshukano "Nisenjyugonen no Kanbojia [Cambodia in 2017]", 248.

93. Ibid.

**Figure 6: Cambodia, Assistance**

## V. Implications on the Financial Community

### Three Important Elements

The discussions in this paper shed light on some aspects which are important in examining changes of the nature of political regimes in some Asian countries. They are the state of the civil-military relationship, the role of corruption and the role of external factors.

The previous discussions reaffirm the political significance of the civil-military relationship in some Asian countries. This is not really a causal factor of changes. In fact, it is the other side of the same phenomena, regime transitions. On one side, we see changes in the nature of political regimes in some of these countries. On the other side, we observe changes in the civil-military relationship. The change in the civil-military relationship affected the fate and nature of political regimes in the Philippines, Myanmar and Thailand. So far, Indonesian politics have been relatively secure from intervention of the military, we cannot be certain if the civilian supremacy over the military is really firmly established in Indonesia. The future of many democracies in Asia rests on whether civilians can constrain the military and take political power away from them.

The second important factor is corruption. Many regime changes which we have seen in this paper involve political corruption. People's distaste for corruption can work both ways. It can weaken an authoritarian regime. Yet, more importantly, it deprives power away from the newly born democratic regimes. This applies to the Estrada Presidency and the Thaksin Administration. When citizens are

so fed up with government corruption, they tolerate military intervention and do not make strong opposition. The implication is that the elimination of corruption, in newly born democracies and semi-democracies, is likely to sustain these regimes.

The third element is the role of external factors. Among the six cases, Myanmar and Cambodia are cases in which external factors have been very relevant. The increased sanctions after the mass protest in 2007 in Myanmar prompted the military regime to speed up democratic reforms. The military did not obstruct elections in 2010 and 2015 and accepted the transfer of power to the NLD. Of course, the military could feel secure because they still can keep prerogatives under a new regime. Yet, fear of too much dependence on one country in the field of economy was a major factor in the military's commitment to democratize the country to a semi-democratic regime.

The opposite case is Cambodia. As we have just seen, gradual decline in the leverage from democratic countries which tend to relate types of political regime to the provision of financial assistance was a major factor in Cambodia's authoritarian regime becoming even more despotic in recent years.

### Role of Democratic Countries and International Financial Institutions

So, what can countries interested in endurance of democratic regimes do?

Democratic countries have been losing influence over the fate of political regimes in the emerging countries for

two reasons. First, democratic countries face too many problems at home and have reduced political capital to spend abroad. The problems include expansion of inequality because of globalization and technological innovations, polarization in domestic politics, deflation as well as slow growth, negative interest rates, demographic change, climate changes, Brexit and so on.

So, some countries like the United States, which have been interested in the nature of political regimes in different parts of the world, have reduced their interest in this problem. This is very much evident in how democratic countries have responded to the breakdown of the democratic regime in Thailand. A military commander made a coup d'état in 2014 to come to the position of the prime minister and holds on to power without choosing means. Democratic countries demonstrated almost no interest in the fate of the democratic regime in Thailand.

The other reason is the West has come to lose economic leverage over authoritarian regimes because they have ceased to be the dominant sources of financial resources. Thus, just as Cambodia did no longer have to worry about sanctions, authoritarian leaders in other countries also do not have to be afraid of sanctions.

This, does not mean, however, that democratic countries have completely lost leverage. The democratic countries should still be aware of their leverage. The financial resources and economic opportunities they offer are enormous. There are several ways. First is the use of sanctions against countries with authoritarian practices. If authoritarian regimes or semi-democratic regimes resort to suppression of opposition or violate the political rights of individuals, democratic countries can impose or at least express the possibility of imposing sanctions on these regimes.

Of course, this paper is aware of the existence of strong reservations against being too coercive against sovereign countries through sanctions. There are other ways.

One is a direct approach of providing incentives to authoritarian and semi-democratic regimes to increase democratic elements in their governance. It is possible to design systems of providing financial resources linking the disbursement of financial resources to the political performances of the recipient countries. Under this system when recipient countries improve their political conditions such as the state of political competition and political freedom, the donor countries provide more assistance. In essence, the idea is the same as the philosophy behind the creation of the Millennium Challenge Corporation by the US government in 2004.

The other is an indirect approach. Improving the state of political competition and expanding control of voters over political offices is a huge challenge. It is possible to have a narrower target. Namely, the elimination and the reduction of corruption. As this paper has demonstrated corruption is a major source of undermining legitimacy of the democratic regime. It should be possible for donor countries to give more considerations to the state of corruption in the recipient countries.

Democratic countries should also be more aware of the financial resources provided by the international financial institutions. They can also be sources of leverage on authoritarian rulers. Democratic countries, who are large shareholders of many IFIs, should let IFIs be more attentive to political conditions of the recipient countries and have IFIs provide larger considerations to possible exercise of economic sanctions, introduction of incentives to improve state of political conditions and efforts to eliminate corruption.

Lastly, in the case of IFIs, IFIs should give more deliberations to the assistance policies of the recipient countries. Some countries, which receive financial resources from IFIs, at the same time provide assistances to other countries. IFIs should be more attentive if the recipient countries are providing financial resources to authoritarian regimes, contributing to endurance of authoritarian rule, or not. If a recipient country is in fact providing assistance to countries with dictators, this means that IFIs indirectly provide assistance to despotic regimes. IFIs should consider being more reserved as regard to providing financial resources to countries who give monetary resources to despotic regimes.

One related problem is that democratic countries do not have enough information about the amount of financial resources which emerging countries, regardless of types of political regime, receive from other countries. IFIs, more specifically, the IMF or IBRD, should collect information from departments of finance of the member countries on the amount of financial resources which each country receives.

What this paper suggests in this section may be too ambitious to the readers. It may remind the reader of the phrase "it is easier than said done." Certainly, a Hobbesian situation exists in some countries, where various conditions simply do not allow governance under democratic regimes. Yet, even if doing is difficult, we should always explore possible means to secure democratic governance where there seem to exist enough conditions to have governance under democratic regimes.



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Washington, DC 20037, USA. Tel:(1) 202 393 6663 Fax: (1) 202 393 6556

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Email: [info@emergingmarketsforum.org](mailto:info@emergingmarketsforum.org)

