

Dividing Success and Failure: The Critical Role of the Military and Opposition Political Parties in Democratic Transition

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the factors that contribute to successful democratic transitions in divided societies through a comparative analysis of four cases: two successful transitions (South Africa and Indonesia) and two failed transitions (Libya and Sudan). The thesis was motivated by Myanmar's failure of democratization, which has been hindered by military dominance, ethnic tensions, and a fragmented opposition. The study investigates the roles of military support, opposition political parties, civil society, and constitution-making in shaping democratic outcomes. Using a Structured Focused Comparison (SFC) methodology, the findings reveal that military and opposition involvement are crucial for a successful transition, while civil society and inclusive constitution-making, though important, are not decisive. Lessons from South Africa and Indonesia suggest that Myanmar's path to democratization requires engaging the military as a key political actor and fostering opposition unity.

DECLARATION

I certify that this thesis:

1. does not incorporate without acknowledgment any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any university
2. and the research within will not be submitted for any other future degree or diploma without the permission of Flinders University; and
3. to the best of my knowledge and belief, does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text.

Signed..........

Date.....March 20, 2025.....

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Finally, I extend my heartfelt thanks to all individuals who have directly or indirectly supported me throughout my studies and the completion of this thesis. Your encouragement and assistance have been instrumental in this journey.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

The thesis aims to understand what factors drive a successful democratic transition by examining four international cases and considering the implications for Myanmar's democratic transition. This research is motivated by the current failure of Myanmar's democratic transition, with challenges that have persisted for more than a decade. In order to understand the challenges and Myanmar's potential democratization, the research study investigates four countries in a comparative case study. Two successful cases of democratic transition were selected: South Africa and Indonesia. Two additional cases of failed democratic transition were chosen for investigation: Libya and Sudan. By drawing lessons from these cases, the research aims to provide insights into the conditions necessary for a successful democratic transition in Myanmar.

Myanmar is a deeply divided society that has experienced prolonged civil wars since gaining independence in 1948. From 1962 to 2010, Myanmar was under the rule of a military regime. Although a political opening began with the 2010 election, the path to democratization has been fraught with significant challenges due to the impact of the long rule of the military. Between 2010 and 2020, Myanmar has faced numerous challenges, include military dominance, an undemocratic constitution, weak governance, fragmented opposition, and ethnic tensions. The main problem is that the military maintained its power through the 2008 constitution, while the opposition National League for Democracy (NLD) government was weak in leadership, excluded pro-democracy allies, and ethnic groups. Additionally, ethnic divisions and localized economic priorities further eroded opposition unity. These factors did not strengthen democracy but instead led to a military coup. Despite efforts by many actors to restore democracy after the coup, major challenges remain, including uniting divided factions, resolving disputes, promoting inclusive governance, and weakening the military. In order to understand better what conditions might be required to drive a successful democratic transition in Myanmar, this research begins with examining which factors are identified in the scholarship that are expected to drive a successful transition to democracy.

Therefore, the thesis asks: *Under what conditions can a divided society successfully transition to democracy?*

The literature review examines and outlines the conditions required for a successful transition to democracy in divided societies. The division of ethnicity, language, culture, and ideology is considered to have the potential to undermine a democratic transition. The scholarship focuses on examining key factors such as the involvement of the military, opposition political parties, civil society, and constitution-making. The literature highlights that the military can play a significant role either facilitating or obstructing a democratic transition while opposition political parties and civil society often collaborate, coordinate, and mobilize citizens to challenge military dominance and

establish democratic institutions. Constitution-making is recognized as pivotal but needs to be inclusive.

In order to answer the research question, *under what conditions can a divided society successfully transition to democracy?* the research methodology applied is a Structured Focused Comparison (SFC). By selecting two successful cases of transition to democracy (South Africa and Indonesia) and two unsuccessful cases (Sudan and Libya). The selection of four case studies, spanning the periods 1974-1999 and 2000-2019, and focus on divided societies and all countries that have undergone a transition to democracy. For each case study, the question assesses the level of military, opposition political parties, and civil society organization involvement and inclusive constitution-making, which of these factors (low, medium, or high) provide insights into the pathways to democratic success in deeply divided societies, including contexts like Myanmar.

From the research findings, it can be found that the different key factors from different case studies determine a successful or unsuccessful democratic transition. The findings highlight that the involvement of both the military and opposition political groups in a transition to democracy appear to be a critical factor in contributing to success. This factor was high in both the success cases, and low in both the unsuccessful cases. The inclusion of civil society and an inclusive constitution-making process appear to be important but not decisive in determining whether or not a transition to democracy will succeed.

By analysing the role of military involvement, opposition political parties, civil society, and constitution-making processes from the finding, Myanmar requires a careful consideration of these factors' role for a successful transition to democracy. For example, Myanmar military needs to be considered as a key player in a democratic transition. At the same time, the involvement of civil society and political parties is a crucial role in achieving democracy. Lastly, Myanmar's constitution-making process should include ethnic minorities, civil society, and opposition groups to avoid marginalization and division, as seen in Libya and Sudan. To ensure a successful transition, Myanmar can learn from South Africa and Indonesia by promoting continuous dialogue, strong leadership, and broad participation.

Implications for the literature regarding the relations between military, opposition, and constitution-making are that political opposition parties may be even more important than previously assumed. The further implication in the literature review is that a successful transition to democracy requires a political party as a platform to intermediate and facilitate the democratic government. It also plays a role in mobilizing and organizing to dismantle the military regime. The finding suggests that civil society's role in democratic transition may be important but not decisive, as there were active civil societies in two successful cases and one failed case of transition. The findings similarly suggest

that inclusive constitution-making is important but not decisive, as this was present in all four cases – successful and unsuccessful - to some extent.

The thesis is structured as follows: chapter two explores Myanmar's struggle with democratization over the past decade, analyses key obstacles such as military dominance, weak governance, fragmented opposition, and ethnic tensions. The following chapter is a literature review, which outlines existing scholarship on democratic transition in divided societies, focusing on the role of the military, opposition political parties, civil society, and inclusive constitution-making. Chapter four is a research methodology, justifying the use of the Structured Focused Comparison (SFC) approach to examine four case studies South Africa and Indonesia as a successful and Libya and Sudan as a failure. The fifth chapter presents case studies of South Africa, Indonesia, Libya and Sudan. It assesses the role of military, opposition political parties, civil society, and constitution-making in shaping each country's democratic transition, identifying patterns of success and failure. The sixth chapter synthesizes finding from the case studies, demonstrating that the military and opposition political parties are key factors in determination a successful transition to democracy. Chapter seven discusses the implications for Myanmar. The final chapter concludes and provides implications for the scholarship and for democratic transitions more broadly.

CHAPTER TWO: THE CHALLENGES OF MYANMAR'S TRANSITION TO DEMOCRACY

2.1 Introduction

Myanmar is a society characterized by complexity and division, which is based on ethnicity, religion, language, and historical memory. From 1962 to 2010, Myanmar had been under the rule of a military regime. The opening of Myanmar began in 2010 after five decades of military rule. This involved liberalizing the media and internet, releasing political prisoners, permitting exile groups to enter the country, and a space for civil society organizations (Bünthe, 2014). However, the initiative of Myanmar's transition from an authoritarian to a democracy between 2010 and 2020, led to a military coup on February 1, 2021. Despite the enormous development experienced under the hybrid regime of U Thein Sein and the democratic transition led by the Daw Aung Aung San Su Kyi government, the recent coup has resulted in devastation, chaos, fragmentation, destabilization, and has undermined the prospects of a smooth transition to democracy. Therefore, it is crucial to examine the obstacles that limit the achievement of a successful democratic transition in Myanmar and the upcoming challenges in transitioning following the coup. However, the challenges of Myanmar's transition to democracy between 2010 and 2020 were primarily attributed to the military, leadership deficits, a fragmented opposition, and limited experience with democratic governance.

2.2 Key Players in Myanmar's Attempted Transition to Democracy: 2010 to 2020

Firstly, it is undeniable that the military plays a significant role in Myanmar's political and institutional development since gaining independence from British colonial rule in 1948 (Huang, 2013). The military historical involvement underscores its self-perception as the guardian of national unity and stability (Kipgen, 2011). The military has ensured its dominance through a system designed to protect its core interests, codified in the undemocratic 2008 constitution (Croissant & Kamerling, 2013). This document grants the military significant political privileges and the capacity to veto any amendments. For example, the constitution reserves 25 percent of the seats in both houses of parliament, at both the national and regional levels for active members of the military (Information, 2008). In order to pass the constitutional amendment, it will be necessary to obtain majorities of above 75% in both the upper and lower houses of Parliament (Harding, 2019). As a result, rather than conducting the constitutional amendment, the military used its power through a coup on February 1, 2021, staged just hours before the new parliament, dominated by opposition parties, was set to convene. It is clear that the military declared a state of emergency, transferred power to the commander-in-chief, and detained key opposition leaders, including president U Win Myint and State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi. Therefore, the military was the primary challenge to democratization in Myanmar.

Secondly, the National League for Democracy (NLD), led by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, emerged as the most powerful opposition party by securing a landslide victory in the 2015 general election, subsequently forming the government. However, the NLD government was unable to successfully lead Myanmar's democratic transition due to its limited experience with democratic institutions (Ghoshal, 2013). This lack of institutional capacity hindered its ability to govern effectively and to foster unity among opposition groups who shared the same value of democratic principles, including the 1988 students' movement team and ethnic political parties.

2.3 Key Challenge: Exclusion and Fragmentation

Barany (2018) highlights that Daw Aung San Suu Kyi exhibited weaknesses as a political leader, particularly in governance and in recognizing the contributions of the broader opposition coalition (Barany, 2018). Her administration was criticized for prioritizing loyalty over competence in government appointments, often selecting individuals based on allegiance rather than expertise or skills. This was evident in key appointments, like presidents and ministers, where the roles required specific skills and expertise that were often missing.

Moreover, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's Leadership failed to engage with longstanding allies in the pro-democracy movement. Notably, the 88 Generation Peace and Open society, a powerful opposition groups that had fought alongside the NLD for Democratic freedom since 1988, was excluded from significant political processes and campaigns. This exclusion reduced opportunities for collective action and weakened the broader opposition's efforts to promote democratic principles. Therefore, the NLD government's failure to unite democratic forces and manage governance effectively created significant obstacles for Myanmar's democratic transition.

In addition, the opposition party's formation of the government demonstrated a lack of recognition and inclusion of ethnic political parties in the cabinet, further straining the relationship between ethnic groups and the NLD (Swe, 2021). For instance, the Shan Nationalities League for Democracy (SNLD) and the Arakan National Party (ANP) negotiate to appoint state prime ministers as representatives for Shan and Rakhine State were unsuccessful. This inability to reach a compromise highlighted the NLD government's limited understanding of ethnic histories and sensitivities.

Furthermore, decisions to memorialize General Aung San, the national hero who played a pivotal role in securing Myanmar's independence from British colonization, in ethnic regions were perceived as dismissive of ethnic representation (De, 2019). For example, the construction of a statue of General Aung San in Kayah (Karenni) State and the naming of a bridge after him in Mon State following the NLD's landslide electoral victory sparked concerns among ethnic groups. These actions were interpreted as attempts to impose "Burmanization" and centralization, echoing practices historically associated with the military. Meanwhile, The NLD's failure to address these concerns and to engage meaningfully with ethnic groups reinforced perceptions of exclusion and marginalization.

Consequently, the relationship between the NLD and ethnic political parties became increasingly strained, posing significant challenges to Myanmar's democratization process due to the NLD's inability to build coalitions and adequately recognize ethnic diversity.

On the other hand, while ethnic groups were excluded by the NLD in the formation of the government, blaming the NLD alone does not provide a complete solution for ensuring a smooth transition to democracy. Ethnic groups have also contributed to the challenges of the democratization process by isolating themselves due to concerns about preserving their territory, culture, language, and religion. For instance, some ethnic armed opposition groups prioritized local economic interests, such as collecting taxes from local populations and engaging in illicit activities, including opium production, logging, and jade mining, rather than actively pursuing federalism, self-determination, and autonomy. Although ethnic groups have long been marginalized and discriminated against, their lack of proactive engagement during the democratization process has hindered progress toward their political goals. However, unless the majority of Burmese both the military and NLD government have addressed those issues, the prospect of Myanmar's transition to democracy remains grim (Kramer, 2010). Therefore, the ongoing conflicts between the ethnic arms opposition and the military led to a hard road to democracy.

Another critical challenge faced by the NLD government is the political trap set by the military, which has constrained the democratic government's ability to progress (Cifuentes, 2023). For example, the Rohingya genocide in Rakhine state (Bowcott, 2019) and the widespread conflicts between the military and ethnic groups across various regions have dominated the government agenda. These crises forced the NLD government to focus on addressing public criticism and managing issues such as the Rohingya crisis and the 21st-century Panglong Conference, rather than prioritizing reforms to strengthen governmental systems and institutions. As a result, the military has continued to exert indirect influence over the government and the country, further undermining the democratic transition (Huang, 2013). These interconnected challenges ethnic conflicts, military manipulation, and governance limitations highlight the complexities of Myanmar's democratization process and underscore the difficulties in achieving sustainable democratic progress.

2.4 The Challenges of Post-Coup in Restoring Democracy

The military coup on February 1, 2021, ended Myanmar's democratic transition. The military declared a state of emergency and removed the newly elected government led by the National League for Democracy (NLD) before it could begin its new term (Kipgen, 2021). The military then formed the State Administration Council (SAC) to take power while the Committee Representing Pyidaungsu Hluttaw (CRPH) formed the National Unity Government (NUG) to challenge the military and restore democracy.

The coup triggered mass protests across the country. People from all sectors include university students, teachers, doctors, bankers, and government workers joined the Civil Disobedience Movement (CDM). They refused to work under the military regime and demanded the return of an elected civilian government. Young people especially played a leading role, organizing protests, forming resistance networks, and building new political and armed groups such as the NUG, CRPH, National Unity Consultative Council (NUCC), and People's Defense Forces (PDFs). This strong and diverse resistance was something rarely seen in Myanmar's history. However, despite the bravery and determination of the people, restoring democracy faces many serious challenges.

Firstly, the military remains the most significant obstacle. Even though the military has lost control in some areas and is rejected by most of the public, it still has strong resources. The junta controls advanced military technology, airstrikes, and heavy weapons that the resistance cannot match. Many revolutionary groups have no way to defend against air attacks, which have killed thousands of civilians and destroyed villages. For example, in places like Sagaing and Chin State, entire communities have been bombed (Peck, 2024). The military also receives support from powerful neighbouring countries like China, India, and Thailand, as well as from Russia (Events, January to March 2025). These countries continue to trade with the junta, sell weapons, or avoid putting real pressure on them. This international support helps the military stay in power.

Secondly, the resistance movement face internal challenges of leadership and unity (HDF, 2025). While public support remains strong, there is no single charismatic leader capable of uniting the diverse resistance actors across ethnic and regional lines. Many groups struggle with coordination, trust, and territorial disputes. According to Myers (2023), effective opposition requires compromise, shared leadership, and the ability to form a functioning government (Myers, 2023). However, the NUG is often perceived as Bamar-dominated, with ethnic resistance organizations (EROs) feeling sidelined in decision-making. In addition, the NUG has limited control over armed groups on the ground, leading to fragmentation in strategy and implementation. Therefore, Myanmar's path to democracy is hindered both by the military's enduring power and by the resistance's internal divisions. Without addressing these structural and political challenges, the future of democratization in Myanmar remains uncertain.

2.5 Conclusion

Overall, Myanmar's transition to democracy from 2010 to 2020 faced significant challenges, including military dominance, weak governance, fragmented opposition, and ethnic tensions. The military's control, solidified by the 2008 Constitution, allowed it to retain power, while the NLD government struggled with leadership deficiencies and exclusion of key allies and ethnic groups. Ethnic divisions and local economic priorities further weakened opposition unity. The 2021 military coup highlighted

the fragility of Myanmar's democratization, and post-coup efforts to restore democracy face major obstacles, such as uniting factions, resolving disputes, and building inclusive governance.

CHAPTER THREE: LITERATURE REVIEW: WHICH FACTORS DRIVE A SUCCESSFUL DEMOCRATIC TRANSITION?

3.1 Introduction

The literature review aims to comprehend the conditions for successful transition to democracy. The term "transition" has been described by scholars as periods of regime change and influential or founding movements (Munck & Leff, 1999). This implies that while discussing democratic transition, the focus is on political processes and the decisions made by individuals or groups that lead to a change in the governing system (Doorenspleet, 2004). In order to understand the success of

transition to democracy in a divided society, the literature review will be examined about the relations between military, opposition and constitution-making in divided societies.

3.2: Transition to Democracy in Divided Societies

Defining divided societies is a challenging task that scholars have grappled with for decades. O'Flynn (2013) asserts that since the end of the Cold War, all societies have been somewhat divided, often characterized by deep divisions along ethnic lines. In this context, ethnicity includes inherent identities that naturally separate groups based on race, language, culture, or nationality (O'Flynn, 2013). Therefore, establishing democracy in a divided society presents numerous challenges including ethnic conflicts and power imbalance. Among them, the ethnic conflict will be explained by the following argument.

Transition to democracy is tough in divided societies because there is a likelihood that political instability will lead to violent conflict. Scholars argued that democratization efforts are unlikely to succeed in the presence of ongoing ethnic conflict (Horowitz, 1993). For example, it can be seen in numerous nations across Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe, and the former Soviet Union, where ethnic conflict is a prominent factor contributing to the lack of success in democratization (Huntington, 1991). Carter (2013) highlights that ethnic conflicts, including ethnic hatred, tension, and civil war, create substantial obstacles to holding democratic elections, maintaining political stability, and accommodating rival communities (Carter, 2013).

Moreover, the transition to democracy in a divided society is difficult because of the identity-based politics and ideology problem. Horowitz (2002) and Waller and Waller (2021) argue that divided societies are characterized by identity (Horowitz, 2002) and ideology problems that are difficult to resolve (Waller & Waller, 2021). Therefore, Mill argued that a shared national identity is essential for the success of democracy as he believed that democratic governance can only exist within the framework of a nation-state (O'Flynn, 2006). Therefore, addressing the profound divisions within society requires an inclusive dialogue that leads to a political settlement that achieves a transition to democracy (Assefa, 2021).

3.3 The military and the transition to democracy

Within the context of the debate about the transition to democracy, many scholars examined that the military has a significant role in facilitating regime change (May et al., 2004). Scholars argue that in some countries the military agrees to liberalize and democratize, while others do not. However, it can also be found that in many democratic transitions, the military has historically been a dominant force, wielding considerable power and influence over political and economic affairs. Therefore, the military presents substantial challenges to the achievement of democratization.

Firstly, the key challenge is the military's capacity to meddle in civilian government, either openly through coups or secretly through political manipulation, which threatens the stability and integrity of emerging democratic institutions. Many scholars debated that the coup undermined democracy, while others discussed the military coups leading to regime change (Thyne & Powell, 2016). Military coup makes it impossible to maintain a stable democracy when the military takes over civilian leadership and undermines the integrity of elections (Frazer, 1995). One expert argues that military democratic values and arrangements may not result in lasting and successful democratic governance, as the military often falsely claims to protect democratic norms while instigating coups (Motseki et al., 2020). In contrast, a military coup can contribute significant opportunities for the nation toward democratization. Thyne and Powell (2016) found that in highly authoritarian countries led by long-term dictators, military coups can sometimes pave the way for democratization, especially when other methods for achieving democracy are unlikely to work (Thyne & Powell, 2016). Although all military coups possess anti-democratic characteristics, experts argue that some coups exhibit a stronger pro-democracy stance compared to others (Harkness, 2017). Collier supported that military coups represent the sole feasible method for deposing excessively oppressive and autocratic rulers. Thus, the military deems it essential to assume a pivotal role in establishing an interim administrative entity until democratic elections are conducted to create civilian governance (Varol, 2017). Otherwise, Yamahata (2023) stated that the risk of military intervention and political control will continue to linger unless the military is under civilian control even after democratization (Yamahata, 2023).

Secondly, scholars have contended that the military resists relinquishing its power in the democratization process due to its tendency to establish a self-proclaimed "guardianship" over the country by controlling political and economic institutions (Said, 2012). For instance, In Argentina, the military's initial claim to power was based on defending the country's national security, but it eventually expanded to include carefully infiltrating and taking control of governmental and constitutional institutions that would typically be under the jurisdiction of a civilian administration (McSherry, 1997). Therefore, in establishing democracy, Jendayi Frazer elucidated that a successful democratic transition necessitates the civilian's rule over the military through the establishment of an accountable political system. Moreover, Blair (2013) argues that it requires the capacity to effectively convince the military forces in autocratic regimes to support and facilitate the transition to democracy without opposing it (Blair, 2013). Therefore, the military's role in supporting the democratic transition is considered highly important.

3.4 Opposition political parties, civil society and the transition to democracy

Scholars argue that the coordination between opposition political parties and social movements plays a crucial role in democratic transition (Mainwaring, 1986). Opposition actors are identified as

political parties, civil society organizations, media, and grassroots movements in mobilizing, organizing, and negotiating for democratic transition.

A process of democratization requires competitive party politics and multi-party system, which means that political parties are the key pillars of good governance, the rule of law and the protection of human rights (Kiiza, 2005). Giovanni Sartori claimed that parties are the central intermediate structures between society and government because they have the ability to join and mobilize individuals into large groups that are capable of impacting significant political outcome (McKenzie, 1977). This scholar also argued that the parties is the best tool to fulfil vital functions in democratic politics such as election, recruit political leadership, and aggregate social interest into political platforms. On the other hand, Carries Mauning argues that the democratization process involves post-war political settlements and arrangements, exemplified by the transformation of armed opposition groups into civilian political parties (Manning, 2004). Therefore, since the end of the cold war, many countries like Kosovo, Bosnia and Mozambique transform from armed opposition groups into political parties as the political parties play a significant role in the democratic transition.

According to numerous scholars, opposition leaders play an important role in the process of democratization and the establishment of a stable democracy by dismantling authoritarian regimes, constructing constitutional democracies, overseeing institutional affairs, ensuring free and fair elections, and guaranteeing political rights (Lowenthal & Bitar, 2016). Although broader social, civil, and political forces played important roles, political leaders remain crucial to their countries' successful transitions, including military leaders such as Mandela and De Klerk, who were pivotal in steering South Africa towards effective democracy through its "negotiated revolution" (Habib, 1995). For example, many successful democratizations like Brazil, Chile, Ghana, Indonesia, Mexico, the Philippines, Poland, South Africa and Spain. On the other hand, Mark R. Thompson stated that women leadership play a democratic transition and inspiring people to join the mass protest in against the authoritarian regime especially in Asia women leadership's Corazon C. Aquino in the Philippines (1986), Benazir Bhutto in Pakistan (1988), Khaleda Zia and Sheikh Hasina Wajed in Bangladesh (1990) and Megawati Sukarnoputri in Indonesia (1998) (Thompson, 2002). However, Scholars have also discussed that the importance of leaders possessing a distinct vision, strong decision-making abilities, effective negotiation skills, and the ability to exercise authority to facilitate successful transitions to democracy (Kalpokaite & Radivojevic, 2020).

In addition, civil society can play a pivotal role in driving successful democratic transitions by contributing to political and economic stability. Scholars have offered various definition of civil society in the context of democratization. Kean and Walker (1989) describe civil society as operating independently of the state and establishing boundaries of state intervention (Kean & Walker, 1989). Kopecky and Mudde (2003) further define it as an entity that exists between the state, individuals and economic production, encompassing organizations such as households, voluntary associations,

media, social institutions, and non-governmental organizations (Kopecký & Mudde, 2003). These organizations are typically characterized by their non-violent nature, self-organization, self-reflection, and the tension they maintain both internally and with state institutions (Arato & Kalyvas, 2002).

Civil society organizations (CSOs) have been recognized for their ability to undermine authoritarian regimes and promote democracy (Threlfall, 2008). Threlfall (2008) argues that CSOs disrupt dictatorships efforts to maintain control, while Larry Diamond (1994) highlights that extensive mobilization of civil society is a crucial driver of democratic change (Diamond, 1994).

Civil society fulfills essential role such as monitoring state power, democratizing authoritarian regimes, and providing training for government officials. For example, citizens in numerous countries have challenged autocracy not as isolated individuals but as members of students movements, churches, professional associations, women's groups, trade unions, human rights organizations, producer groups, the press and civic associations. Historical evidence underscores the transformative impact of civil society. Countries such as South Korea, Taiwan, Chile, Poland, China, Czechoslovakia, South Africa, Nigeria, and Benin have undergone significant democratic transitions due to the extensive mobilization of civil society organizations. Civil society is the main fosters cooperation across social and political divisions by building networks and trust (Foley & Edwards, 1996). Therefore, the involvement of opposition political parties and civil society in a democratic transition is considered important.

3.5: Inclusive constitution-making and the transition to democracy

The process of inclusive constitution-making presents a fundamental challenge in the democratization process. It involves significant contributions from practitioners, experts, policymakers, opposition groups, civil society, and the previous ruling elites, particularly during regime change transitioning from an authoritarian to a democratic governance system. Constitution-making is pivotal to democratic transitions, as it necessitates critical decisions by political elites regarding the structures, limits, and practices of the new government, as well as the rights and responsibility of citizens.

Constructing a self-enforcing constitution during the uncertain period following the fall of an old regime and the rise of a new one is essential, especially in divided society (Du Plessis et al., 2015). The scholar further argued that a self-enforcing constitution requires citizens to resolve coordination problems to act collectively whenever governments threaten fundamental constitutional principles. Similarly, other scholars highlight that constitution-making during democratic transitions offers an invaluable opportunity to establish political institutions with broad societal and elite support (çkaya & Özbudun, 2009).

In recent years, public participation in constitution-making has emerged as an international norm and best practice. Kan and Rakuita (2014) underscore the importance of transparency and citizen involvement in ensuring legitimacy and trust in the new constitution (Kant & Rakuita, 2014). Eisenstadt, LeVan, and Maboudi (ELM) argued for prioritizing public engagement early in the constitution-making process rather than relying on referendums and ratifications, which may occur too late to address initial deficiencies in citizen involvement (Eisenstadt et al., 2015). They advocate for “bottom-up” approaches that emphasize citizen participation over “top-down” elite-driven processes, which often exclude or manipulate public input. Therefore, Magaloni argued that successful democratization and constitutional stability require incentivizing both pro-authoritarian and pro-democratic groups to uphold the constitutional agreement (Magaloni, 2008). This involves a strategic shift towards democracy when the risks of social unrest outweigh the costs of suppressing it, and maintaining democracy necessitates the ability to penalize groups deviating from the agreed-upon constitution (Alberts et al., 2012). Therefore, high inclusivity of a constitution-making process during democratic transition is considered important.

3.6 Conclusion

In conclusion, the literature suggests that key factors that require consideration in a transition to democracy in a divided society are military relations, opposition political parties, civil society, and constitution-making. These are considered to be central elements for a successful democratic transition. The next chapter introduces the research method which will assist to investigate these factors in a comparative case study of two success cases and two unsuccessful transitions to democracy.

CHAPTER FOUR: METHOD: STRUCTURED FOCUSED COMPARISON

4.1 Introduction

This study employs the method of Structured Focused Comparison to answer the research question: “Under what condition can a divided society successfully transition to democracy?” using a comparison of two successful cases of democratic transition and two unsuccessful cases. A structured focused comparison is used to identify key factors that contribute to a successful democratic transition that are present in the success cases and absent in the unsuccessful cases. This chapter defines the Structured Focused Comparison method and outlines the advantages and disadvantages. The Structured Focused Comparison (SFC) is conducted by investigating the historical experiences of democratic transition in divided societies by selecting the four case studies and spanning the periods of 1974 to 1999 and 2000 to 2019. Case study selection is based on two criteria: the presence of divided societies characterized by ethnic, religious, or ideological divisions, and experience with a transition to democracy. The questions investigated in order to determine which factors influence a successful democratic transition are drawn from the literature and include: the role of the military, the involvement of opposition parties, the involvement of civil society, and inclusivity of constitution-making by asking question to determine the level of each factor (low, medium or high) in the democratic transition.

4.2 Method: Structured Focused Comparison

The method of structured-Focused Comparison is designed to address the criticisms of single-case studies, particularly their non-cumulative nature (Jankauskas et al., 2023). This systematic approach enhances the comparative understanding of historical events, within the field of political science.

The Structured Focused Comparison (SFC) helps ensure that researchers analyse systematically and compare in multiple cases selected. By comparing cases with different outcomes (in these cases a comparison of success and failure cases of democratic transition) applying a SFC method enables the researcher to identify key factors that may be important in determining the divergent outcomes. Therefore, a SFC method is selected to investigate the research question posed in this study, as it provides an appropriate avenue to comparatively investigate key factors influencing the success of a transition to democracy.

Despite its strengths, the Structured Focused Comparison (SFC) method has limitations. First selecting case studies for a Structured Focused Comparison poses significant challenges, particularly in determining whether the cases are truly comparable. Democratic transitions often occur under vastly different conditions, making it difficult to establish consistent criteria for comparison. For instance, case selection may be based on factors such as the presence of divided

societies, geographic diversity, or variations in the time period of transition. These differences add complexity to the selection process, requiring careful judgment to ensure the chosen cases are relevant and suitable for the analysis.

A second limitation of SFC is a bias of the researcher due to their interpretation and translation of the data. It means that researcher's bias can occur when personal beliefs or perspectives influence the selection, interpretation, interest, and value that can lead subjective framing of debates and misrepresentation of explanations. In this case, every effort was made to triangulate sources and evaluate the cases objectively.

The final challenge lies in the difficulty of thematic selection when analysing transitions to democracy. Specifically, determining which factors to prioritize such as the role of the military, opposition participation, or constitution-making poses a significant challenge. Selecting these themes involves assessing whether they adequately capture the complexities of democratic transitions across different case studies. This uncertainty can hinder the ability to conduct a comprehensive and meaningful comparative analysis.

A structured focused comparison is chosen for this research as a way to comparatively analyse and identify which factors influence a successful democratic transition. Two democratic success cases are compared with two democratic failure cases in order to identify factors which are most influential in democratic success. Four key factors expected to influence democratic success, and drawn from the literature, are investigated in each case. By systematically comparing cases, structured focused comparison allows for drawing meaningful conclusions, even in complex and diverse contexts like Myanmar through providing valuable insights into the challenges and opportunities for democratic transition.

4.3 Case selection for the structured focused comparison

Case selection for the structured focused comparison is based on two criteria: each case is a divided society, which was characterized as ethnic division such as race, language, culture, religious or nationality; and each case has undergone a democratic transition. Two successful transition cases were chosen and two unsuccessful transition cases. This makes the structured focused comparison particularly suitable for analysing these cases as it emphasizes the examination of historical and structural factors that influence the success or failure of democratic transition processes.

The political transformation began in the region of eastern Europe, spread to Latin America, and parts of Asia, and then moved to parts of sub Saharan Africa (Doorenspleet, 2004). According to Larry Diamond, the number of democracies steadily increased or held steady annually from 1975 until 2006, representing a significant expansion of democratic governance (Diamond, 2022). Similarly, Samuel P. Huntington (1991) noted that at least 30 countries transitioned to democracy

during the period from 1974 to 1990 (Huntington, 1991). However, the graph illustrates that the world has experienced a democratic recession, regression, and erosion, marked by a stagnation or reversal of democratic progress globally after 2006 until 2019.

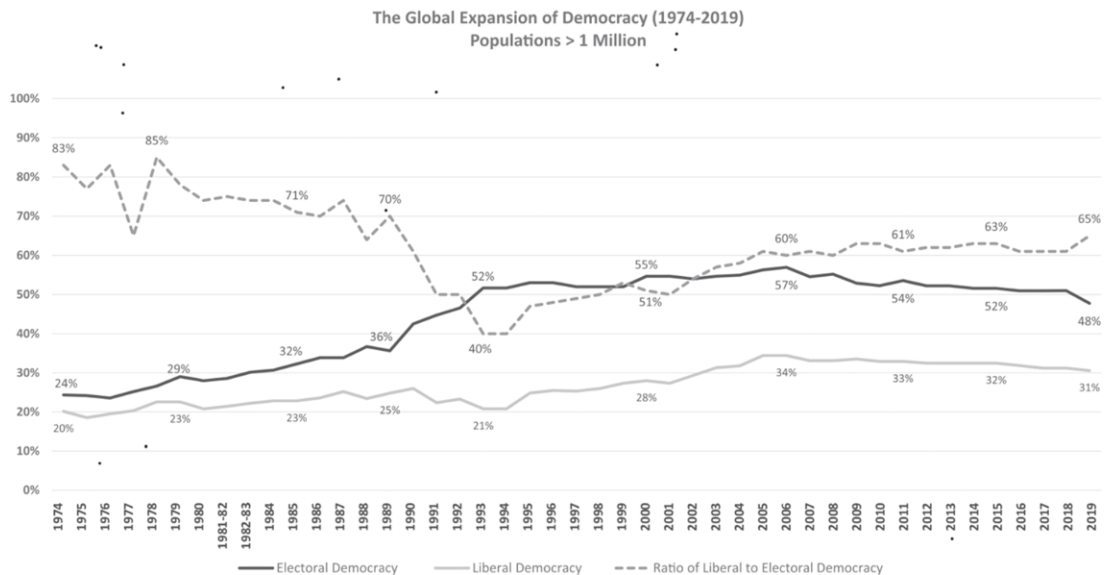


Figure 1. The global expansion of democracy (1974–2019) populations > 1 million.

Since the global trend of democratization has slowed, with the spread of freedom and democracy experiencing a prolonged halt, the case selection for this structured-focused comparison encompasses two distinct periods: 1974 to 1999 and 2000 to 2019. See the four selected cases in Table 1, below. These cases represent a spread across geographic regions. All four are divided societies. Two represent successful democratic transitions, and two represent unsuccessful transitions. Therefore, the structured focused comparison methodology is the most appropriate approach to address the research question.

Table 1: Case Study Selection

Country	Divided society	Year of Transition to democracy	Outcome	Location
South Africa	Ethnic, racial, tribal, religious, or linguistic division	1991- 1994	Successful	Africa
Indonesia	Multicultural country (300 ethnic groups and 200 different languages)	1999	Successful	Southeast Asia
Libya	Tribes Division (140 main tribes)	2011	Failure	North Africa
Sudan	geographical diversity (multicultural, multiethnic, and multilingual population)	2019	Failure	Northeastern Africa

4.4 Questions for the structured focused comparison

In this study, firstly, context questions were applied to each case to understand the historical background of the democratic transition for each case study – as follows:

- *What was the transition to democracy?*
- *What happened?*
- *What was the outcome?*

Following this, four key questions for the structured focused comparison were applied consistently to examine across all case studies. These four questions were selected based on factors identified in the literature as significant in influencing democratic transitions. The primary aim was to examine whether these factors played a critical role in determining the success or failure of democratic transition. These factors are: military involvement; involvement of opposition political parties and civil

society; and inclusivity of constitution-making. The investigated the level of involvement-categorized as low, medium, or high- of four crucial actors processes:

Question 1: *What was the role of the military in supporting the transition to democracy? (low, medium, or high)*

Question 2: *What was the involvement of opposition political parties in the transition to democracy? (low, medium or high)*

Question 3: *What was the involvement of civil society in the transition to democracy? (low, medium or high)*

Question 4: *What was the level of inclusivity in the constitution-making process? (low, medium or high)*

By comparatively evaluating the response to these questions the study seeks to identify key factors that contribute to a successful transition to democracy.

4.5 Conclusion

In conclusion, this study employs the methodology of structured focused comparison to answer the research question. The selection of four case studies, spanning the periods 1974-1999 and 2000-2019, focuses on divided societies and all countries having undergone an attempted transition to democracy. Finally, the chapter outlines the guiding questions for the structured focused comparison: four key questions concern the role of military involvement, opposition political parties and civil society involvement, and inclusivity of constitution-making.

CHAPTER FIVE: CASE STUDY FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter will comparatively examine the democratic transitions of South Africa, Indonesia, Libya, and Sudan through analysing the key factors that contributed to their success or failure. Each case study will assess the role of military involvement, the role of opposition political party and civil society organizations, and the inclusivity of the constitution-making process. Table 2, below, shows the level of each factor in the process as high, medium, or low to understand the variations in democratic outcomes.

Table 2: Level of key factors and democratic outcome

Countries	Military involvement in supporting the transition	Political parties' involvement	Civil society involvement	Inclusivity of the constitution-making process	Democratic success / failure
South Africa	Medium	High	High	High	SUCCESS
Indonesia	High	High	High	High	SUCCESS
Libya	Low	Low	Low	Medium	FAILURE
Sudan	Low	Low	High	Medium	FAILURE

5.2 South Africa

5.2.1 Context

South Africa's democratic transition began in 1990 with President F.W. de Klerk's reform initiatives, including the unbanning of the ANC and the release of Nelson Mandela. Between 1990 and 1994, extensive negotiations led to the 1993 constitutional settlement and the first democratic elections in 1994. The peaceful dismantling of apartheid and the voluntary transfer of power marked South Africa as a successful case of negotiated democratic transition (Handley et al., 2008).

5.2.2 Military Support for the Transition

South Africa's transition to democracy can be viewed as having medium support from the military called South African Defence Force (SADF) (Dale, 2002). However, both the military regime and the

opposition armed force play a crucial role in establishing the negotiation platform to achieve the civilian control over the military and military integration. Therefore, the military support in democratic transition considered as medium.

One of the reasons of military involvement can be understood as balancing factor as armed resistance play a crucial role despite the South African Defence Force (SADF) being the largest military force under the apartheid regime (Licklider, 2015). That led to the SADF united armed forces to ensure its legitimacy and lowering the risk through finding the best possible solution to manage the conflict before, and after elections. For example, the seven united forces are the South African Defence Force (SADF), two liberation armies called Umkhonto We Size (MK) and the Azanian People Liberation Army (AP:LA); and four independent homeland armies called the Transkei Defence Force (TDF), the Venda Defence Force (VDM), and the Ciskei Defence Force (CDF) (Turner, 2015). It is clear that the two major arm groups agreed to integrate all armed forces to build a new national defence force in South Africa called South African National Defence Force (SANDF) (Mashike, 2007). Moreover, the two major armed forces from both side the military regime and the opposition armed forces played a crucial role in establishing the negotiation platform to achieve the civilian control over the military. The political platform is that the establishment of Transitional Executive Council (TEC) to facilitate its gradual and peaceful transition in the 1994 election (Paruk, 2008). Although there were many problems that occurred during the process of formation, the SADF took a series of informal meeting with the different armed forces groups to reach the objectives of unifying the military to a united one (Williams, 1995). Therefore, the professional military of apartheid military regime could facilitate in creating a new national defence force and civilian control over the military.

5.2.3 Involvement of Opposition Political Parties

As the primary opposition political party in South Africa, the African National Congress (ANC) has historically represented the majority of Black South Africans since its founding in 1912. The ANC played a pivotal role in the nation's political landscape, both as a key force in the anti-apartheid struggle and during the transition to democracy. Consequently, opposition party's involvement was considered as high in South Africa's democratic transition.

The African National Congress (ANC) played a pivotal role in the political mobilization and organization of resistance against the apartheid regime by formulating a coherent strategy under a common vision in establishing a non-racial and democratic South Africa. This was in response to regime's systemic segregation across education, healthcare, housing and employment (Haasbroek, 1971; Mhlauli et al., 2015). In order to achieve that the ANC political strategies was clear to play a central role throughout this history to reach a negotiation political settlement (Khwela, 2000). For example, the mobilization and organization strategies of ANC was gaining a massive support through trade unions, civic groups and political fronts including the international support (Nathan, 2004).

Moreover, the unite of various political affiliations from different ideologies and reorganizing the ANC membership was also crucial in playing a central role for the South Africa Transition to Democracy (Ottaway, 1991). Therefore, the ANC efforts led the National Party President F.W.De Klerk to adopt a more liberal stance through releasing all political prisoners, legalizing all opposition parties, and beginning genuine negotiations with the shape of a new South Africa in 1990 (Jung & Shapiro, 1995).

5.2.4 Involvement of Civil Society

Civil society involvement was evaluated as high in South Africa as this was a key driver in political change in South Africa. It can be observed through two distinct phases: the period before the end of apartheid and the post-apartheid era.

The civil society involvement in opposition in the apartheid regime is considered high because civil society mobilized and organized large-scale protests and demonstrations about suffering from discrimination from the regime of apartheid (Fioramonti, 2005). For example, black workers faced systemic discrimination and were denied basic rights, including restrictions on jobs, living areas, and union representation. Another example is that particularly, the involvement of African National Youth League demonstrated a strong commitment to democratic ideas, including freedom and peace (Botiveau, 2011). It is clear that the Trade Union and AFNYL played a significant role in demonstrations, rallies, strikes as well as member education program to mobilize their members and broader public support. Therefore, the civil society were able to mobilize a large number of people to protest against repressive apartheid law and polices.

Secondly, civil society played a role in building alliances and networks in order to raise the voice of the society to head outside as well as inside the country. It means that civil society increased their influence in the society and actively opposed the apartheid regime through joining together to establish the National Forum as an informal, non-political aligned civil society organization to discuss and strategize on the opposition to apartheid. The alliance involvement included women groups, local associations, non-profit organizations, and social movements such as trade unions, religious leaders, black activists, and students regarded as a driving force in mobilization and organization against the apartheid regime (James & Caliguire, 1996). Therefore, the mobilization and organization of civil society regards as a powerful instrument and highly involved in South Africa Transition to democracy both national and local levels to fight against the apartheid regime.

Finally, throughout the South African's Transition to democracy, civil society organization is highly involved because they are the main actors in engaging with the community and educating citizens' participation in politics. Civil society organizations provided a broad range of community services, from educational support and training to rural development and media services. For instance, many non-profit organizations and community-based associations played a role in promoting human rights and democracy before and after the election in 1994 (James & Caliguire, 1996). It is evident that they actively participated in the struggle to establish a non-racial, non-sexist, unified, democratic,

and prosperous society by engaging in politics and addressing public issues that impact society (Gila & Latief, 2018). Therefore, civil society plays a significant role in promoting democracy.

5.2.5 Inclusivity of Constitution-Making

The South African inclusive constitution-making process, which took place from 1991 to 1996, was a crucial step in the country's transition from apartheid regime to democracy, resulting in a constitution that symbolized reconciliation between the black majority and white minority.

Throughout the process, South African constitution-making was regarded as high in term of inclusivity and its participatory nature. This indicates that both opposition and regime leaders agree to engage in negotiations for a political settlement and collaborated on drafting an interim constitution in 1993, demonstrating their commitment to reconciliation and the reconstruction of South Africa (Motala, 2005). The constitutional settlement process involved a series of formal and informal including a secret negotiation between the opposition and the regime. For instance, forty-seven meetings took place between Nelson Mandela and government leaders to a negotiated settlement following apartheid (after Apartheid). It is evident that the discussion gradually build trust between the liberation movement and South African security forces through leading to an agreement on the election date and opening the way for high level constitutional negotiations.

Moreover, maintaining dialogue can be regarded as a significant factor in reducing deadlock and laying the groundwork for restarting multiparty negotiations. While the early negotiations excluded some political actors, the later Multi-Party Negotiating Process (MPNP) became more inclusive by involving a broader range of participants. For instance, the MPNP brought together 19 political parties from diverse ethnic backgrounds, including Black, White, and Indian communities, to engage in discussions (Teuteberg, 2015). This phase of negotiations marked more comprehensive and representative effort, as a broader spectrum of political actors and stakeholders was mobilized, facilitating a more inclusive approach to shaping South Africa's democratic constitution. Therefore, maintaining continuous dialogue played a crucial role in overcoming deadlock and promoting inclusivity in the negotiation process.

5.3 Indonesia

5.3.1 Context

Indonesia's transition to democracy began after president Suharto resigned in 1998 due to an economic crisis and mass protests. However, earlier efforts at democracy had failed under previous leaders (Bhakti, 2004). Suharto's resignation in 1998 led to a critical phase of political liberalization under President B. J. Habibie, who initiated key democratic reforms such as press freedom, free and fair elections, regional decentralization, and the release of political prisoners. These reforms culminated in the historic 1999 general election, marking Indonesia's official transition to democracy.

5.3.2 Military Support for the Transition

Following the fall of Suharto's in 1998, the involvement of the military in Indonesia's transition to democracy can be characterized as high due to the military's leadership and willingness to reform, and overseeing of the transfer of power from Suharto to Habibie. Whilst the military was not overly involved in the transition itself, the important and influential role that they played in ensuing a stable transition, indicates that their involvement was high.

Firstly, the military involvement could be identified as a high because Suharto willingly shifted the political power to his vice-president Habibie in order to meet the demand of the student-led protests demanding democratic reforms, and the military supported and helped facilitate this process. Habibie's presidency started to make a significant step towards stabilizing, democratizing, and reforming the Indonesian politics through promoting human rights and freedom (Pratiknya & Asshiddiqie, 2000). His reforms lifted restrictions on political parties, freeing political prisoners, ending press censorship, decentralizing governance, and allowing East Timor a referendum on independence (Mietzner, 2014). His leadership transformed Indonesia's political landscape in ways that likely would not have occurred if the military had assumed power in 1998 or had opposed the transfer of power and not supported it.

Moreover, the military involvement was high because Suharto authorized Wiranto as the head of the armed forces and minister of defence and security in Indonesia during his resignation. This authorization to response the emergency power if needed. Military elements recognised that a military take-over would elicit further instability. Wiranto chaired a meeting with his civilian associates and concluded that the constitutional transfer of power to Vice-President B.J. Habibie was the only viable option. This decision was based on the political and social context, where a military assumption of power was seen as neither realistic nor desirable. Thus, Wiranto's actions helped prevent a military-led transition and supported a constitutional approach. Thus, military influence in a stable transition is evaluated as high.

5.3.3 Involvement of Opposition Political Parties

The opposition political parties' involvement can be characterized as high because the political parties played a crucial role in challenging Suharto's authoritarian new order regime. Although political parties are disunited and fragmented due to the military repression, political parties like PDI and the People's Democratic Party (PRD) continuously responded to mobilize opponents and strengthen the coordination and collaboration in challenging the regime.

The Indonesian Democratic Party (PDI) played a significant role as an opposition party in undermining the Suharto regime (Aspinall, 2005). The political party leader's Megawati Sukarnoputri, emerged as a prominent figure in the opposition due to her direct criticism of Suharto's administration, particularly during the economic crisis. She attributed the crisis to Suharto's

leadership, condemning his governance and suggesting that he step down. Megawati's leadership and vocal opposition, especially following the events of 1996, which solidified her status as a victim of Suharto's repression, elevated her to a symbolic position within the broader anti-Suharto movement. Therefore, her popularity drew supporters to the party, particularly from the poorer sections of the middle and upper class who were becoming increasingly frustrated with Suharto's new order regime.

Moreover, the involvement of opposition political parties was significant for Indonesia's transition to democracy particularly through grassroots mobilization. The formation of the "People's Democratic Union" (later the People's Democratic Party, PRD) demonstrated how student, worker, and farmer activists organized themselves to challenge the Suharto regime in 1994 (Russell, 2022). Their efforts to mobilize workers and peasants, supported by actions such as protests against forced resettlement for infrastructure projects, spurred broader collective actions like strikes and demonstrations across the country. These activities helped to galvanize support for emerging radical political groups, laying the groundwork for broader opposition to the authoritarian regime and contributing to the conditions that ultimately facilitated the transition.

5.3.4 Involvement of Civil society

The involvement of civil society in the Indonesian transition to democracy can be considered as high because various activist groups including student associations, youth, academics and journalists have kept up and collaborated to pressure elites to address various issues like corruption and political reform in Indonesia.

Firstly, civil society played a crucial role in advocating for new laws and institutions aimed at eradicating corruption by mobilizing and organizing actors from diverse backgrounds (Setiyono & McLeod, 2010). This movement brought together various student organizations, including HMI (Himpunan Mahasiswa Islam), GMNI (Gerakan Mahasiswa Nasional Indonesia), PMKRI (Perhimpunan Mahasiswa Katolik Republik Indonesia), and PMII (Pergerakan Mahasiswa Islam Indonesia), to stage protests against government corruption. The anti-corruption movement gained momentum as demonstrations became more spontaneous and widespread, attracting participation from professional associations, labor unions, women's organizations, lawyers, and academics. These groups not only provided moral and logistical support to student activists but also contributed substantive ideas and policy analysis. Consequently, civil society movements became instrumental in shaping anti-corruption legislation and institutional reforms.

In addition, the students' movement was the main driving force for the political transition to democracy (Madrid, 1999). In order to achieve the long political transition, the students had to have multisector strategies in political mobilization and organization (Sastramidjaja, 2019). Firstly, they mobilized the factory workers to join the protest and demonstration through founding alliance from a wide range of background within the students, between the students and political parties including civil society

organization press (Russell, 2022). The most notable of alliance among the students included the National Students League for Democracy, students action front for reform and democracy, and students' solidarity for democracy. It is clear that the power of collaboration and coordination between the students, political parties and civil society could result the political transition through seeing the resignation of Suharto in 1998.

5.3.5 Inclusivity of Constitution-Making

Throughout its history, Indonesia experienced five attempts at constitutional development, occurring in 1945, 1949, 1950, 1956-1959, and 1999-2002. Among these, the 1999-2002 period was crucial in safeguarding Indonesia's transition from Suharto's authoritarian rule to a democratic institutional framework (Indrayana, 2008). The 1999-2002 constitution reviews based on the 1945 constitution rather than a totally new constitution. However, the constitution-making process under President Habibie's leadership is evaluated as highly inclusive (Montes & Vial, 2005).

Habibie introduced several critical initiatives that demonstrated a commitment to reform and set the stage for broader constitutional changes (Indrayana, 2008). These included: (i) promoting the 1998 special session of the People's Consultative Assembly (MPR) to establish the schedule for the 1999 elections; (ii) supporting comprehensive electoral reforms in 1999; (iii) liberalizing press freedom and freedom of expression; (iv) releasing political prisoners; and (v) organizing Indonesia's first democratic general election in 1999. These measures reflected a clear vision and conveyed to the public the importance of transitioning to the next stage of constitution-making.

Public participation in constitution-making was considered as high as they had the right to participate and express their concerns in the process. This is because of the abolishment of restrictive regulations and simplification of the publication license process under the administration of Habibie. These actions created an environment where the public could freely and actively express their concerns regarding constitutional amendments.

Additionally, the release of political prisoners further broadened participation. Many of these individuals, including political party leaders, student leaders, and activists including the experts and civil society organizations were key actors whose involvement was crucial for meaningful constitutional debate and reform. By fostering a more inclusive political environment, Habibie's administration ensured that public participation in the constitutional process was both extensive and representative, demonstrating a high degree of inclusivity.

Additional criticism that the People Consultative Assembly (MPR) failed to adequately involve the public in discussion on the draft amendments during their seminars and constitution-making process, the MPR began allowing more time for the amendment process and included greater public involvement from the second stage through to the final stage. For example, the first stage of public consultation and seminars were conducted in major cities or held at large hotels, which was exclude

the people from rural communities (Indrayana, 2008). However, following the criticism, the MPR's drafting committee forming expert team to support the amendment process, and the public engagement compared to the earlier period between 1999 and 2002 (Denny, 2015). Therefore, the development of Indonesia's constitution during this period can be characterized as inclusive.

5.4 Libya

5.4.1 Context

Libya's Transition to Democracy began following the 2011 revolution, which was influenced by Arab Spring and fuelled by public anger over Muammar Qaddafi's decades of oppressive rule (Boduszyński & Pickard, 2013). Following the regime's violent repression of protests led to Qadhafi's fall and the formation of the National Transition Council (NTC). The NTC took interim control and organized elections in 2012. However, the post-election period was marked by political fragmentation, the failure to draft a new constitution, and institutional deadlock, ultimately derailing Libya's democratic transition (Ichwanda & Satria, 2018). Therefore, Libya's transition to democracy is widely regarded as unsuccessful.

5.4.2 Military Support for the Transition

The military involvement in Libya transition to democracy was low due to a weak institutional structure of the military (Lutterbeck, 2011). Libya's military institution was found to be exceedingly weak, incapable of providing the stability needed for a successful political transition (Zoubir & Rozsa, 2012). This weakness was largely due to Qaddafi's strategy of structuring the military around personal loyalty and the allegiance of ethnic tribal rebels over the course of his 40-year rule (Lutterbeck, 2013). For example, Qaddafi's regime provided loyal military units with advanced weaponry, such as cluster bombs and landmines, and trained them to target civilians, torture captives, and execute prisoners. Rather than building a professional and ethical military, Qaddafi preferred a force that would protect him from any potential challenges to his power. Therefore, the capability of the military institution can be considering as low due to personalisation of the force.

Moreover, following the 2011 revolutions, the military had fragmented broadly across the region based on the interests and ideology agenda. For example, the two splits of the armies had splinted into the Eastern and Western part of the military. The one in the Eastern of arm forces called the "Libya National Army" (LNA) which is led by the former Gaddafi officer Khalifa Hifter (Makhlou, 2024). The armed formation remained deeply divided and localized, frequently clashing with each other and among themselves until the ceasefire agreement in October 2020 (Alunni, 2021). Therefore, the involvement of military in transition to democracy can be considered as low due to deep fragmentation and disunity.

5.4.3 Involvement of Opposition Political Parties

The role of opposition political parties in Libya's transition to democracy is low due to several season. Firstly, there is no clear opposition political party after the collapse of Qaddafi in October 20, 2011. However, following the fall of Qaddafi, the rebel opposition and revolution team who joined to together and found "National Transition Council" through claiming to the legitimate government of Libya (Joy, 2011). It means that NTC issued declaration as a government promise to Libyans and international community to lead the country to democracy with the vision of democratic of Libya. The NTC also formed the transitional executive council which would be responsible for preparing the country for the first free election in Libya within 8 months (Hweio, 2012). Therefore, it can be founded the emerge of political parties for the upcoming election. However, the opposition political parties were poorly institutionalised and faced many limitations and challenges getting involved and gaining traction in the transition to democracy.

One of the challenges is that political parties was lack of democratic experience and political culture after several years prohibited political parties formation by Qaddafi (Hatita, 2011). Political parties were limited to organize political events, build trust and reach out to the people (Kadlec, 2012). It was hard for political party to implement their political agenda in the community across the country (Saidin & Storm, 2024). Moreover, the involvement of political parties was limited due to its insufficient capacity to build a strong institution. This capacity limitation weakened Libya's political landscape in building a strong institution and further public engagement. It is clear that the National Transitional Council was considered as a weak performer to lead the people in Libya. The absence of a cohesive political party structure across the country prevented the formation of parliament capable of representing national interests, resulting in a fragmented political landscape (Yurtsever & Said, 2018). Therefore, the opposition groups were evaluated as low due to lack of democratic and political culture experiences.

5.4.4 Involvement of Civil Society

The involvement of civil society in transition to democracy was low due to the prohibiting of civil society under the Gaddafi regime (Jiránková, 2014). Qaddafi rejected any form of civil society, and the effort to establish such organizations because he perceived them as potential threats to his regime. These organizations could serve as platform for opposition by organizing communities at the grassroots level. He even claimed that "there is no place for civil society because Libyan society is already civil". Therefore, the civil society organization can be characterized as a low involvement in Libya transition to democracy.

Moreover, although a short period of time civil society organizations were able to operate freely after 2011 revolution, the division between eastern and western Libya, led to low involvement due to escalating concerns over security and safety. Civil society actors in Libya have been consistently and systematically targeted by the political elite, aimed at curtailing opportunities for civic engagement and public discourse (Sadi, 2023). Activists, journalists, and public figures have faced

abduction, torture, and enforced disappearances through creating an atmosphere of fear and repression. Therefore, the involvement of civil society before and during the transition to democracy can be considered a low due to these limiting factors.

5.4.5 Inclusivity of Constitution-Making

Libya constitution-making process, the coalition of opposition called the “National Transitional Council” played a significant role in constitutional development following the Gaddafi regime in 2011. However, the NTC constitutional reform planned was characterized as medium due to several reasons such as the focus on three regions representation, the exclusion of ethnic minority and women participation.

Firstly, the constitutional development plan was followed by the historical constitutional making. It means that the drafting constitutional development body call “Constitutional Draft Assembly” members must be selected for 60 members from each of three regions (Gluck, 2015). It is clear that this is inspired by the model of the 1951 constitution (Geha & Volpi, 2016). Therefore, the constitutional development plan had overall medium involvement, whilst some efforts at public participation were made.

Secondly, in term of inclusivity, there were various group oppose NTC’s plan for constitutional reform because they are not involved in the sixty-members of Constitutional Draft Assembly (CDA). It means that the issue related to the formation of the CDA was the extent of female representation (Johnson, 2017). Moreover, The Amazigh, Touareg, and Tebu minority groups voiced concerns that their representation within the CDA would be insufficient although they were the early opponents of Qaddafi. They expressed their concern because they want to make sure that they had consequential voting power within the CDA and it requires for any decision involving minority rights must have their agreement. Therefore, the constitution development in Libya could be identified as a medium in term of inclusivity. Some efforts at participation in constitution-making were made, backed by international bodies. However, overall, inclusivity is evaluated as medium and not highly participatory.

5.5 Sudan

5.5.1 Context

Sudan’s transition to democracy began in 2019 following the overthrow of longtime military ruler Omar al-Bashir through a popular uprising and opposition movements. The transition involved military leaders Abdel Fattah al-Burhan and Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo (Hemeti), who played key roles in removing al-Bashir from power. In the aftermath, the Forces of Freedom and Change (FFC) and the Transitional Military Council (TMC) reached an agreement on a power-sharing arrangement aimed at guiding Sudan toward democratic governance, with plans to hold elections in 2022 (Ali, 2020). As part of the transitional process, Abdalla Hamdok was appointed as Prime Minister to lead a government focused on peace, social justice, and economic development. However, tensions

between civilian and military factions, as well as internal divisions within the armed forces particularly between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) ultimately disrupted the transition. These divisions culminated in a military coup on October 25, 2021, before elections could take place. Therefore, Sudan's attempted democratic transition resulted in political instability, ongoing conflict, and civil war, further deepening the country's crisis.

5.5.2 Military Support for the Transition

Throughout the history, Sudan was dominated and controlled by the military in all areas such as political, social and economic. Following the Sudanese Armed Force military leader Al-Bashire ouster, the new formation of the Transitional Military Council (TMC) which is led by Burhan a chairman and Mohammed Hamdan Daglo (Mamettie) as vice-Chairman, who involved in toppling down the military regime. They played an important role before and during the transition period from authoritarian regime to transitional arrangement government through planning to hold the election within 39 months in 2022. However, although they got involved in toppling down Al-Bashire, the military involvement in Sudan transition to democracy could be characterized as low due to the competition and see democratization as a threat.

Firstly, the military involvement was considered as low due to the military perceived democratization as a threat for their assets, wealth, status, and physical safety. This situation led to the military intervention in seizing power at a time when elections were imminent (Tounsel, 2023) through protecting to target former elites and their assets (Ali et al., 2022). It is clear that the general fears of being hold accountable of past crimes especially as civilian expressed intentions to target former elites and their assets (Berridge, 2023). Therefore, the military believe maintaining their political power is the only to avoid accountability for their actions and neglecting the needs of the Sudanese people through leading to widespread suffering rather than democratization (Gavin, 2022).

In addition, although the military involvement in transition to democracy initially appeared to be a positive development, evidenced by the formation of "the Transitional Military Council" (TMC) under the leadership of SAF's Burhan and RAF's Hemedti, the transition was subsequently disrupted by the two parties' disagreement due to the power competition difference over integration timelines, and economic interested. The power struggle led to an end of the transition to democracy and results the ongoing conflicts (Chibelushi, 2024). For example, the two parties did not reach the agreement about the time frame arrangement for integration into Sudan's Armed Force (SAF) due to the proposal of RSF for 10 years whereas SAF for two years ("Civil War in Sudan," 2024). This integration threatened the RSF's financial independence as both groups controlled the economic assets. Therefore, this rivalry has halted Sudan's democratization through ending with civil war.

5.5.3 Involvement of Opposition Political Parties

In Sudan's transition to democracy, political parties played a limited role which was characterized by low involvement due to significant restriction on opposition activity. The primary opposition, the Democratic Union Party (DUP), along with other notable parties like the Sudanese Communist Party (SCP) and National Umma Party (NUP), faced severe repression. Security Officials frequently targeted opposition leaders with arrests, detentions, and raids on gatherings, effectively curtailing any meaningful political participation. Despite new political parties emerging during the transitional period, opposition leaders struggle to operate freely or pursue political agendas, as they were continuously thwarted by government crackdowns (House, 2019). Therefore, this restrictive environment demonstrates the low level of political involvement in Sudan's democratic transition.

Secondly, the political parties can be characterized as low due to lack of the capacity and resources to strengthen their organizations (Hartog, 2007). For example, many parties struggle with inadequate infrastructure and severe funding constraints, relying primarily on financial contributions from party leaders and business elites. Furthermore, political parties often lack a clear political vision, as their identities are largely shaped by regional, ethnic, or religious affiliations rather than well-developed policy programs supported by expert input (Ahmed & El-Nagar, 2003). Therefore, the political parties are considered as a low involvement in transition to democracy due to capacity limitation and organizational resources.

5.5.4 Involvement of Civil Society

The involvement of civil society in Sudan's transition to democracy can be characterized as high due to the power of civil society in removal of long-standing dictatorship Omar Al-Ashir and continuous rejecting the October 25, 2021 coup. Firstly, civil society organizations, grassroots movement, and youth groups played a pivotal role in mobilizing and organizing peaceful protests during the 2018-2019 uprising, demonstrating strong civic engagement in the democratic process (Madani, 2024). These movement create a numerous formation for political expression and participation. For instance, resistance committee were established across all states in Sudan, focusing on capacity building, trust-building, strategic movement planning, and non-violent resistance. For this process, the Sudanese Professionals Association (SPA) played a crucial role in developing strategic communication framework, fostering citizen engagement, and formulating protest tactics informed by grassroots activism (Wessels, 2023). It is clear that several of associations and organizations came together and build the coalition called "the Forces of Freedom and Change" through demanding political freedom and pushing for democratic and constitutional reforms (Towriss, 2023). Therefore, this collective action become a powerful collaboration in removing a long-term dictator Omar Al-Bashir.

5.5.5 Inclusivity of Constitution-Making

Throughout its history, Sudan has struggled to establish a permanent constitution since gaining independence in 1956. Efforts during the country's three democratic periods (1954–1958, 1964–

1969, and 1986–1989) failed to produce a lasting constitutional framework. Similarly, the military regimes of General Ibrahim Abboud (1958–1964), General Jaafar Nimeiri (1969–1985), and General Omar al-Bashir (1989–2005) were unable to draft a constitution that was widely accepted by Sudan's political forces (al-Abdin). Following the end of al-Bashir, the 2019 constitutional charter was drafted through negotiations between military and civilian actors as a framework for Sudan's democratic transition. However, the process was short-lived, as the 2021 military coup effectively ended hopes for constitution-making. Given its brief duration but initial inclusivity, the constitutional charter can be characterized as having a moderate level of significance.

The initial transition period in Sudan could be seen as a high intern of inclusivity because the constitutional development plan was developed by both parties called "Transitional Military Council (TMC) and the Forces for Freedom and Change (FFC). This agreement signalled a promising step toward democratic governance, particularly through provisions such as power-sharing and the establishment of the Sovereignty (el-Battahani, 2023). For example, the establishment of the Sovereignty Council (SC), a governing body with 11 members: five military representative, five civilian members representative, and one additional member appointed by the FFC and TMC. This is obvious that various cabinets and commissions are established as one of the processes of constitution-making. Therefore, the development of constitutional in Sudan could consider as high due to the inclusivity between the two parties.

Despite these inclusive efforts, the October 2021 military coup disrupted the transition, halting constitutional development. While the 2019 charter emphasized transitional justice, it lacked a comprehensive procedural framework for drafting Sudan's permanent constitution (Sen, 2021). While initial power-sharing between civilian and military actors was achieved, the coup ultimately ended the process, highlighting the challenges of ensuring separation of power and the rule of law during Sudan's democratic transition. Therefore, the constitutional charter can be considered of medium due to its short-lived impact

5.6 Conclusion

In conclusion, the findings from the case studies of South Africa, Indonesia, Libya, and Sudan indicate that the success or failure of democratic transitions indicates distinctions in military involvement, the role of opposition political parties, civil society engagement, and the inclusivity of the constitution-making process. These will be comparatively analysed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER SIX: COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE FINDINGS

6.1 Introduction

This chapter will analyse the findings to suggest which factors might be important in the success or failure of a democratic transition in a divided society. The chapter compares the findings according to support of the military, involvement of opposition political parties, civil society and the inclusivity of the constitution-making process. The findings suggest that support of the military for the transition and the involvement of opposition political parties may be decisive in determining whether or not a transition is successful.

Table 2: Level of key factors and democratic outcome (same as above)

Countries	Military involvement in supporting transition	Opposition Political parties' involvement	Civil society involvement	Inclusivity of the constitution process	Democratic success/failure
South Africa	Medium	High	High	High	SUCCESS
Indonesia	High	High	High	High	SUCCESS
Libya	Low	Low	Low	Medium	FAILURE
Sudan	Low	Low	High	Medium	FAILURE

6.2 Military Support for the Transition

The findings suggest that military support for a transition is an important factor in determining whether or not a country transitions to democracy. There was a clear distinction in the pattern of military support between the success cases and the failure cases. Military support in South Africa was considered medium, while in Indonesia was assessed as high. Despite these differences, both countries successfully navigated their transition to democracy. However, in Libya and Sudan military support was evaluated as low and both nations did not have a successful transition to democracy. The cases of South Africa and Indonesia suggest that a successful transition to democracy requires the military's willingness to relinquish power, engage in negotiated settlements for a single army under the civilian control, and reduce its dominance by allowing greater political

space for civilian participation in decision-making processes. Therefore, the military involvement particularly in such condition contribute a critical role in enabling democratic transition.

6.3 Involvement of opposition political parties

The findings suggest that the involvement of opposition political parties is an important factor in determining whether or not a country will successfully transition to democracy. The findings found both South Africa and Indonesia's opposition political parties' involvement was high and had a successful transition to democracy whereas Libya and Sudan had a low involvement of political parties, and there was a failure of democratic transition.

In both South Africa and Indonesia, the ability of opposition political parties to mobilize, organize and coordinate across diverse sectors of society underscores their central role in breaking through authoritarianism and paving the way for democracy. These findings highlighted the essential nature of robust political party involvement in ensuring a successful transition to democracy.

In contrast, Libya and Sudan provide examples of how restrictions on opposition political parties can hinder democratic transitions. Both countries shared a similar finding that the opposition political party's involvement was low due to the insufficient capacity to strengthen organization and institution. For example, parties did not have a clear political structure, party program, and clear political vision. Therefore, the low involvement of opposition political parties, coupled with inadequate institutional and financial capacity, emerges as a significant factor in the failure of democratic transitions in both Libya and Sudan.

6.4 Civil Society involvement

The findings suggest that civil society involvement is not a decisive factor in whether a country will transition to democracy as it was present in two success cases and one unsuccessful case at a high level. This suggests that civil society may be assist to commence a transition but may not be decisive in determining whether or not that transition is a success. In South Africa and Indonesia, where civil society involvement was evaluated as high, both countries achieved successful democratic transitions. In contrast, Sudan, despite similarly high level of civil society participation, did not experience a successful transition. Libya, on the other hand, had low levels of civil society involvement and also failed to transition to democracy. Therefore, civil society engagement does not seem decisive in determining a successful outcome.

In South Africa, the civil society involvement was rated as high due to the three patterns of strategies; mobilization and organization of individual in a large-scale to protests and demonstration, building alliance and network, and empowering community participation in politics. In Indonesia, there had some similarity with South Africa's regarding the peaceful protest and demonstrations, capacity building program, and building alliance network.

In Sudan, although civil society movement was evaluated high, but not experiences a successful transition to democracy. Similarly, civil society played a role removal long-standing dictatorship Omar Al-shir and had a similar tool in community mobilizing, network and capacity building like South Africa and Indonesia. However, the finding indicated that the biggest distinct in Sudan is that they did not have a strong connection with political parties as the political party institution are weak compared to those countries. In Libya, the civil society involvement was assessed as limited due to Gaddafi regime and security concern after the two armies' rivalry. The finding suggested that the Gaddafi regime's restriction on civil society significantly undermined its capacity to contribute to the democratic transition after the 2011 revolution. Although civil society organization briefly operated with relative freedom, their activities were systematically curtailed by the regime and political elites, who targeted civic actors and restricted opportunities for political and civic engagement. Therefore, civil society involvement is an important factor, it is not a decisive in determination of successful transition to democracy.

6.5 Inclusivity of the constitution-making process

The findings suggest that inclusivity of the constitution-making process is a somewhat important factor in contributing to a successful democratic transition, but is not decisive. In South Africa and Indonesia, the constitution-making process was evaluated as high inclusivity and there was a successful transition to democracy. However, in both Libya and Sudan there was a level of inclusivity in constitution-making, evaluated as a medium level, and yet there was not successful transition. This suggests that whilst inclusivity might be important in furthering a democratic transition, it is not alone decisive.

6.6 Conclusion

In conclusion, the findings suggest that the support of the military and involvement of opposition political parties is very important in determining the success of a transition to democracy. While civil society engagement plays a significant role in democratic transitions and the inclusivity of the constitution-making process is important, they are not decisive factors based on the comparative case studies examined. Therefore, the insights from this analysis provide valuable lessons for the prospects of democratic transition in Myanmar.

CHAPTER SEVEN: IMPLICATIONS FOR MYANMAR

7.1 Introduction

The findings suggest the military involvement of military and political parties are important for democratic outcome. By analysing the role of military, opposition political parties and civil society involvement, and constitution-making process, Myanmar better understand the key conditions necessary for a successful democratic transition.

7.2 Military

Firstly, the support of the military is a crucial part of democratic success. In South Africa, the military opened the door for negotiation from different armed organizations and facilitated dialogue to create a single army under the civilian control. The military in Indonesia, liberalized and shifted the leaders to meet the demand of the people by giving a clear vision and strategic plan toward a democratic nation. However, applying these lessons to Myanmar presents significant challenges. The Myanmar military (Tatmadaw) views itself as the ultimate guardian of national unity and has consistently resisted meaningful dialogue with democratic forces (Kipgen, 2011). The military has employed divide-and-rule tactics, co-opted certain ethnic groups, and exacerbated inter-ethnic tensions rather than fostering unity. In contrast to South Africa's experience, the African National Congress (ANC) and its armed wing's Umkhonto We Sizwe (MK) were united whereas Myanmar opposition and ethnic armed organizations remain fragmented. Therefore, a more unified and strategic collaboration rooted in a shared political vision is essential for meaningful transition to democracy in Myanmar.

Indonesia's democratic transition offers significant lessons for Myanmar, especially regarding the military's role. A key element of Indonesia's success was the willingness of reformist military leaders to respond to civilian demands and facilitate a peaceful power transfer. Myanmar's 2011 transition initially appeared to follow this model, with former general Thein Sein assuming civilian leadership. However, Myanmar's 2008 Constitution entrenches military power by guaranteeing parliamentary representation, protecting the military's political and economic interests. This constitutional structure poses a major barrier to replicating Indonesia's transition. Therefore, unless the 2008 Constitution is abolished and replaced with a new democratic framework, reducing military dominance in Myanmar's political system will remain a significant challenge. In this context, the military's willingness to participate in a genuine democratic transition is also a critical factor in determining the success of future reforms.

Otherwise, Myanmar will experience a similar situation to Sudan and Libya. In Libya, the division between Eastern Libya National Army (LNA) and Western militia under Operation Dawn had a clash frequently, which eroded the democratic transition and led to political instability. Similarly in Sudan, the competition between Sudan Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) led to the coup

as the military perceive democratization as threat. Therefore, Myanmar's military must ensure that any transition plan includes structured military reform and a clear role for the Tatmadaw in future democratic framework. Moreover, the military leaders must perceive democratic transition not as a threat, but as an opportunity to redefine their role within a stable and legitimate political order. Without this shift in perspective, Myanmar's prospects of a successful and peaceful transition to democracy will remain bleak.

7.3 Involvement of Opposition Political Parties

The finding suggested that the opposition political parties in both nations South Africa and Indonesia, are strong, united, and coordinate a wide range of actors, which was important in determining a successful democratic transition whereas Libya and Sudan found that political restriction and prohibition in operating and building trust with the public were the biggest challenges to democratic transition.

The experiences of South Africa and Indonesia offer valuable lessons for Myanmar's democratic transition. However, the National League for Democracy (NLD) failed to form alliances with key actors such as the Shan Nationalities League for Democracy (SNLD), the Arakan National Party (ANP), the 88 generation movement illustrates a missed opportunities to present a united front against military dominance (Swe, 2021). For example, the SNLD and ANP negotiate to appoint state prime ministers from those parties in Shan and Rakhine States were unsuccessful. This reflects a broader exclusion from decision-making during the NLD government formation. This exclusion weakened the democratic coalition and signalled a lack of political vision and coordination among opposition actors.

In contrast, the success of South Africa and Indonesia highlights that democratic transition requires not only unity and inclusive leadership but also the development of robust political institutions. Without such efforts, Myanmar could face the fragmented and unstable political trajectories of Libya and Sudan, where the absence of political party capacity, limited experience with democratic mobilization, and authoritarian repression led to the collapse of transitional processes. Therefore, Myanmar's opposition must learn from both successful and failed transitions. This involve building strong alliances among political parties, civil society, students, labor movements, religious institutions, business sectors, and intellectuals. Even under the current military imposed the restrictions following the military coup, political parties must remain engaged, develop strategies, and maintain organizational readiness to support future democratic governance.

7.4 Involvement of Civil Society

The research findings indicate that while the strength of civil society significantly shapes democratic transitions, it is not the sole determining factor. The experiences of South Africa, Indonesia, and

Sudan demonstrate that active civil society engagement particularly through mass mobilization, alliance-building, and community political empowerment has been critical to democratization efforts. These cases offer valuable lessons for Myanmar, especially in fostering citizen participation, establishing collaborative networks, and enhancing civic education. However, Sudan's experience also highlights a key limitation: without strong and sustained partnerships with political parties, civil society alone may struggle to effect lasting political change. This insight is particularly relevant for Myanmar, where civil society organizations often divided along ethnic and regional lines face challenges in building unified platforms. Promoting cooperation across diverse civil society actors is therefore essential. Unlike Libya, where civil society was constrained by government repression, Myanmar still holds the potential to strengthen democratic consolidation through continuous civic engagement and grassroots empowerment. To ensure a successful transition, Myanmar's civil society must adopt strategic approaches centered on mobilization, coalition-building, and inclusive political participation.

7. 5 Inclusivity of Constitution-Making

The findings indicate that while constitution-making is a critical component of democratic transitions, it is not a deciding factor. The experiences of South Africa and Indonesia demonstrate that inclusive dialogue, visionary leadership, and broad-based citizen participation are essential elements that contribute to effective democratization. In contrast, the cases of Libya and Sudan, which exhibited only moderate levels of participation, failed to achieve stable democratic outcomes, underscoring the importance of sustained dialogue and consensus-building. Although Myanmar may draw important lessons from the South African and Indonesian models, structural barriers persist most notably the requirement that constitutional amendments must be approved by a 75% parliamentary majority, which effectively grants the military veto power over any reform. However, Myanmar can still adopt the core principles of inclusive dialogue, active civic engagement, and democratic leadership. Given the country's ethnic diversity, the exclusion of minority voices from constitutional reform risks deepening social divisions and replicating the failures observed in Libya. Therefore, for Myanmar to achieve a successful and sustainable democratic transition, its constitutional process must be grounded in inclusivity, responsive leadership, and the meaningful participation of all its citizens.

7.6 Conclusion

In conclusion, this study highlights several critical conditions necessary for Myanmar's democratic transition, drawn from the comparative analysis of South Africa, Indonesia, Libya, and Sudan. First, meaningful reform within the military is essential specifically, a shift away from viewing democratization as a threat toward recognizing it as an opportunity for national unity and stability.

Second, the opposition requires to be united, include all group, and strategically organized through visionary leadership to challenge authoritarian control and gain public support. Third, civil society must play a more unified and strategic role, using context-sensitive approaches such as peaceful mobilization, civic education, and engagement with political actors. Finally, constitutional reform must be inclusive, participatory, and representative of Myanmar's ethnic and political diversity. Without such reforms, Myanmar could face the same failures witnessed in Libya and Sudan. The following chapter will situate these findings within the broader academic literature on democratization and state-building.

CHAPTER EIGHT: CONCLUSION: IMPLICATIONS FOR SCHOLARSHIP AND FOR DEMOCRATIC TRANSITIONS

8.1 Introduction

This part of the study will examine the finding implication for the existing scholarship and overall conclusions to the study.

8.2 Military

This study shows that the military can play both helpful and harmful role in democratic transition. In certain contexts, such as the South Africa and Indonesia, the military contributed to stabilizing political conditions and gradually transferring authority to civilian leadership. These cases supported existing scholarship that emphasizes the significance of elite pacts and negotiated settlements between military and civilian leaders in enabling peaceful transition (May et al., 2004).

However, the findings also confirm concerns raised by scholars that the military often resists giving up power (Said, 2012). It may continue to control politics and the economy behind the scenes, making it harder to build real democracy (Yamahata, 2023). While some military coups in highly authoritarian regimes may create opportunities for change, they still carry risks. although the military involvement can provide initial support during transitional periods, the establishment of durable democratic institutions ultimately requires firm civilian control and sustained efforts to curtail military influence in political life. Therefore, a successful transition depends on whether the military truly accepts civilian rule and steps away from politics (Varol, 2017) (Thyne & Powell, 2016). Therefore,

In short, while the military can help in the early stages of transition, strong civilian control is crucial to achieving lasting democracy. Future efforts must focus on limiting military influence and strengthening democratic institutions.

8.3 Involvement of Opposition Political Parties

Following the end of the cold war, many countries around the world transition from the military regime to democracy and opposition armed groups transformed into political parties (Manning, 2004). These opposition parties played an important role in ending authoritarian regimes and building democratic systems. This was seen in South Africa and Indonesia, where the African National Congress (ANC) and the Indonesian Democratic Party led in mobilizing people together and organizing protest through working closely with civil society, grassroots movements, and media. This supports the existing the scholarship argued that political parties serve as crucial role in for organizing mass movements and challenging military rule (McKenzie, 1977).

In addition to institutional structures, visionary and inclusive leadership emerges as a critical factor in democratic transitions (Habib, 1995). Leaders like Nelson Mandela and Megawati Sukarnoputri exemplify how effective leadership can guide and inspire public participation. These findings further support the argument that opposition leaders are instrumental not only in dismantling authoritarian regimes but also in constructing democratic institutions and upholding political rights and electoral integrity (Lowenthal & Bitar, 2016). Therefore, the study confirms that both strong opposition and effective leadership are central to successful democratization process.

8.4 Involvement of Civil Society

The involvement of civil society is widely regarded in the scholarly literature as a key driver of democratic transitions. The literature demonstrated that civil society operates independently from the state, monitoring state power, delineating the boundaries of state intervention, and enhancing democratic processes (Kean & Walker, 1989). This aligns with the findings that civil society organizations (CSOs) play a crucial role in mobilizing individuals for large-scale demonstrations and protests against authoritarian regimes. These findings support Larry Diamond's emphasis on the extensive mobilization of civil society as a significant force for democratic change (Diamond, 1994). Examples from countries such as South Africa and Indonesia demonstrate the pivotal role of civil society in facilitating successful democratic transitions. However, the findings suggest that high involvement of civil society is not sufficient for a democratic transition, and that other factors may be of even higher importance.

8.5 Inclusivity in Constitution-Making

Many scholars emphasize the critical role of the constitution-making process in democratization, highlighting its importance in preventing the return of political violence and in providing a valuable opportunity to establish new political institutions and frameworks during transitions to democracy (Du Plessis et al., 2015). This aligns with the finding that successful democratization often requires a political agreement between pro-authoritarian and pro-democratic groups. For example, South Africa's successful transition was facilitated by compromises between elites from the military regime and opposition leaders during negotiations. However, the current findings suggest that inclusivity in constitution-making is not sufficient in ensuring a democratic transition and that factors such as support of the military and the involvement of opposition political parties may be even more important.

8.6 Conclusion

In conclusion, the comparative analysis emphasizes the key support of the military and involvement of opposition political parties as key to a successful democratic transition. Civil society involvement and inclusive constitution-making are likely important, but not decisive. Overall, the findings suggest

that nation-building or policy-making during transitions to democracy needs to focus on paying attention to the involvement of the military establishment and political parties in the transition process. Civil society and inclusive constitution-making are important but alone do not appear to determine a successful transition to democracy. Therefore, the finding suggest that the military and opposition political parties are the main driving force into a successful transition to democracy from the case studies.

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