Northern Illinois University
Huskie Commons

Graduate Research Theses & Dissertations | Graduate Research & Artistry

2019

Cultural models of democracy among Burmese residents in Chicago, Illinois, and Fort Wayne, Indiana

John Hillory Hood

Follow this and additional works at: https://huskiecommons.lib.niu.edu/allgraduate-thesesdissertations

Recommended Citation

Hood, John Hillory, "Cultural models of democracy among Burmese residents in Chicago, Illinois, and Fort Wayne, Indiana" (2019). *Graduate Research Theses & Dissertations*. 2026.
https://huskiecommons.lib.niu.edu/allgraduate-thesesdissertations/2026

This Dissertation/Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate Research & Artistry at Huskie Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Graduate Research Theses & Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Huskie Commons. For more information, please contact jschumacher@niu.edu.

ABSTRACT

CULTURAL MODELS OF DEMOCRACY AMONG BURMESE RESIDENTS
IN CHICAGO, ILLINOIS, AND FORT WAYNE, INDIANA

John Hillory Hood, M.A.
Department of Anthropology
Northern Illinois University, 2019
Giovanni Bennardo, Director

This thesis examines implicit assumptions about democracy among Burmese residents in Chicago, Illinois and Fort Wayne, Indiana. A major focus of the research is the durability of foundational cultural models – basic, simple, widely-shared modes of thought – that may or may not change over time, measured in this study through length-of-residency. As such, I examined three distinct sample groups: temporary residents, immigrants, and adult offspring of immigrants. This research comprised methods of ethnography, semi-structured interviews, as well as a free-listing memory task. A key point of inquiry is intracultural variation occurring between sample groups. Particular attention was paid to heterogenous discourses from opinion communities, and the inner conflict that such discourses can generate within the mind.

Key Words: Burma, Myanmar, Southeast Asia, democracy, cultural model, discourse analysis, cognitive anthropology, intracultural variation, cultural durability, cultural memory, refugee, migration, diaspora, authoritarianism

NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
DEKALB, ILLINOIS

MAY 2019

CULTURAL MODELS OF DEMOCRACY AMONG BURMESE RESIDENTS IN CHICAGO, ILLINOIS, AND FORT WAYNE, INDIANA

BY

JOHN HILLORY HOOD
©2019 John Hillory Hood

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE
MASTER OF ARTS

DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY

Thesis Director:

Giovanni Bennardo

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis would not have been possible without several people. I would like to acknowledge my thesis director, Giovanni Bennardo, from whom I learned so much about cognitive anthropology and who worked very closely with me even while on sabbatical. I would like to acknowledge Andrea Molnar for all she has taught me about cultural anthropology and Southeast Asia. I would like to thank committee member, Emily McKee, for her constant guidance and dedicated mentoring. I must thank Judy Ledgerwood for setting an example of what embodies a truly great academic, and for all her instruction from anthropological theory to Southeast Asian studies. I would like to thank Stephen Buttes at Purdue University for helping connect me to other faculty and members of the Burmese community in Fort Wayne. I would like to acknowledge Caitlin Bemis for her support as both a peer-reviewer and a dear friend. I would like to thank Tevita Manu'atu for his help with analysis software and his support as a friend and *toko* for life. None of my success at NIU would be possible without April Law; I cannot express the immense importance of her role in our department. Likewise, the success of every graduate student in our department is thanks to Ruthann Yeaton, an adept problem-solver, a good-listener, and an all-around great person. Lastly, I would like to thank all of my Burmese friends for their crucial and instrumental help with translation.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my mother, Hope Hood, who taught me the importance of education from an early age, and who has devoted her life to educating children.

I also dedicate this thesis to my grandmother, Jean McClintock, who taught me to persevere against all odds and never to give up in the face of adversity.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

LIST OF TABLES vii

LIST OF FIGURES viii

Chapter

1. INTRODUCTION 1

2. BAMAR RESIDENTS IN THE UNITED STATES 9

The Nation of Burma/Myanmar 9

Conflicts Prompting Migration Waves 12

Cultural and Analytical Concepts from Ethnographic Literature 15

Cosmological Conceptions of Political Legitimacy 16

Social Organization 22

Diaspora Studies 26

Conclusion 31

3. ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORKS 32

Cultural Model Theory in Cognitive Anthropology 32

The Internalization Process 38

Durability of Cultural Models 40

Conventional Discourse and Heterogenous Speech 46

Chapter Page

Conclusion 47

4. METHODOLOGY 48

Sampling 48

Data Collection 51

Collecting Ethnographic Data 51

Collecting and Analyzing Linguistic Data 51

Collecting Cognitive Data 55

Conclusion 57

5. BURMESE CULTURAL MODELS 58

Foundational Cultural Models 59

Burmese Cultural Models of Democracy 64

Elite Youth Cultural Model: *Opening the Floodgates* 64

Migrant Cultural Model: *Subordinating the Military* 76

Second-Generation Cultural Model: *Individualization* 84

Conclusion 91

6. DISCUSSION 94

7. CONCLUSION 101

BIBLIOGRAPHY 106

LIST OF TABLES

Table Page

Table 4.1 Participant Demographics 50

Table 4.2 Keyword Examples 54

Table 5.1 Cultural Models Comparison..... 59

Table 5.2 Freelisting Terms Comparison 61

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure Page

Figure 1: Example of the core and peripheral nodes of a mental model 34

Figure 2: Document portrait from MAXQDA of an Elite Youth participant 55

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This study examines implicit assumptions about 'democracy' among Burmese participants residing in the greater Chicago, Illinois metropolitan area and Fort Wayne, Indiana. I collected data between March and July of 2018. I developed the following research questions:

What are the implicit assumptions about 'democracy' among Burmese residents in the United States?

- Are there commonly shared implicit assumptions about democracy? Is there variation among these implicit assumptions? If so, what are the variations and why do they exist?
- Does an indigenous Burmese worldview influence implicit assumptions? Does this foundational worldview change over the migration experience? If so, to what degree and in what form?

I generated three hypotheses to test aspects of these research questions. First, I hypothesized that a foundational worldview exists among the Bamar[1] is sociocentric in nature. This sociocentric aspect refers to the general predisposition for a person within a community to

---

[1] Bamar refers specifically to the ethnic group sometimes referred to as Burmans in older literature.

focus on others before oneself.[2] This predisposition thereby generates certain types of behavior in which consideration of other-than-ego is privileged over ego (Miller 1984, 961-978; Triandis et al. 1988, 323-338; Triandis 1989, 269-289; 1995, 19-20, 26-28, 43-80, 170-187; 2001, 907-924; Markus and Kitayama 1991, 224-253; Neher 1994, 949-961; Kusserow 1999; Strauss 2000, 85-114; Weisner 2001; Nisbett 2003, 47-77; Shimizu 2011, 431; Bennardo 2009, 173-178, 202, 299, 336-339; Smith 2012; Bennardo and De Munck 2014, 121-124; Marecek and Christopher 2018). This sociocentric foundational worldview should influence implicit assumptions about 'democracy.' Second, I hypothesized that due to this sociocentric disposition, 'individual rights' would be largely absent from implicit assumptions of 'democracy.' Thirdly, I hypothesized that some form of variation of implicit assumptions would be present across members of the diasporic communities, due to different life experiences.

I attempted to employ a control variable of Bamar ethnicity among participants to constrain potentially large variation among the multiple Burmese ethnic groups who reside in the United States. The independent variable of ethnicity allowed me to elicit implicit assumptions specific to Bamar cognition. In terms of sampling, I employed a snowballing technique, through which the quest for individuals of Bamar ethnicity led to the emergence of three distinct samples groups, each of which comprise unique migrant categories: 1) temporary Burmese residents 2)

---

[2] Sociocentrism and egocentrism should not be considered as a rigid dichotomy, but rather as a continuum across societies as well as individuals. Sociocentrism does not preclude egocentrism, nor vice-versa. Sociocentrism does not imply that individuals have no sense of 'self.' Entire societies cannot be homogenized into such overgeneralized classifications à la Orientalism or Occidentalism. Studies on sociocentric and egocentric tendencies (such as those listed in this paragraph) have become increasingly more nuanced and culturally specific over time, indicating that these tendencies are context specific. As such, the conditions for sociocentrism in Burma/Myanmar are uniquely Burmese.

Burmese migrants, 3) second-generation Burmese-Americans. I employed an independent variable of length-of-residency in order to analyze implicit assumptions about democracy differing across the diasporic experience. This strategy allowed for the testing of durability and intracultural variation. I also examined other independent variables, such as generation, type of schooling, and social class, but to a lesser degree, and discussed them only if and when significant. Through snowballing, place-of-residency also emerged as an independent variable, thus leading to three primary independent variables: time, place, and ethnicity.

In order to answer my research questions and test my hypotheses, I acquired ethnographic data via literature review and traditional methodology such as participant observation, linguistic data via semi-structured interviews, and cognitive data via a freelisting memory task. To analyze the data, I utilized conventional discourse analysis as well as strategies within the cultural model analytical framework. A cultural model is a mental organization of knowledge that is intersubjectively shared among a community and that contributes to the constructions of behavior. There may exist, firstly, foundational cultural models, which are basic, simple, and widely-shared mental models, and secondly, molar cultural models that are more complex and typically build on – and include – foundational cultural models while using other types of knowledge (Brewer 1987, 187-197; Shore 1996, , 45, 53-54, 69-70, 116-134; Kronenfeld 2008, 67-74; Bennardo 2009, 12-13, 345; Shimizu 2011, 431-433; Bennardo and Kronenfeld 2011, 93-95; Bennardo and DeMunck 2014, 51-55; Bennardo 2018, para. 3).

The field sites comprised two areas of the midwestern United States with sizable Burmese communities, specifically the greater Chicago metropolitan area and Fort Wayne, Indiana. The two sites vary to a large degree in terms of overall general population, ratio of

Burmese residents, as well as distribution patterns of Burmese residents. A key difference between the two research sites exists in terms of ethnic segregation. While there are nearly similar amounts of Burmese residents in the Chicago metropolitan and Fort Wayne, the overall ratios differ starkly.

The Chicago metropolitan area is highly populated at roughly 9.6 million (United States Census Bureau 2017). There are approximately 7,000 Burmese residents within this area, only about 0.07% of the population; which is to say only 1 out of nearly 1400 residents are of Burmese origin (Husain and Marx 2017). As such, each Burmese ethnicity tends to keep to their own specific ethnic group. For example, the Rohingya tend to live in the same area and have a cultural center unto themselves. Likewise, the Karen community lead a similar existence, residing in pockets of ethnic insulation. Burmese residents, of various ethnicities, are largely separated across the Chicago metropolitan area. The Bamar ethnic group, a relatively small number when compared with the other ethnicities, appeared particularly scattered, based simply upon my own observation.

Fort Wayne, Indiana has a much smaller population than Chicago, at roughly 265,000 (United States Census Bureau 2017). I found the various ethnic Burmese communities in Fort Wayne to be much more homogenized than in Chicago, most likely due simply to a matter of numbers. It is estimated that there are at least 6,000 Burmese residents in Fort Wayne (estimates range between 5,000 and 7,000), equating to 2% of the population; which is to say that nearly 1 in every 44 residents are of Burmese origin (Bogue 2015; Burmese-American Community Institute 2017). The immigration dates to Fort Wayne appear clearer than those to Chicago.

The United States began relocating Burmese to Fort Wayne in the 1990s following the 8/8/88 uprising in Burma/Myanmar (Bogue 2015). In 1991, the United States government designated Fort Wayne as a Burmese resettlement site due to low unemployment, presence of jobs requiring little to no skills in English, low housing costs, and a relatively low crime rate (Hickey 2007, 28). By the late 1990s, 500 Burmese had been resettled in Fort Wayne via the Catholic Charities (Bogue 2015). It is likely that participants from this group are included in this study.

The second wave of migration to Fort Wayne occurred in the early 2000s, comprising mostly uneducated farmers and jungle fighters who were fleeing encroaching military campaigns by the junta, with these Burmese having spent time in Thai refugee camps (Hickey 2007, 28). The late 2000s saw a greater influx of roughly 1500 Burmese, including ethnic groups such as Mon and Karen, but many Muslims as well (Bogue 2015). A third-wave of over a thousand Rohingya began arriving in 2013, with a Burmese mosque constructed in 2015 (Stockman 2018). To the best of my awareness, no members of these groups participated in this study.

In Fort Wayne, multiple ethnicities and religious faiths mingle at Burmese restaurants and stores. While there are mosques, temples, and churches devoted to the different Burmese ethnic groups, their unity as refugees from Burma/Myanmar[3] in a moderately small city seems to

---

[3] The name of this country is a complex and politically-charged issue. Formerly known as Burma, and still recognized as such by Western countries such as the United States, the nation of Burma officially changed the name to Myanmar in 1989. Many who opposed the military junta refused to call the country Myanmar, especially in response to the events of the 1990 election. Ironically, both “Burma” and “Myanmar” refer to the dominant ethnic group in the country, the Bamar, with the former being a colloquial term and the latter a literary term for the same people. For the purposes of avoiding apparent bias on my part, and since my participants used different terms for the country, as well as in the hopes of avoiding confusion, I will refer to the nation as Burma/Myanmar throughout this thesis.

have coalesced these variant communities, likely forming a somewhat insulated opinion community. In the shops and restaurants, I observed these differing faiths and ethnicities interacting amicably. From my conversations and observations, most Burmese residents live on the south side of the city, a visibly impoverished and reportedly crime-ridden area. Many Burmese live in subsidized, low-income housing – rows of small tan houses adjoined together in a long chain. There are gas stations in the area called "City Mart," complete with a replicated logo on the sign mimicking that of the well-known chain of grocery stores in Burma/Myanmar. It should be noted, that all participants from Fort Wayne resided on the south side of the city.

This study contributes to existing bodies of research in such fields as anthropology, cognitive science, political science, migration studies, and area studies. Regarding subfields of and research concentrations within anthropology, this study contributes to cognitive anthropology through cultural model research; cultural anthropology through migrant studies; political anthropology through the inquiry of democracy and autocracy; linguistic anthropology through investigative methods; anthropology of religion through examination of Theravada Buddhism; and anthropology of development in terms of how to best interact with countries transitioning to democracy.

It should be noted that there is no 'perfect' model of democracy upon which to base this study. Due to the vast varieties of democracies around the world, and the amount of conflicting definitions among researchers, I do not claim one variation of democracy to be more valid than others. I considered basing this research in a political science definition of democracy, but such

an approach would be idealized and potentially ethnocentric, rather than as a baseline 'standard' definition of democracy. The term 'democracy' is often employed loosely, with each individual projecting implicit assumptions about the concept. While political science definitions of democracy, or types of democracy, may be useful in an academic sense, ordinary citizens likely have their own conceptions.

As such, policymakers should be aware that there is no universal conceptualization of democracy, especially in countries like Burma/Myanmar where 'democracy' is an English loan word. Localized conceptualizations will be dependent upon indigenous worldview, historical processes, and individual life experiences. For example, in a national survey, 80% of people in Burma/Myanmar believed the 2015 elections would have a positive effect. Of those people, when asked, "What does democracy mean?" 53% replied 'freedom' while 35% stated that they did not know (Asia Foundation 2014b, 61).

Such has been the case in other Southeast Asian countries. In Timor Leste, 36% of those polled equated 'democracy' with 'freedom of speech,' while no one equated 'democracy' with 'elections' (Asian Foundation 2001, 28). The United Nations began democracy-building efforts in Cambodia in 1993, yet as of a 2014 survey, there remains a weak understanding of 'democracy,' associated with 'freedoms' rather than 'self-governance' (Asia Foundation 2014a, 13). Policy makers need to be aware of current understandings of 'democracy' in countries that are actively building greater political capacity in terms of self-governance. There must also be greater recognition of the ways in which the concept of 'democracy' is indigenized into existing cognitive models of political and social life.

In regard to Burmese language translation, it should be noted that some Burmese terms appear as footnotes with the original Burmese script present. Since there is no universal, standardized transliteration system for Burmese, certain Burmese terms are sometimes spelled in unique ways by different scholars. In such instances, I have provided a footnote describing alternate transliteration appearing in other texts, but have included Burmese script for clarity.

In Chapter 2, I provide an overview of the Bamar people, their country-of-origin, my research sites, and previous works within which this study is situated. In Chapter 3, I address the theoretical frameworks employed in this study. In Chapter 4, I describe the methodology used for data collection and analysis. In Chapter 5, I present analysis and results of the data obtained from my ethnographic research, the semi-structured interviews I conducted, and the freelisting memory tasks I administered. In Chapter 6, I provide a brief discussion of the research and its results. In Chapter 7, I close this work with a summation of findings, contribution to various fields of study, and implications for policy making. Finally, I suggest possible future research avenues opened by the results obtained.

CHAPTER 2

BAMAR RESIDENTS IN THE UNITED STATES

The Nation of Burma/Myanmar

Given the diasporic nature of the people focused on in this study, it is important to understand the country from which participants originated. Burma/Myanmar is a country in Southeast Asia, located between India, China, and Thailand. While territorial domination may have begun with village founders, Burma/Myanmar as a classical state ruling polity emerged between the 9th and 11th centuries CE[4] with the Kingdom of Bagan.[5] The Bamar ethnic group conquered other lowland groups, consolidating power through a series of kingships until being colonized by the British in 1824. Following independence in 1948, the Bamar ethnic group assumed control of the state apparatus constructed by the British colonizers. With the subsequent post-independence assassinations of General Aung San and his officers, purportedly due to Aung San's position of ethnic inclusion, U Nu assumed the presidency. Employing a rationale of threats posed by minority groups, such as the Shan and Kayah, the military, under command of Ne Win, led a coup in 1962, deposing U Nu, and effectively installed a socialist dictatorship that

---

[4] This date, while more historically accurate, is sooner than generally recognized due to the popularly aggrandized 'first king' of Burma/Myanmar, King Anawrahta (Aung-Thwin and Aung-Thwin 2012, 80).

[5] Bagan (ပုဂံ), sometimes spelled Pagan in older literature

lasted decades (Ho 2008, 185; Swearer 2010, 110-116; Aung-Thwin and Aung-Thwin 2012, 25, 44, 73, 77, 80, 83, 256; Egreteau 2016, 41).

Elections during this time merely reaffirmed one-party institutional power. Bamar-dominated central areas elected military officers, while the military government selected token members of different ethnolinguistic groups at the peripheries to increase the regime's legitimacy in those areas, as well as to help better bring those areas under control through localized bureaucratic surveillance. Such attempts proved largely unsuccessful, as village lineage and the influence of local monks remained impervious to outside state-based interference (Taylor 2009, 328-332).

A significant uprising in 1988 rendered the election of 1990 markedly different. While this uprising seemingly culminated on August 8 of 1988, the conflict began earlier in March, as a drunken son of a member of the military regime attacked a student in a tea shop after an altercation about music. Outraged by the attack, the students returned to campus and gathered a group to return, resulting in more violence. This violence further enraged more students who began protesting, only to be met with severe reactions from the military government in the form of beating, arrests, murders and the closing of schools (Lintner 1990, 1-12).

Following the events in March, the situation quieted until June when further student protests and violence erupted. Throughout July, the military government continued to arrest suspected dissidents. As the auspicious date of 8/8/88 approached, a cartoonist for *Cherry* magazine created an image of the Statue of Liberty breaking a chain comprising four eights. The student movement capitalized on the image by communication via radio and with calls to rise against the government on that date (Lintner 1990, 77, 87-91). The military government killed

hundreds of student protestors between August 8th and August 12th of 1988 in Yangon, during what came to be known as the 8/8/88 Movement. In September of 1988, the regime murdered over 3,000 additional protesters on the orders of General Saw Maung. Following the killings, thousands of students and prodemocracy reformists fled into the geographical peripheries of the country, such as the area bordering Thailand (Fink 2009, 46-59).

Due to the uprising, the military regime promised multiparty fair elections in 1990. This promise prompted the pro-democracy formation of the National League for Democracy (NLD) party. Aung San Suu Kyi, daughter of independence leader General Aung San, began giving speeches calling for nonviolent protest against the military regime and a call for a 'second struggle for independence.' She focused on fostering a democratic spirit within the Burmese people to overcome the purported Burmese propensity for government avoidance[6] and rejection of foreign concepts, as per her own characterization of the Burmese. The military retaliated by placing Aung San Suu Kyi and other top leadership of the NLD under house arrest ten months before the 1990 election. This tactic ultimately backfired as the NLD received 59.87 percent of the valid vote in an election with the highest voter turnout in Burmese electoral history. The military regime refused to transfer power to the NLD, leading to two decades of internal strife and disdain from the international community (Taylor 2009, 403-485).

The 2010 election, while touted by the government as the first 'free and fair' election since 1960 did not include the NLD. There are multiple reasons for exclusion of the NLD,

---

[6] The Five Enemies (ရန်သူမျိုးငါးပါး), government, fire, famine, flood, and plague – signifying that the government is to be avoided if possible, and if not then bribed (Spiro 1967, 138).

although these can be boiled down to two primary reasons. Firstly, many members of the NLD sought to boycott the elections on the grounds that the results of the 1990 election be instituted. Secondly, the military government severely hindered the NLD by implementing so many regulations regarding political parties. For example, the regime outlawed foreign donations, thereby cutting off funding from political dissidents who had fled abroad. Thanks to reforms instituted in 2011, the 2015 general election resulted in the NLD party taking power in a landslide victory, as the quasi-civilian government largely stepped down during the transition of power; yet still, the military retains 25% of seats in parliament, as per the current constitution (Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar 2008; Ho 2008, 185; Swearer 2010, 110-116; Aung-Thwin and Aung-Thwin 2012, 25, 44, 73, 77, 80, 83, 256; Egreteau 2016, 41).

Conflicts Prompting Migration Waves

It is important to briefly explain the historical situations in Burma/Myanmar that prompted migration to the United States. There are an estimated 4.25 million Burmese living abroad, but this number includes other drivers beyond conflict, such as economic and environmental migration. The majority, nearly 70%, live in Thailand. Nearly 15% are based in Malaysia. From here the numbers decline with 4.6% in China, 3.9% in Singapore, and only about 1.9% in the United States (International Organization for Migration 2018). Based on census information from 2000 and 2010, there are approximately 168,000 Burmese residing in the United States (Pew Research Center 2017). This number may be less than the actual amount due to census methodology used which excludes temporary students, re-migrants, second-generation, and other Burmese peoples (Cheah 2008, 200).

The ‘first-wave’ of Burmese migrants occurred between 1967 and 1988, thanks to the liberalization of American immigration policies by way of the 1965 Immigration Act, which abolished anti-Asian targeting. The military coup by Ne Win in 1962 largely motivated this ‘first wave’ to migrate. The military regime adopted an ethno-nationalist platform in which non-Bamar peoples became the victims of violence and economic oppression. The military regime forced non-Bamar to ‘de-ethnicize’ in order to participate in society, adopting Bamar names, Buddhist practices, and other aspects of prescribed Bamar ethnic identifiers. Those migrants able to leave ‘re-ethnicized’ once in the United States, readopting aspects of their Chinese heritage (Cheah 2008, 199-203; 2011, 82-83, 118).

The military regime made it very difficult to emigrate, allowing people to leave with only $100 as of 1966, and only $64 as of 1980, eventually dwindling to $0. Some migrants smuggled money through the black market, but most immigrated to the United States with very little money. The skills preference option of the 1965 Immigration Act permitted this ‘first wave’ into the United States, not as refugees but as economic migrants. The anti-Chinese riots in Burma/Myanmar in 1967 further prompted migrations, as tensions between Burmese nationalists and Chinese Maoists boiled over into violence. Immigrants of the ‘first-wave’ constituted mostly ethnic Chinese, many of whom relocated to California such as the Bay Area. These immigrants had been mostly middle and upper class in Burma/Myanmar (Cheah 2008, 199-203; 2011, 82-83, 118; Seekins 2006, 74-75).

The ‘second-wave’ from 1988 through 2006 comprised more diverse ethnic groups, including Bamar. The beginning of this wave is marked by the 1988 student uprising, which prompted some of the migration. Roughly 3,000 Bamar students and professors relocated to the

United States either as students or visitors. Of those, nearly 2,000 relocated to Fort Wayne, Indiana. Since many had migrated by means of a student or visitor visa, many could not work legally and had difficulty finding more than just odd jobs. Fearful of deportation, many remained in the United States illegally, with only few seeking asylum (Cheah 2008, 199-203; 2011, 82-83, 118).

Like the 'first-wave,' this 'second-wave' included ethnic Chinese, but by this time they had undergone a process of 'burmanization' by which they adopted Bamar names and lost a great deal of their Chinese language skills, as well as cultural heritage. These ethnically Chinese citizens more willing adapted to Bamar lifestyle under the military regime to survive economically. These 'burmanized' Chinese-Burmese who immigrated to the United States had mostly been educated and belonged to the upper or middle class. With the black-market money smuggling network to the United States now better situated, more of these immigrants could bring wealth abroad than in the previous wave. Other ethnic groups who arrived during the 'second-wave' had been more resistant to 'burmanization,' such as the Karen, Chin, and Kachin, among others, who retained their names, language, and cultural heritage. Such groups fled ethno-nationalist policies as well as civil war (Cheah 2008, 199-203; 2011, 82-83, 118).

The 'third-wave' began in 2006, with a massive influx of Karen to the United States. Due to an opening of immigration in State Department policy, nearly 13,000 Karen migrated to the United States between October 2006 and August 2007 (Cheah 2008, 202). Protracted civil wars with non-Bamar ethnic groups have prompted ongoing migration since 2006, including many Karen, and other groups such as Chin and Kachin. Arguably, a 'fourth-wave' began in 2015 with the influx of over 5,000 Rohingya to the United States in places such as Chicago and Fort

Wayne, Indiana (Farabaugh 2017). This 'fourth-wave' may be short-lived, since the Trump administration announced in 2017 that it would reduce refugee slots from 110,000 to 45,000, but only allowed in less than 20,000 refugees by the end of the last fiscal year (Krupa and Feleke 2018).

Cultural and Analytical Concepts from Ethnographic Literature

In terms of ethnographic background relevant to this study, three major topics need to be addressed. Firstly, Burmese conceptions of political legitimacy and authority are of direct relevance. These conceptions have developed over many centuries through the formation of a complex cosmology. Secondly, social organization must be explored, given the relevance of sociocentrism inherent in Burmese society. Lastly, diaspora studies, especially those of Southeast Asian immigrants to the United States, will help to provide context to this study. I have chosen the diaspora studies most relevant to my research.

Cosmological Conceptions of Political Legitimacy

While Myanmar is typically conceived of as a Theravada Buddhist country, religion in Myanmar is a complex system involving indigenous beliefs and practices along with other systems of outside influence, specifically Brahmanic Hinduism and Theravada Buddhism.

Within the Burmese cognitive map, the world is a dangerous place, full of spirits that can cause harm. These spirits are thought to occupy the landscape in Southeast Asia, existing as the original owners and lords of certain physical domains, often associated with notable aspects of the landscape (Tannenbaum and Kammerer 2003, 16). These spirits are dangerous because they are powerful and are not bound by the consequences of their behavior (Durrenberger and

Tannenbaum 1992, 80). Since the spirit(s) is the original owner of the land, a relationship between the spirit and the human inhabitants is necessary. This relationship assumes the form of an original contract between the human founder(s) who cleared the land for settlement and the spirit that rules the land. The contract is one in which the humans agree to propitiate the spirits through offerings in exchange for the well-being of the human community, such as bountiful harvests or healthy children. Due to the ability to initiate such a contract, the founder is associated with power, charisma, and potency. The successor to the founder, often of the founder's lineage but in some cases appointed, must maintain this contract. The original founder's potency is thought to be transferred down through successors (Tannenbaum and Kammerer 2003, 3-4, 6).

It should be noted that these spirits can take many forms. Some having been wild nature spirits transformed into guardian spirits to protect humans. Others may have been the spirits of the founders themselves or of other original human inhabitants now in guardian spirit form. The particular spirit form depends upon the area and people, and thus variation on this theme is present across Southeast Asia. Some guardian spirits may rule over a small domain, with other spirits possessing dominion over much larger landscapes. Guardian spirit lords exist at the household level, village level, regional level, national level, and in some cases even at a global level. This system of guardian spirit lords reflects a sociopolitical order, and indeed many guardian spirit lords are former rulers or kings. In such a way, households and villages could be aggregated as leaders sought to consolidate power (Tannenbaum and Kammerer 2003, 4-9). Such networks of unequally distributed sociopolitical power thus form a 'chain of being,' with entities ranked according to their power and level of their lordship. While guardian spirit lords provide

well-being for the village, their power also connotates protection – the more powerful the guardian spirit, the greater the degree of protection (Durrenberger and Tannenbaum 1992, 80).

In Burma/Myanmar, these spirit lords are known as *nat*.[7] Burmese kings transformed spirits into *nat* spirit lords by means of royal decrees, thereby instituting them as guardian *nat* of Burma/Myanmar through a transformative ritual (Spiro 1967, 47-54). As such, the *nat* are conceived of as ruling in tandem with the king (Lehman 2003, 28). Bénédicte Brac de la Perrière (1989, 20) has suggested that *nat* cosmology quite probably emerged out of ancestor veneration, echoing founders' ideology. As with founder ideology, guardian *nat* rule over different levels of domain. In Burma/Myanmar, it is no different, with guardian *nat* existing at the household, family, village, district, national, and global levels. The national *nat* of Burma/Myanmar, the Taungbyone Brothers are two Muslims put to death by King Anawrahta[8] (Spiro 1967, 97-101, 113-14).

As Indian traders interacted with Myanmar over the course of history, elements of Hinduism came to be indigenized within the local political-religious framework. Local leaders adopted Hinduism, capitalizing on the concept of the *devaraja* to increase their legitimacy. The *devaraja* is a divine ruler, loosely translated as 'god-king,' his legitimacy and authority conceptualized through the law of karma. Certain Brahmanic Hindu beliefs thus fused with the indigenous *nat* cosmology, since the organization of kingdoms reflected the model of Indra's

---

[7] 'nat' (နတ်) – a Burmese spirit lord, sometimes spelled 'naq' in other literature

[8] Anawrahta (အနော်ရထာ) – sometimes spelled Aniruddha in other literature

domain.[9] Southeast Asia thus adopted Indian models of state-building through symbolic rather than pragmatic means in terms of assuming power over peoples. Hindu cosmology merged with the local indigenous context, such as the 32-part Hindu *devata* cosmology[10] being fused with the 32-part galactic polity of the Mon people. This notion explains why a major Hindu deity, Indra, king of the gods, plays an important role in the *nat* tradition, reinterpreted as the king of the *nat* called Thagya Min, who has rulership over the entire world. With the addition of Indra and the guardians of the four quarters, Burmese kings ruled over the kingdom through the Cult of the 37 *Nat* spirit lords, imbuing rulers with enhanced legitimization and authority (Keyes 1977, 65-66; Lehman 2003, 17, 24, 27-28).

Theravada Buddhism entered Burma/Myanmar through the Mon people, with legend indicating that monks successfully converted Anawrahta, the King of Bagan in 1044 CE (Aung-Thwin and Aung-Thwin 2012, 80). As with the Indianization process, Anawrahta increased his legitimacy by adopting Buddhism and portraying himself as a *dhammaraja*, essentially a Buddhist version of the Hindu divine ruler concept in which the king epitomizes the teachings of the Buddha. Anawrahta is credited with the construction of countless pagodas, the architecture of which incorporated elements of the preexisting religious elements, such as Hindu *mandalas*[11]

---

[9] Indra – Vedic Hindu god of rain; in Buddhism, Indra is known as Sakka, ruler of the gods; in the *nat* system, Indra is known as Thagya Min, king of the spirit lords (Swearer 2010, 41, 256)

[10] 32-part Hindu cosmology – Indra, the four world guardians, and twenty-eight subordinate gods (Tambiah 1976, 5)

[11] Mandala – A diagram of a squared circle representing the unified nature of individuals, society, and the cosmos. Many religious structures in Southeast Asia are built in this shape (Swearer 2010, 257)

and indigenous *nat* shrines. The *mandala* concept is important since this symbol allowed kings to rule from a centralized location over peripheries, thus incorporating larger domains.

In the Burmese case, the Hindu Mount Meru, the 'axis mundi' that connects cosmological realms, is Mount Popa in Bagan, the most sacred *nat* location. King Anawrahta built Shwezigon stupa, in the form of a mandala, only 30 miles from Mount Popa, centralizing Burmese kingships and bringing peripheral domains into its cosmologically legitimized orbit (Swearer 2010, 94). While lauded as the righteous spreader of Theravada Buddhism, Anawrahta is also credited with the official system of the Cult of the 37 *Nat*. It is likely that a succession of Burmese kings capitalized on many religious motifs in order to legitimate their reigns, thus explaining why elements of these three religious systems appear to have been fused at key points in Burmese history (Keyes 1977, 71-72).

In order to achieve enlightenment, Theravada Buddhist cosmology largely hinges upon the law of karma through the making of merit by way of good deeds (Keyes 1977, 88). As such, the legitimacy of the king is based on the notion that he has accumulated merit through previous lives (Harris 2007, 3). This concept of past karma is associated with everyone's lot in life, whether one is rich or poor, healthy or ill, a king or a beggar. The better one's position in life, the better that person's past karma. It is through this cognition that those in power legitimize their authority since they are believed to be deserving of power. The Buddha is the pinnacle of power, and the *dhammaraja* which is to say 'the king of Buddha's teachings' is thus a being of

considerable power.[12] Likewise, monks possess power through their past karma, meritous acts, and detachment from the world (Durrenberger and Tannenbaum 1992, 80).

The king and the monkhood comprise the 'two-wheels' of Theravada Buddhism and exhibit a patron-client relationship. This relationship reflects a sacred stability between the rulers and the monkhood that keeps existence in balance. The ruler acts as patron for the monkhood, such as sponsoring the construction of Buddhist religious buildings, and the monkhood legitimizes the ruler (Tambiah 1976, 5; Harvey 2000, 117; Lai 2010, 171; Swearer 2010, 72-82). This relationship between political and religious figures remains an important part of life in Theravada Buddhism nations, such as Burma/Myanmar today (Jordt 2007, 1-2, 6; Walton 2017, 23). However, this notion of secular and religious dual-rulership existed before the influx of Theravada Buddhism in the form of village chiefs and spirit mediums in preexisting *nat* practices (Keyes 1977, 153; Ho 2009, 274).

The complex cosmology in Burma/Myanmar of these religious systems has resulted in the compounding of legitimacy of rulers. The notion of kingship falls in line with founder ideology since the king is the founder of the kingdom. The Bamar believe the founding king to be Anawrahta. The *nat* system allows for spiritual rulership over specific domains, with *nat* ruling alongside the king. Founders' ideology is also present in terms of the Buddha as the founder of Buddhism. While the king may have accrued enough merit to be in his position, kingship is nonetheless a worldly position. As such, the king is dependent upon the monkhood to

---

[12] Sometimes appears as 'rajadhamma' as well as 'kammaraja' in other literature

legitimize his authority, since power in Theravada Buddhism is directly correlated to detachment from the world.

These concepts endure in contemporary Burma/Myanmar, transposed onto contemporary political situations. Ingrid Jordt (2007) concludes her study by characterizing post-independence rulers in Burma/Myanmar as pretenders to the throne. She details U Nu's almost overly flagrant attempts to symbolically represent himself as a righteous king through his religious focus and state work projects. She chronicles the early failure of the Ne Win dictatorship in their overly secular approach, as well as their attacks on 'unorthodox' forms of Buddhism. Her ethnography builds to the conclusion that monkhood support of the military regime could not correspond to the true monkhood, and as such a schism occurred in which spiritual legitimacy redirected into a lay meditation movement (1-2, 170-199). Regardless, these issues of cosmologically-determined legitimacy persist today.

Social Organization

The 1977 work by Charles F. Keyes, *The Golden Peninsula,* outlines the sociocentric focus of Burmese society. Keyes (1977) states that within Burmese society, "social structure and social organizational factors provide frameworks within which behavior takes place," going on to say that individuals "operate not in isolation, but as a member of social groups" (163-166). Of course, all individuals are parts of social groups anywhere in the world, but the karma cycle fixates individuals in a specific socio-spatial locus. The notion is that the focus on other-than-ego, as opposed to ego, tends to be more predominant here than in other societies.

This sociocentrism is exemplified in the cultural practice of *ana*, a form of 'face-saving' typical in hierarchical societies and of Southeast Asia in general, in which a person may not tell the truth out of fear of giving offense.[13] *Ana* is generally conceived of as the resistance to asserting oneself, and instead placing the best interests of others above one's own interests. In fact, the concept of *ana* reflects the strong sense of hierarchy and inequality within social relations, as forthrightness and candor can appear hostile. The Burmese say the phrase *anade*[14] quite often, although those of a higher rank in the social hierarchy are not required to express such a sentiment to a subordinate (Seekins 2006, 66-67).

Such hierarchy equates to a social system in which dependency roles are clearly pre-established and thereby presupposed. Southeast Asian societies are marked by 'dependency' on others, or interdependency, which is considered to be a virtue, and is likely due to traditional patron-client networks (Keyes 1977, 155). These networks are especially important in societies where the rule of law is weak to the degree that protection must be sought from influential and significant persons of higher status (Seekins 2006, 354-355). While clients are dependent upon a patron, that patron is also a client of a higher ranking official, forming a chain of patron-client relationships. Patrons must display conspicuous consumption in the forms of ceremonies and construction that not only increases their prestige but also makes merit (Spiro 1977, 35-36).

---

[13] *ana* (အားနာ), "strength-hurt" or in the long form "cheek-hurt"; a word which has no English equivalent but generally refers to verbalizing one's apprehension and shame of possibly giving social offense

[14] *anade* (အားနာတယ်), a sentence describing one's feeling of *ana*

In Burma/Myanmar, patron-client relationships are central to many spheres of life, such as business, politics, and even family life. Patron-client networks became entrenched within Burmese society since the time of kings, when elites comprised those who retained the king's favor and trust, yet subject to his whims since political power resided in leaders as opposed to institutions. Later, under the military dictatorship, entrepreneurs sought military patrons who could provide protection in exchange for economic benefits. These patrons, in turn, became dependent upon this system due to the insufficiency of the Burmese economy (Seekins 2006, 354-355).

This trend increased after 1988, when the military government increased funds and opportunities for profit among government officials and businesspeople. The 'crony' system is well known and openly spoken of in Burmese society, with individuals fully aware that through such a network they can make vast profits quickly on enterprises that otherwise would not be economically viable. One prominent example of this system is the official granting of exclusive import-export licenses to preferred entrepreneurs who otherwise would not be able to attain such licenses in a competitive-based free-market system (Seekins 2006, 354-355).

In Burmese society, people pursue assistance from powerful people who are relatives, former classmates, former military cohorts, or people who came from the same township. Connections to kin, such as aunts, uncles, cousins, and even more distant kin are typically strong due to the need for mutual aid. This need is just as critical in a large urban setting like Yangon as it is in a village. Wealthy family members are expected to help family members who are in need, such as employing relatives or helping to arrange beneficial marriages. Contemporarily, social services are essentially nonexistent in Burma/Myanmar, rendering the family system the primary

provider of both material and psychological support in a society where survival can be especially challenging (Seekins 2006, 182-183, 354-355).

This obligation to help kin is a social norm more along the lines of morality than affection. The Burmese generally do not associate kinship with love or friendship, although such situations may occur. Despite how one feels about a relative, there is a moral obligation to assist that relative, even if that relative is disliked. This moral obligation persists and must be honored regardless of an individual's feelings. For example, a younger brother must respect an older brother, while the older brother is expected to care for the younger brother's children in the case of the younger brother's absence or death. It is expected that youth will respect and honor their elders as a matter of moral obligation. This remains true for non-kin as well, not only to members of different generations, but also to age distinctions within the same generation, even if the age difference is only by a day. When Burmese people address one another, they use honorifics, i.e. lexical affixes, that are systematically linked to age-grade and biological gender. This obligatory linguistic norm is not explicitly taught, but rather is internalized during the socialization process (Spiro 1977, 48-49, 55, 100).

In Burma/Myanmar, it is normative for parent-child obligations to be honored in any and all circumstances. The uniqueness of the Burmese parent-child bond is evidenced by the use of kinship terms used for non-kin. Terms such as brother, sister, aunt, and uncle are all used as honorifics for non-kin, including strangers. The terms for parent and child, however, are never used to address non-kin. Since parents are considered to be sacred, they are to be honored out of a sense of duty. This duty is not merely one in which inferiors express deference to superiors, but is truly one of worship, since along with the Buddha, his teaching, the monkhood, and teachers,

parents are one of the 'Five Objects of Worship.' It is customary for children to literally prostrate themselves before their parents at certain times of the year, a custom which is built into certain religious ceremonies. It is believed that a child who disrespects their parents will be doomed to live a short life. The father is considered to be the *ein-oo-nat,*[15] the guardian and ruler of the household in human form, the immediate authority figure to which absolute deference must be paid (Spiro 1977, 75-76, 82-83).

Daughters typically have somewhat different obligations than sons, with the youngest daughter expected to remain living with the parents to take care of them until the parents die. Still, sons are generally preferable to daughters since sons are able to make merit for their parents and do not require supervision like daughters whose virginity must be protected (Spiro 1977, 81-82). Young men will most often ordain as monks not for their own enlightenment but out of familial obligation, to make merit for their parents, especially for their mother (Spiro 1977, 83; Swearer 2010, 1).

Spiro (1967) suggested that the rigid obligations of child to parent result in tension, which in some cases will boil over to the point in which respect is destroyed. Extreme suppression of autonomy can build resentment within the child, which occasionally causes children to break with sociocentric norms. Conversely, widowed parents may not wish to live with their children in old age due to fears of being controlled or governed by their children after a lifetime of having had complete dominance over them. These disruptions from the customary rules of deference and respect are sometimes related to house ownership, since the house owner

---

[15] *ein-oo-nat* (အိမ်ဦးနတ်), the guardian and ruler of the household in human form

has authority (*awza*), generating a clash of social norms.[16] These instances are more the exception, however, and in most cases deference and respect continues over the course of parent-child relationships (Spiro 1977, 115-117).

Diaspora Studies

In Aihwa Ong's 2003 study of Cambodian immigrants to the United States, she details the difficulty Southeast Asian migrants have in transitioning from collectivist-oriented society to the American focus on individualism. A tension exists in moving from a worldview based in Buddhist compassion, hierarchy, collectivism, and otherworldliness to the individualistic, material pragmatism characteristic of the United States. This transition can be jarring as the value of dependency is eroded by the American predisposition for independence, leaving some refugees in a state of ambivalence (Ong 2003, 7).

Some enduring concepts resulting from long-held religious values and some social structures generating political institutions have been recently disrupted. The 'chain of being' from the worthiest to the lowliest member of society is broken by individualistic ideas based on natural law and grounded in worldly existence. Through the value of an individual's ability to reason, equal members of the state could come to consensus without need of a divinely-sanctioned ruler. Equality under the law in the United States, illusory as it may still be, underscores universal rights from each member within a society. Such a political conceptualization stands in stark contrast to the Southeast Asian premise of political legitimacy

---

[16] *awza* (သြဇာ), political authority/influence

based upon the law of karma, with previous meritous or demeritous acts resulting in positions within the sociopolitical hierarchy. This transition from a religious-based political system to one of equal individuals protected under the law has not occurred in many Southeast Asian post-colonial countries despite adopting the 'democratic' state apparatuses of the colonizers (Ong 2003, 7-9, 18).

When asked why Cambodian migrants chose the United States over other Western countries, Ong's participants replied that America is the land of the free, with some making reference to the Statue of Liberty. These same immigrants expressed disillusion with their previous assumptions about life in the United States. Instead of feeling free, they felt disconnected as minorities, and have continued to watch government assistance dissipate. Judith Shklar (1991, 3) suggested that individual worth in American society is predicated upon the right to vote and the ability to earn income (Ong 2003, 69, 74). Voting is dependent upon citizenship status and as such, refugees are unable to vote. Likewise, in many cases migrants may not be permitted to work or may experience great difficulty earning income.

Gail M. Hickey conducted a relevant study on the Burmese diaspora, among immigrants in Fort Wayne, Indiana in 2007. She highlights that Southeast Asian parents emphasize educational and occupational success. Such achievements elevate Burmese familial social standing while fulfilling one's obligations to the family. Failures in these areas are considered to bring shame upon the entire family. Given the poor academic status of Burma/Myanmar, competition is fierce, and parents are therefore quite serious about education and success. These values carry over across the diasporic experience to the United States. Likewise, other values endure such as placing the good of one's family over that of individual needs. Children are

taught to practice self-control, to defer gratification, and to be dependent on others (Hickey 2007, 36-37).

Some Burmese immigrants in Hickey's study attributed the low level of individualism in Burmese society as a consequence of both Theravada Buddhism and life under the military regime. In terms of religion, Buddhism prohibits the aggrandizement of the ego, and prescribes a calm and mindful attitude regarding others. This attitude conflicts with American competitiveness and self-gratification of 'being somebody' and pursuing desires. Burmese immigrants have also attributed the lessened focus on individualism in their society to oppression by the military regime, which has forced them into submission and to think less of themselves. Conversely, some Burmese immigrants have expressed some insights obtained by exposure to two very different societies. In terms of competitiveness, some extolled the virtues of capitalism as proof that competition is a natural part of the human condition, one that results in a higher standard of living (Hickey 2007, 43-44).

Family life in Burma/Myanmar differs from that of the United States, contradicting the American nuclear, atomistic conceptualization. In Burma/Myanmar, large families live together, and children do not leave home until education is complete and a job is obtained, if not longer. Burmese migrants expressed their difficulty at conceptualizing their existence as a 'separate entity' from their family in the United States. This separation anxiety from living in an individualistic society – such as the United States – can exist for second-generation Burmese as well, raised in Burmese families where the value is placed on collectivism (Hickey 2007, 37, 42-43). While Hickey's ethnography helps to illustrate the life experiences of Burmese immigrants,

other ethnographies of immigrants from Southeast Asian Theravada Buddhist countries, such as Cambodia, reveal similar themes.

Ong (2003) describes Southeast Asian parents as feeling a loss of moral authority over children as children yearn to develop an independent American identity different from the characteristics of their cultural heritage. These conflicts emerge as teenagers prefer to spend money on clothes, media, and amusement, instead of saving for the family or saving for the future. The erosion of parental authority is furthered by dependency on children to deal with, not only language barriers, but also logistical matters of American life, such as bills, landlords, doctors, and other unfamiliar societal aspects. Children are forced to become adults at a young age, a process that is exacerbated by the inability to turn to their parents for help (168-178).

The divide between parents and children is further intensified by social norms, such as the doting nature of American parents who openly express love, while Southeast Asian parents do not routinely say “I love you” or play with their children. This lack of love perceived by the children of immigrants is compounded by the parents’ expectation for absolute obedience on the part of the child at home. Children are expected to remain silent yet must often speak on behalf of the parent in situations outside the household. Cambodian migrant parents blamed the increasing disrespect for elders by their children on the American education system, providing examples such as waving and saying “Hi” instead of bowing and using Cambodian status greetings. Parent-child tensions are perhaps most severe in terms of dating, sex, and marriage, with parents unable to control teenagers in these areas. In Southeast Asian Theravada Buddhism, children make merit on behalf of their parents, but these rituals are largely disrupted by life in the

United States where Southeast Asian parents appear to their children as a heavy burden rather than a venerated person (Ong 2003, 168-178).

In her 2001 study of Cambodian migrants to the United States, Julie Caniff examines implicit assumptions about success. Employing a cultural model analytical framework, she examines how Cambodian cultural models of success may clash with American versions, while analyzing the durability of cultural models. For example, Canniff illustrates how the second-generation may shift between different cultural models dependent upon context. She describes a teenage daughter in the study who exhibited behavior typical of a middle-class teenage American while at school switching to a Cambodian cultural model at home by deferring to family needs (36). Canniff also discusses another teenager who completely shifted to the American freedom and independence cultural model away from the Cambodian interdependence cultural model due to negative emotions about her family life (251).

In terms of the durability of cultural models, Canniff (2001, 266, 270) evidences that generally across her participants, the Buddhist cultural models of 'balance' and 'living in the moment' have endured. There exists a cultural juxtaposition between the Cambodian Buddhist cultural model of 'living in the moment' as virtuous as compared to the American Puritanical cultural model of wasting time as sinful (69). While 'living in the moment' is deeply ingrained within the Cambodian worldview due to Buddhism, this cultural model also likely endures due to the history of life under the Khmer Rouge when people never knew what the next day might bring (270).

Conclusion

These examples from other Southeast Asian diaspora studies reveal a pattern in which cultural models may adapt over the course of the migration experience. This adaptation can occur as a mutation of the original model itself, or through the use of multiple models, employing a different cultural model according to situational context. These Southeast Asian examples also reflect further evidence of the struggle between sociocentric and egocentric values. Social organization is different in Burma/Myanmar versus that of the United States, and such organizing practices are carried over to the United States, existing within the family home and within the local community. The sociocentric practices clash with individualistic American ideals about social organization. The development of an atomistic sense of self is portrayed as a struggle for migrants in the Southeast Asian diaspora literature, while for the second-generation individualism is practiced outside the home and seemingly preferred to familial obligations. The evidence that these studies provide made me hypothesize that each sample group within this study might have different cultural models of democracy.

CHAPTER 3

ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORKS

Cultural Model Theory in Cognitive Anthropology

The cultural model theory I adopted for this study is based on four fundamental assumptions in relation to cultural models (see Bennarrdo 2018). First, culture is a mental phenomenon, albeit expressed through language or behavior and thus visible in practice. Second, culture is mental knowledge that is organized in a specific way and shared within a social group. Third, the distribution of shared mental knowledge may result in idiosyncrasies and intracultural variation, signifying distributional patterns of culture. Fourth, there may exist widely-shared, basic and simple cultural models, foundational cultural models, which may generate other molar cultural models across multiple domains.

The primary assumption of this study is that culture is a mental phenomenon, which is to say that culture does not exclusively exist outside individuals (D'Andrade 1987, 112-127; Quinn 2005, 3) It is helpful to begin by defining 'culture' by referring back to Goodenough's 1957 definition: "whatever one has to know or believe in order to operate in a manner acceptable to members" (32). If such, then accurate representations of 'objective' culture are impossible since culture exists within the mind and must always be indirectly inferred and is thus incapable of direct apprehension (D'Andrade 1987, 112-127; Shore 1996, 43-46). Culture transits the permeable border between the intrapersonal and extrapersonal realms, and thus must be analyzed

within the context of both. These realms are not mirror replicas of one another but do shape each other through internalization of external stimuli (Johnson-Laird 1980, 23-40, 419; Strauss and Quinn 1997, 8-11, 114-130, 175-182, 205-206, 231, 253).

Since culture is a mental phenomenon, theories of cognition are extremely important in order to analyze the phenomenon of culture. The assumption of a cultural model framework is that cognition functions through organizing structures such as schemas, frames, scripts, and mental models (Brewer 1999, 729-730). The suggestion for the existence of these cognitive structures is rooted in the pioneering research of Frederic Bartlett (1932) and his study on memory, which laid the groundwork for schemas. In 1972, Bateson introduced the concept of a *frame,* which acts as a mental map of the extrapersonal terrain, separated by a cognitive border. Like a map, representations provide analogic metacommunicative information, distinguishing the symbol from the target of the symbol.

A short time later in 1975 Marvin Minksy expanded on the concept of frames, suggesting that frames provide expectations, yet are adaptive, with the ability to change through peripheral nodes. The expectations are the default values of the frame's peripheral nodes that can change their value as new sensory input enters the mind. The core part of the frame instead has more fixed content and it is much more difficult to change (Figure 1). Abelson and Shank (1977) focused on a subtype of frames, called a script. This type of frame centers on a sequence of events, which allow for inference to occur, thus making brevity of linguistic expression possible. Rumelhart (1980) expanded Minksy's (1975) research to formulate a psychologically-based theory of schemas, suggesting that 'molar' (large, complex, and consisting of relational units) representations exist within the mind that map the external realm (Brewer 1999, 729-730).

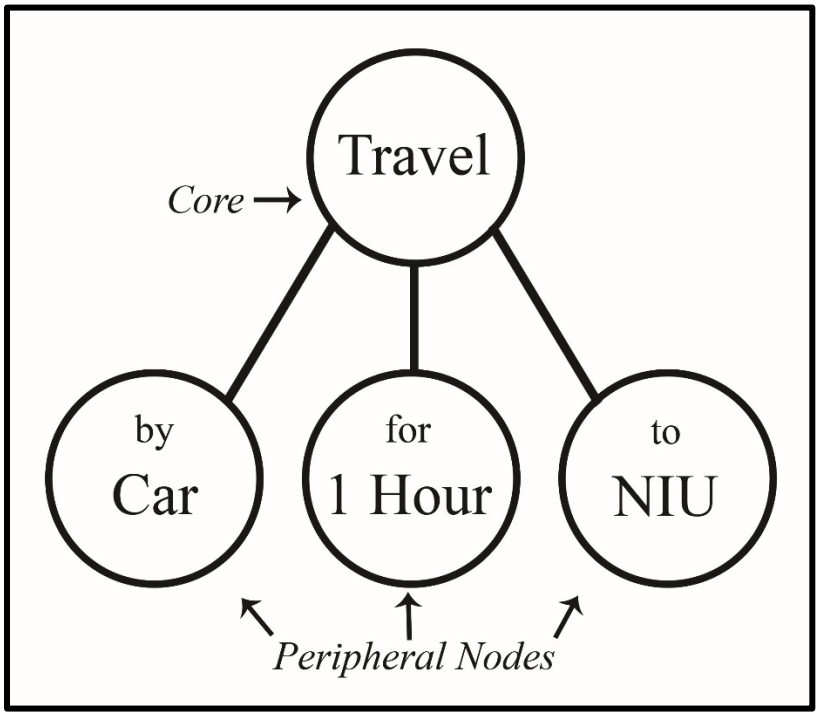

Figure 1: Example of the core and peripheral nodes of a mental model.

Lakoff and Johnson (1980) advanced schema theory with their emphasis on metaphor as a deeper conceptual mechanism that allows for building new knowledge and also otherwise challenging communication by means of generating analogy between domains. Johnson-Laird (1983, 190) further advanced schema theory through his proposal of mental models, simulations produced by the mind to conceptualize the extrapersonal realm. All of this research led to mental model theory of cognition, leading to a better understanding of how the mind works in organizing mental representations, i.e. knowledge, and at the same time, processing these representations.

The second assumption is that culture is mental knowledge that is organized in a specific way and shared within a social group. This assumption is a logical extension of Goodenough's

definition of culture. A mental model refers to an individual's mental organization of knowledge, while culture is the mental organizations of knowledge shared within a community. Cultural models are mental representations shared by members of a social group, which function both to sensibly interpret incoming information and to form and generate appropriate expressions of communicative behavior (Shore 1996, 43-46).

For Roy D'Andrade (1987), a cultural model is "a cognitive schema that is intersubjectively shared by a social group. Such models typically consist of a small number of conceptual objects and their relations to each other" (112). For Holland and Quinn, cultural models are "presupposed, taken-for-granted models of the world that are widely shared (although not necessarily to the exclusion of other, alternative models) by the members of a social group and that play an enormous role in their understanding of the world and their behavior in it" (Holland and Quinn 1987, 4). Since cultural models are shared by a social group, this shared knowledge greatly reduces the amount of linguistic interaction required for communication (Bennardo and De Munck 2014, 51-53).

This assumption is relevant to this study since I collected data from diasporic communities, with groups separated from their original sociocultural group in different periods and for different lengths of time. The possibility of sharedness of cultural models may be exhibited by different migrant groups, each of which may have a separate or slightly altered cultural model. There may exist an even greater paucity of sharedness of cultural models between separate groups due to the unique nature of each model.

The third assumption is that the nature of shared mental knowledge may result in idiosyncrasies and intracultural variation. If cultural models produce predictable consequences,

then it can be said that a cultural model is a necessary condition to produce those behaviors, though it may not be a sufficient condition. Cultural models are intrinsically flexible, and are composed of two basic parts, a core and a periphery (Figure 1). This segmented internal structure is one in which the core at the upper-levels is more static, and the peripheries at the lower-levels contain variables bound by external elements, that is to say by experiences in specific cases and contexts.

Peripheral nodes are attuned to extrapolate context through inference and contain default values when context does not provide specific values that help change the preexisting defaults (Minksy 1975, 212). "People not only notice feature correlations, but they can deduce *reasons* for them based on their knowledge of the way the world works" (Medin and Wattenmaker 1987, 36). This dual internal structure of cultural models therefore allows for flexibility between contexts, and thus helps explain idiosyncrasies and intracultural variation within a particular social group.

Cultural model theory helps to resolve issues regarding 'culture' within anthropology by providing units of analysis that are located in an individual mind, while shared within a community. Thus, individual and collective variation is potentially possible and explainable. While flexible, cultural models may be predetermined and particular. A culturally competent member of a society should be able to effectively utilize the core and default peripheral nodes of a multitude of cultural models while also being able to intentionally adjust them contingent upon circumstances (Bennardo and De Munck 2014, 4; Minsky 1975, 212). Cultural models, like other molar organizations of knowledge, may be universally shared, may be idiosyncratic (dependent

upon whether the member of the social group adheres to typical models), or may be collective (Shore 1996, 43-46).

This assumption relates to this study in terms of the research question regarding potential variation based on a primary independent variable of length-of-residency in the United States. Variation may be present between the sample groups, exhibiting changes that have occurred at the level of peripheral nodes due to exposure to American culture. The life experiences of migrants may have fostered alteration of existing cultural models, for example. Likewise, those second-generation Bamar born in the United States, and who are American, are likely to exhibit variation from their parents due to their growing up in the United States.

The last assumption is that there may exist a number of widely-shared, basic and simple foundational cultural models that generate various other molar cultural models across multiple domains. Bennardo and Kronenfeld (2011, 93-95) list types of cultural models that are similar, such as: foundational, cultural conceptual systems (i.e. worldview), and action – with these three comprising the primary types. Of these, the foundational cultural model is of particular interest to this study, with Shore (1996, 45, 53-54, 69-70, 116-134) having referred to this type as a "foundational cultural schema." Such a model may be embedded together with a large number of other units of knowledge in other models, thereby generating more complex cultural models or 'molar' cultural models. A foundational cultural model acts as a simple blueprint which may be used across a variety of situations in order to reduce the necessity of complex cognitive processes (Bennardo 2009, 173-178, 202, 299, 336-339). This primary type of cultural model is important to this study, since I propose that a sociocentric foundational model is at work within

the Burmese worldview and may participate in the generation of various Bamar cultural models of democracy.

The Internalization Process

Since culture is herein considered to be a mental phenomenon, it is important to explore the internalization and socialization processes by which culture as shared knowledge emerges. Anthropologists, such as Pascal Boyer (1993, 33-34) have criticized cultural anthropologists for ignoring the 'black box' of such processes. Through lived experiences, knowledge becomes internalized and is not necessarily explicitly taught. This knowledge forms the boundaries of culturally acceptable behavior.

Since this knowledge is more categorical than codified, generally speaking, it is flexible, and thus is as capable of changing over time as much as it is capable of reproducing itself. Such a framework explains individual and collective variations of cultural norms within populations. This variation appears to call for more detailed examinations of the distribution of culture, through a more nuanced and exhaustive analysis of intracultural discontinuities.

Cognitive anthropologists Naomi Quinn and Claudia Strauss in their 1997 research sought to expand upon the framework of Pierre Bourdieu, and his concepts of *habitus, doxa,* and *dogma* to further explain the role of internalization in the formation of cultural models. Strauss and Quinn (1997, 44-47) explicitly state that there are many similarities between their approach and that of Bourdieu, and they explain how their book expands on the theoretical frameworks of Bourdieu.

They agree with Bourdieu's concept of *habitus*, that cultural knowledge is internalized through daily practices as opposed to strictly explicit rules. Through *habitus*, forgotten history is internalized and reproduced through daily practices. Since the reproduction of norms and behavior are practiced by individuals, there is room for variation and change. Bourdieu is often criticized for his theory of *habitus* insomuch as it does not account for change. Strauss and Quinn, however, explain how his theory does allow for change since social reproduction is accomplished through individual actions, and since these daily practices involve variation, they are capable of producing change.

Strauss and Quinn (1997: 44-47) expand Bourdieu's framework by proposing a theory of how the mind works, which is clearly necessary in any examination of the internalization process. They also expand his concepts of *doxa* and *dogma* - that which remains unsaid and that which is said - beyond, in their view, an overly binary, structuralist, conceptualization. In addition, Strauss and Quinn also expand Bourdieu's framework by introducing the importance of emotion and motivation, and the role they play in either encouraging or discouraging use of cultural models by individuals. While Bourdieu's 'durable dispositions' are likely to be reproduced much like cultural models, this is not to say that they cannot change due to the forces of acculturation, enculturation, individual emotional experiences, and historical events.

The internalization process can be quite complex, at both the group and individual levels. As is relevant to this study, Strauss and Quinn (1997, 33) provide an example in terms of the fieldwork of Spiro (1993) who went to Burma/Myanmar to study the Theravada Buddhist doctrinal concept of *anatta,* which translates to 'no-self' or 'no-soul.' Upon arrival, Spiro had to revise his study since he found that the Burmese did have a concept of, not only self, but of soul

as well, contrary to a rigid view of Buddhist canon. The notion of the self remained situated within a Buddhist cosmology in terms of the karma cycle. While the Burmese internalized Buddhist concepts such as reincarnation, aspects of their indigenous worldview proved too foundational to be displaced, such as the *leikpya* 'soul' (Brac de la Perrière 1989, 2011).

This example of the Burmese concept of 'self' demonstrates the way in which certain attributes of a core domain may persist. Through the complex internalization process, some attributes may be unchangeable while others are subject to cultural change. This issue highlights the necessity of an examination of durability and variation of cultural models since some internal components, either core or peripheral nodes, may be more durable than others.

Durability of Cultural Models

A primary focus of Straus and Quinn (1997; Strauss 2012) is the durability of cultural models. To this end, they advance a theoretical framework assessing how and why cultural models may remain durable or may lose durability. They refer to those factors that make cultural models remain durable as centripetal tendencies, and to those that erode durability as centrifugal tendencies. This framework, they suggest, accounts for cultural change as well as intracultural variation. The theory of how the mind works that Straus and Quinn suggest is connectionism, in which a neural network consists of connected nodes that generate appropriate behavior. While I assume a more computational approach to how the mind works through cultural models (see Bennardo, 2009), their suggestions for durability are still highly relevant and useful to my study.

Strauss and Quinn (1997, 89-98) list five centripetal tendencies of cultural understandings. Firstly, they are relatively durable in individuals. Secondly, they have emotional

and motivational force that generates behavior. Thirdly, they are relatively durable historically speaking, being passed down from to generation to generation. Fourthly, they are relatively thematic, with one theme being applicable across a variety of situations. Lastly, they are more or less widely shared.

The centrifugal tendencies are essentially the inverse of the centripetal tendencies. Cultural understandings can be changeable in different people. They can be unmotivating or changed by new emotions. They can vary across generations or change due to historical events. They can be situationally limited, and lastly, it is possible for them to be shared by relatively few within the group. The cultural process involves individuals, thus necessitating the combination of both psychological and anthropological approaches. This combination is necessary because culture is a mental phenomenon of shared knowledge between distinct communities. Additionally, since emotions and motivations play a role in the cultural process – which is to say the interfacing between intrapersonal and extrapersonal realms – a psychological approach can help to highlight some of these issues in individuals.

Strauss and Quinn (1997) posit that some cultural models are more durable because they have emotional resonance, including some that are formed early in life. Some cultural models are durable because they "rest on neuronal connections that are not easily undone" since "change in the world can lead to new patterns of strong neural connections but it does not completely destroy earlier learning" (90). Cultural models are also durable because they tend to be self-reinforcing. Within the intrapersonal realm, individuals may experience all the typical features of an event even when only some of the features are present in the extrapersonal realm. Not all

aspects of an external event may be captured by the mind, but rather impressionable or significant aspects may be retained in a symbolic sense.

An important point made by Strauss and Quinn (1997, 93-98) is that educational systems also render cultural models durable, since teaching is designed to make concepts endure, with repeated exposure to knowledge that is continually built upon. They mention fear as making cultural models durable, but actually they argue that any sort of intense emotion will render a cultural model more durable. They especially focus on rewards and punishments in childhood during the socialization process of good and bad behavior, which is tied to identity. Such notions appear reflected in research on child-rearing and classroom norms in different societies that has illustrates the importance of socialization in the development of cultural models (Shimizu 2016, 433-442). Intensely internalized cultural models from childhood can generate resistance to change, which Strauss and Quinn (1997, 96-98) refer to in terms of socialization.

While people may project the entire internalized cultural model onto a partial representation in the extrapersonal realm, cultural models do not act as impermeable perception filters. With new information, new cultural models may be learned, or old ones changed, as peripheral nodes are reassigned. Strauss and Quinn once again stress the importance of emotion, suggesting that novel situations can be emotionally charged (such as culture shock) and therefore emotions might play a role in the formation of new cultural models or in the restructuring of old cultural models.

Since cultural models vary by situation, they can be adaptable and thus account for flexibility of individuals. Strauss and Quinn loosely correlate this conditionality to Bourdieu's 'regulated improvisations' and Schneider and Shiffrin's 'controlled' versus 'automatic'

processes (Strauss and Quinn 1997, 99-100). Another key point is that the same cultural models may not have the same motivations behind them for different people since observations of the extrapersonal realm during childhood are connected to intrapersonal feelings about those observations. New feelings, whatever they may be, toward cultural models may change preexisting cultural models if the new emotional experience is strong enough.

Historical durability is rather straight-forward and easily observable: one generation models itself on the previous generation's cultural models, or these models are intentionally passed down from one generation to the next (Strauss and Quinn 1997, 111-118). This notion relates back to the ideas of Bourdieu, with his 'cultural reproduction' as a reason for historical durability. This sort of reproduction is not entirely unconscious, but rather certain cultural models exist about what information must be taught to and preserved for future generations, whether explicitly taught or merely implicitly demonstrated. Strauss and Quinn suggest that it is nearly impossible to predict which cultural models will remain durable and which will fade.

Strauss and Quinn (1997, 111-118) discuss the reasons for centrifugal tendencies against historical durability, such as through the phenomenon of disruptive historical events. New events can disrupt historically durable cultural models. This notion relates back to the earlier illustration of the role of emotion in the shaping of cultural models. Historical events are tied to emotional experiences, such as war or acts of mass violence. Strauss and Quinn (1997, 122-134) also suggest that the powerful members of a group can control what cultural products the general public can consume, in line with the ideas of Foucault (1972).

Thematicity also plays a role in durability of cultural models. According to Strauss and Quinn (1997), thematicity refers to the "tendency of some cultural models to be evoked in a wide

variety of contexts" (118). Themes can spread across different subcultures and are most likely to spread across domains of experience. Themes do not necessarily need to spread across contexts but are more likely to be generalized if experienced within a variety of contexts. Returning to the argument about emotions experienced during childhood, Strauss and Quinn reference Weber's 'elective affinity' in which people adopt themes that appeal to them on such levels as identity and emotion.

Centrifugal tendencies against thematic durability are due to the fact that people are not always consistent in the cultural models they enact, and thus neither culture nor personalities are static (Strauss and Quinn 1997, 118-122). Instead people rely upon a network of referential peripheral nodes to determine what to say and how to behave and what to think about extrapersonal objects and events. It is important to note that people need not have the same exact experiences in order to share a cultural model, instead they develop from "the most frequently encountered patterns of associations among features" that are "internalized as strong connections, while random variations around the node are represented by weaker connection weights that have much less effect on cognitive processing" (Strauss and Quinn 1997, 123). This quote is evocative of the mental architecture outlined by Minksy of a core with peripheral nodes that function as interface modules between a mental model and context (Bennardo and Kronenfeld 2016, 84; Minksy 1975, 212; Quinn 2016, 363).

Centrifugal forces against sharedness involve individual experiences. The larger the population, the more likelihood there is for variation. People within one community may have segregated existences, even at the family level, with parents at different workplaces, and children at school, for example. In terms of individual experiences, people may have different feelings

and motivations attached to cultural models, with correlating divergent levels of salience. Strauss and Quinn (1997, 122-134) explain this variance in terms of depth. While two members of a community may both share a cultural model, one member may have an intense emotional connection to it, while for the other the model merely exists at the surface-level of his or her awareness. Information is almost always likely to be processed by different people in different ways, even within the same household. For example, an immigrant, no matter how enculturated they may become, nevertheless is likely to continually experience the extrapersonal realm differently than natives since childhood occurred in a different cultural setting.

The degrees of centripetal and centrifugal forces are of interest to this study since participants vary across the migration experience, with different lengths-of-residency. Likewise, durability of cultural models may be revealed through examination of migrant status and generational gaps between participants. More so, participants within this study experienced very different early life experiences, possibly resulting in variation in cultural models. For example, schooling differed for participants, for some occurring in different countries or at different times.

The reshaping of cultural models, and thereby, durability of cultural models can be investigated across the diasporic experience as migrants face completely new social landscapes. This migratory experience may entail strong emotional experiences, which therein might work to transform existing cultural models within the individual. The question of historic durability is also present, specifically in the degree to which cultural models are or are not passed down from one generation to the next. Likewise, different sample groups may apply different unique themes across an array of topics. Since durability and intracultural variation are largely influenced by

emotion and motivation, different life experiences due to a variety of motivations and having a range of emotional impacts may result in different cultural models.

Conventional Discourse and Heterogenous Speech

Strauss (2012) illustrates how conventional discourse analysis differs from Foucaultian discourse analysis with its focus on broad ideologies stemming from elite sources. She contrasts conventional discourse with Foucaultian discourse by stating that it is more "bite-sized, easy to grasp and repeat" (Strauss 2012, 18). Given such definitions, many conventional discourses can be subsumed under a single overarching Foucaultian discourse. In a sense, conventional discourse analysis is vernacular, with elite-derived discourses analyzed in terms of popularized versions. Foucaultian discourses tend to be framed in terms of dominant and alternative discourses, almost always analyzed within the context of power relations.

Conventional discourses may be far more heterogeneous, with a single person employing seemingly contradictory discourses within the same speech event since they are borrowing stock phrasing from their opinion community. This heterogeneity is due to people internalizing multiple conventional discourses from their various opinion communities. The extrapersonal realm is not a wholly consistent place, and individuals must be able to store inconsistent information in some way. Strauss (2012, 98-111) outlines three processes by which individuals deal with these inconsistencies: *compartmentalization, true ambivalence,* and *integration*. She illustrates that these are not hermetic categories, but that mixtures are employed. When the inconsistency remains out of awareness for people, Strauss labels the process as *compartmentalization*. This process is when a speaker is either unaware or unbothered by the

apparent contradiction within heterogenous statements. *True ambivalence* occurs when a speaker is consciously aware of the contradiction and is bothered by their own awareness of the contradiction. Speakers may engage in a sort of argument within themselves, oscillating between ideas and expressing unsureness. Lastly, speakers may employ an *integration* strategy, combining two contradictory concepts into a compromised model of which they are aware. These processes occur as individuals acquire conventional discourses from different 'opinion communities' such as home, work, school, and fuse them into a reasonable model.

Conclusion

Foundational cultural models, that are basic and widely-shared amongst a social group, contribute to the generation of more complex cultural models. Such models are formed through the internalization process, as culture permeates the boundary between the intrapersonal and extrapersonal realms. Cultural models may be elicited by the analysis of conventional discourses employed by members of a social group. The durability of such models is dependent upon factors such as emotions, historical events, intergenerational transference, thematicity, and different life experiences. Centripetal and centrifugal forces act upon individual cognition in the construction and reconstruction of cultural models. As such, these opposing forces are likely to play a role across the migration experience, both in terms of foundational cultural models and more complex cultural models of democracy, as length of time spent in different societies influences implicit assumptions.

CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGY

This research combined ethnographic, linguistic, and experimental data in order to elicit cultural models. Since cultural models are socially shared, and since these molar structures exist within the mind, it makes a great deal of sense to combine methods from anthropology, sociology, linguistics, cognitive psychology, and cognitive science in order to identify them.

Sampling

I undertook a sampling approach of snowballing. I began with local Burmese acquaintances, and then asked for help finding others within the Chicago metropolitan area. Once I exhausted this snowballing process, I focused on the Fort Wayne, Indiana communities, snowballing through community leaders accessed thanks to faculty at Purdue University Fort Wayne. I supplemented this technique through casual recruitment in 'Little Burma' such as at shops, restaurants, and temples. I sought to achieve a cross-section of the following sample groups in terms of length-of-residency as an independent variable to test my variation hypothesis: temporary residents, decades-long migrants, and lifelong citizens – all of Bamar ethnicity.

I ultimately achieved a sample size of 28 total participants: 11 temporary students in the Chicago metropolitan area, as well as 7 first-generation and 10 second-generation Bamar from

Fort Wayne, Indiana (Table 4.1). The temporary students happened to be urban-dwelling, well-educated elite youth, studying in the United States. All these students had completed high school in Burma/Myanmar and had attained some level of college. I term this first sample group the Elite Youth. They listed their occupation as student, although some described part-time jobs on campus. Within this group, some participants revealed Chinese heritage, difficult to initially assess due to the 'burmanization' process described in the preceding chapter. The second sample group comprised first-generation Bamar immigrants of an older age set, which I term the Migrant group. The last sample group constituted the offspring of the Migrant group, though not necessarily the actual children of participants in this study. These younger participants, which I term the Second-Generation group, comprised American citizens of Bamar ethnicity of a similar age set to the first sample group. It should be noted that I employed no form of verification of Bamar ethnicity other than assertions by participants.

Table 4.1

Self-identified participant demographics (*asterisk indicates non-practicing)

Pseudo Initials	Sample Group	Sex	Age	Education	Work	Ethnicity	Religion
AB	1	M	18	Some College	Student	Bamar/Chinese	Buddhist
BK	1	M	20	Some College	Student	Bamar	Buddhist*
CB	1	M	18	Some College	Student	Bamar/Chinese	Buddhist
DS	1	F	19	Some College	Student	Bamar	Buddhist
EW	1	F	20	Some College	Student	Bamar	Buddhist
FS	1	M	20	Some College	Student	Bamar/Chinese	Buddhist
GP	1	M	22	Some College	Student	Bamar	Buddhist*
HF	1	F	22	Some College	Student	Bamar	Buddhist
IG	1	M	24	Some College	Student	Bamar	Buddhist
JF	1	F	21	Some College	Student	Bamar	Buddhist*
KD	1	M	19	Some College	Student	Bamar	Buddhist
LF	2	F	50	B.A.	Teacher	Burmese	Buddhist*
MG	2	M	49	Some College	Owner	Burmese	Muslim
NH	2	M	51	A.S.	Tech	Burmese	Buddhist
OL	2	M	53	Some College	Owner	Burmese	No Comment
PC	2	M	52	A.S.	Tech	Burmese	None
QW	2	F	50	Some College	Factory	Burmese	Buddhist
RS	2	F	52	Some College	Factory	Burmese	Christian
SC	3	M	18	High School	None	Asian	Buddhist*
TS	3	F	20	High School	Food	White & Asian	Christian
UL	3	M	19	High School	None	Asian-American	None
VS	3	F	21	High School	Retail	South Asian	None
WF	3	M	23	Some College	Factory	Burmese	None
XG	3	M	24	High School	None	Asian	Buddhist*
YC	3	F	21	Some College	Food	Asian-American	Buddhist
ZL	3	M	18	Some College	Retail	Asian-American	Christian
AS	3	M	26	High School	Factory	Asian	None
BC	3	F	22	Some College	Retail	Asian-American	None

Data Collection

Collecting Ethnographic Data

I derived much of the ethnographic data through literature review on the peoples and culture of Burma/Myanmar. My previous education in Burma/Myanmar Studies, Burmese language training, and interactions with Bamar friends prior to the official commencement of this research also contributed to my ethnographic background. Having been previously immersed in Field Site 1, I made observations while among participants and during interviews. To gain a better ethnographic background on Field Site 2, I spent time in Burmese shops, restaurants, and temples, making observations and engaging in informal interviews, in addition to observations during the semi-structured interviews. The ethnographic data that I acquired informed my semi-structured interview questions to ensure cultural relevancy and to most effectively elicit linguistic data.

Collecting and Analyzing Linguistic Data

I conducted semi-structured interviews, which typically averaged 30 minutes, some lasting only 20 minutes, with others lasting up to an hour. In all, I acquired 28 interviews, amounting to roughly 15 hours of recordings and 180 pages of transcriptions. I obtained informed consent and provided contact information. I videotaped or audio-recorded participants, per their consent. Recording is essential for the accurate acquisition of linguistic data, so if participants opted-out of recording altogether, we engaged in an informal conversation, which I relegated to ethnographic data. The identities of participants have been protected by use of pseudonyms, encryption software, and destruction of recordings upon completed analysis. I

conducted interviews in English with certain key Burmese terms used, and with the option for participants to speak in Burmese at any time.

By asking questions about changes over the course of participants' lives, I aimed to indirectly arrive at Bamar cultural models of democracy. Through such strategy, I hoped to activate Bamar residents' cultural model of democracy. I began by asking about basic demographic information. I designed my interview questions to prime the participant to engage in comparisons between earlier life and life today. I then moved on toward larger and larger levels of society and more abstract concepts, for example from family life to education to self-expression. If participants mentioned a change occurring in life, I followed up with subsequent questions to subtly determine change as idiosyncratic or as a change which occurred among the entire group. Since democracy relates to the institution of government, I hoped to indirectly activate the model of institutions through discussions on education. I also explored other avenues of change such as technology and social media.

Once I completed the anonymous transcriptions, I began conducting discourse analysis. I utilized conventional discourse analysis as outlined by Claudia Strauss in her 2012 research on public opinions. This study directly relates to cultural models since in her view, a conventional discourse is "an oft-repeated, shared schema" – which is to say a cultural model (Strauss 2012, 15). Our discourses are often unconsciously taken from those of our daily social groups, which she terms 'opinion communities.' Such communities can transcend physicality to include media, as well as what Ben Anderson (1983) termed 'imagined communities' through notions of national identity. It should be noted that an opinion community does not necessarily hold the same attitudes, but rather expresses conventional ways of speaking about a topic within that

specific community. Centrifugal and centripetal forces apply to opinion communities as well, with some members gravitating more toward social norms and others instead pulling away from them.

Ultimately, I performed an extensive gist analysis by means of a winnowing process (D'Andrade 2005, 91-93). This winnowing process involved searching for recurring themes by identifying keywords for analysis (Quinn 2005; Strauss 1992, 2012; Strauss and Quinn 1997) using MaxQDA.[17] Through repeated readings and refined keyword coding, I identified conventional discourses (Strauss 2012) recurring throughout interviews and across participants (Table 4.2). The proximity of keywords helped identify conventional discourses, such as a participant's perceived relationship between 'crime,' 'freedom,' and the role of 'government,' and how heavily certain keywords and themes are weighted (Figure 2). These conventional discourses then constituted the building blocks of cultural models of democracy. I analyzed the ways in which conventional discourses appeared, identifying strategies of *integration*, *compartmentalization*, and *true ambivalence* to assess the formedness of ideas among participants. This strategy helped to reveal durability across groups, as well in examining for variation within and between sample groups. Durability and variation analysis allowed for the elicitation of foundational cultural models generating molar cultural models of democracy. Lastly, I performed reasoning analysis (Quinn 2005) to validate findings, examining participant reasoning for consistency with the corresponding cultural model.

---

[17] MAXQDA is a software program designed for computer-assisted qualitative and mixed methods data, text and multimedia analysis in academic, scientific, and business institutions. It is being developed and distributed by VERBI Software based in Berlin, Germany

Table 4.2

Interview topics with examples of keywords

Topic	**Keyword Examples**
Change	change, reform, transition, new, old, before, after, since, now
Family	family, home, parents, grandparents, uncle, aunt, child, teenager, kid
Government	government, election, constitution, military, democracy, parliament, congress, president, National League for Democracy, Aung San Suu Kyi
Livelihood	economy, money, cash, budget, fund, finance, business, corporation, invest, stock, profit, GDP, bank, account, wages
Freedom	free, freedom, express, opinion, free_speech, social_media, Facebook, censor
Crime	crime, criminal, guns, rob, invasion, stab, rape, jail, prison, prisoner, gang

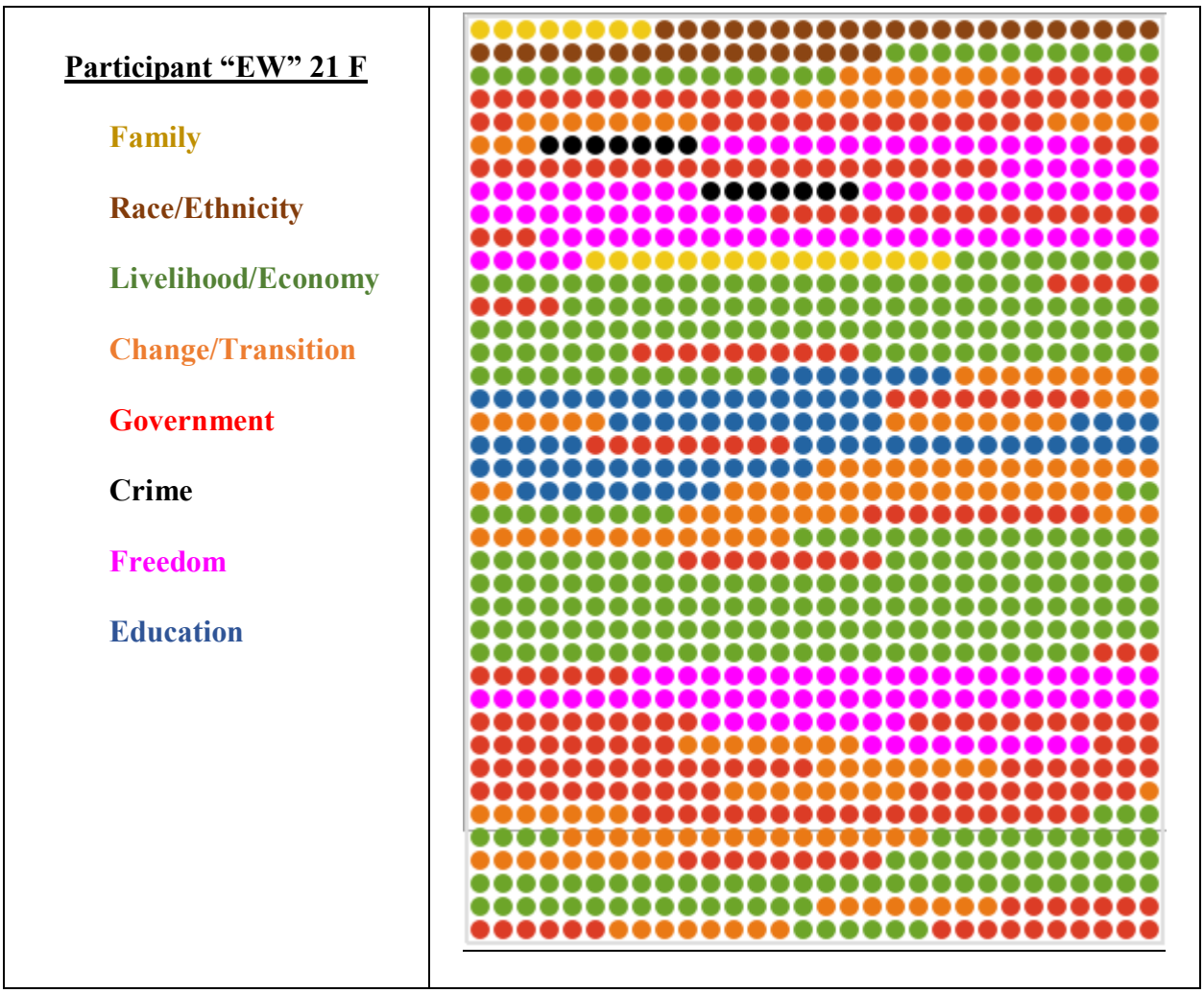

Figure 2: Document portrait from MAXQDA of an Elite Youth participant. Dots represent relative percentage of coded data.

Collecting Cognitive Data

At the end of each interview, I conducted a freelisting task to elicit the most salient terms associated with the domain of 'democracy.' The assumption is that the first words mentioned are the most salient. This memory task is important since our knowledge is organized and stored in memory. By administering a memory task, insights can be drawn as to the organization of

knowledge, in this case of a specific domain. This organization of knowledge that I am eliciting, cultural models, can be activated through the freelisting memory task, thereby revealing terms most closely associated with the domain of 'democracy.'

I instructed participants to list all the words or phrases that come to mind in relation to the English loan-word 'democracy.'[18] I provided the word in both Burmese and English, allowing for participants to respond in either language. Once I collected the freelists, I used AnthroPAC 4 (Borgatti 1992) to sort terms by highest level of saliency. This method accounts for differing amounts of terms listed by individual participants, which would otherwise derail the correlation between frequency and rank. I sought to examine patterns and compare such patterns to the results of the discourse analysis conducted on the linguistic data and the ethnographic data overall, in order to constrain interpretation on my part, and yield the most iterative evidence of Bamar cultural models.

It should be noted that in processing the freelisting data, some interpretation is necessary on the part of the researcher in order to collapse synonymous terms, while attempting to retain any terms that differed enough. For example, I collapsed 'freedom of speech' and 'free speech' into 'free speech' since these phrases are synonymous, but simply worded differently. Conversely, I chose not to collapse 'violence' and 'fighting' since these terms may vary in

---

[18] democracy (ဒီမိုကရေစီ)

context. Ultimately, as will be discussed in my data results chapter, I was perhaps too conservative in regard to collapsing terms, in the effort to constrain interpretation on my part so that this research could remain as iterative as possible.

Conclusion

Through examination of the ethnographic, linguistic, and cognitive data I elicited distinct cultural models of democracy among each sample group. This process involved keyword analysis, conventional discourse analysis, and freelisting analysis in order to determine the propositional statements of each cultural model of democracy. The ethnographic data suggest, not only different foundational cultural models operating within each group, but also that due to different life experiences, variation will be present within each sample group's cultural model of democracy as outlined by Strauss and Quinn and as discussed in the subsequent chapter on data findings.

CHAPTER 5

BURMESE CULTURAL MODELS

Employing the methodology introduced in Chapter 4, themes emerged among the three sample groups (Table 5.1). These themes repeated themselves among participants, especially within each of the three groups: Elite Youth, Migrant, and Second-Generation. Many themes varied between each sample group although some remained the same, as will be discussed further. It should be noted that the topic of 'family' subsumed many repeating themes tied to other topics. For example, the Second-Generation group theme of self-determination occurred within the topics of family, livelihood, freedom, and government.

These themes suggest three distinct cultural models of democracy. The Elite Youth participants expressed an overarching theme of *Opening the Floodgates,* in which the transition to democracy in Burma/Myanmar brought with it new and unknown factors. The Migrant group presented a repeating theme of *Subordinating the Military,* which spread across their conventional discourses and appeared in freelisting data. Lastly, the Second-Generation participants articulated a predominant theme of *Individualization,* highlighting the role of individuals within democracy, and the tension inherent in the conflict between American egocentrism and Burmese sociocentrism.

Table 5.1

Cultural models comparison of emergent themes within each topic for each sample group

	Elite Youth	**Migrant**	**Second-Generation**
	Opening the Floodgates	*Subordinating the Military*	*Individualization*
Government	Free and fair elections Aung San Suu Kyi and the NLD as the face of democracy	Free and fair elections Civilian governance No military control	Rule of law Individuals voting for individuals
Freedom	Freedom threatens social cohesion Free speech is healthy for democracy, but harmful for society Uncertain limits to freedom	Freedom from oppression Free speech for political dissent American children have too much freedom	Freedom of self in the pursuit of happiness Competing ideas Break from the past
Livelihood	Free markets (should be regulated) A rising tide lifts all boats Urbanization	The American Dream Unequal access to equal opportunity Life is a struggle	Self-determination versus familial obligations
Crime	Too much freedom increases crime	Too much freedom increases crime	Crime is normal
Change	Positive changes will occur in Burma/Myanmar	No true change will occur in Burma/Myanmar	Burma/Myanmar can never be America

While some general propositions are shared between groups, e.g. *Democracy is freedom*, there exists such a degree of variation that posing three distinct models is most useful to best reflect implicit assumptions. For example, for each of the three groups, Elite Youth, Migrant, and

Second-Generation, the gloss ‘freedom’ seems to have different conceptual meanings. Likewise, while each group produced the proposition *Democracy means free speech*, it appears to be slightly more salient for the Elite Youth participants than for the other two sample groups as per the freelisting data (Table 5.1). Additionally, each sample group spoke of ‘free speech’ in a different way. These variations exist because each sample group has had different life experiences resulting in unique cultural models of democracy.

The freelisting data dovetails with the interview data, indicating the most salient terms associated by participants with the concept of democracy. Table 5.2 illustrates the freelisting data I obtained, for those items of 0.075 salience and above. I chose this number for the sake of brevity, since the most salient terms are the most closely connected to the domain of study. The freelisting data is a useful memory task since the data reveals the term or phrase most closely related to the domain of ‘democracy’ and thereby the most salient default peripheral nodes. The freelisting data is useful in terms of assessing the most commonly shared terms amongst a social group, but deeper understandings of implicit assumptions about these key terms are found in the interview data. Therefore, within each participant group’s cultural model section below, I begin with key terms from freelisting data, which I then discuss within the context of recurring linguistic themes for each group. I provide quotes from participants, where appropriate, to illustrate these repeating conventional discourses.

Table 5.2

Sample group comparison of most salient freelisting terms (0.075 saliency and above)

	Elite Youth		Migrant		Second-Generation	
#	Item	Salience	Item	Salience	Item	Salience
1	freedom	0.418	freedom	0.464	freedom	0.352
2	free_elections	0.256	no_military_control	0.337	voting	0.283
3	free_speech	0.229	struggle	0.336	independence	0.247
4	Aung_San_Suu_Kyi	0.216	bloodshed	0.276	elections	0.23
5	National_League_for_Democracy	0.166	free_speech	0.254	free_speech	0.16
6	education	0.162	American_Dream	0.222	laws	0.146
7	United_States	0.162	opportunity	0.19	rights	0.141
8	technology	0.132	success	0.159	United_States	0.111
9	inclusive	0.109	fighting	0.143	arguments	0.11
10	peace	0.109	government	0.143	politicians	0.101
11	reform	0.104	equal_opportunity	0.135	Trump	0.1
12	world	0.099	United_States	0.129	rule-of-law	0.1
13	some_bribery	0.097	power	0.125	people	0.1
14	laws	0.091	arguments	0.122	happiness	0.1
15	job_opportunities	0.091	flowers	0.112	constitution	0.093
16	election	0.091	remember	0.111	groups	0.091
17	equality	0.086	wealth	0.107	free_assembly	0.089
18	harmony	0.083	pain	0.102	Hillary	0.087
19	open	0.083	progress	0.1	ideas	0.087
20	together	0.082	freedom_of_religion	0.095	Republicans	0.083
21	high_salary	0.082	light	0.092	education	0.083
22	media	0.081	business	0.089	Democrats	0.082
23	healthcare	0.078	jobs	0.087	representation	0.08

Foundational Cultural Models

Before moving to the proposal of specific Burmese cultural models of democracy, it is important to briefly discuss foundational cultural models. One of my hypotheses is that cultural models of democracy may vary between participants, at least partially, due to different foundational cultural models. These foundational cultural models, in fact, would generate different implicit assumptions about democracy. For example, the Elite Youth, born and raised in a sociocentric environment, had little to no experience in an egocentric society.

During interviews, the Elite Youth participants occasionally employed individualistic linguistic phrases, such as "I think" or "I feel," but made reference to group/s (i.e., an index of a sociocentric way of thinking) when talking about many issues. For example, in response to the question about a participant's religion, BK started his answer in this way:

BK: Well, my family is Buddhist, so…

Here BK does not finish his sentence because it should be obvious that if his family is Buddhist, he is also Buddhist. When I asked each Elite Youth participant about their religion, eight out of eleven participants mentioned the religion of their family. Of the three who did not, these participants stated that they are non-practicing Buddhists.

This group affiliation in terms of family also occurred amongst the Elite Youth in regard to politics. For example, BK again references his family, this time in terms of political affiliation:

BK: I mean my family, like we all support NLD.

These are just a couple examples of a general trend among the Elite Youth expressing one's identity in reference to a social group, i.e. family.

The Migrant sample group represents those born and raised in a sociocentric environment but with decades of exposure and experience of living in an egocentric society, i.e. the United States. Despite this experience, the Migrant discourse mirrored that of the Elite Youth in terms of speaking in group terms. Similar to the Elite Youth participants, this sociocentric discourse among the Migrant group centered on family, as I will illustrate in a subsequent section detailing the Migrant cultural model of democracy. The retention of sociocentrism is likely due to the 'foundational' nature of sociocentrism as a cultural model. These types of models are formed at an early age and tend to exist at the root of cognition, later generating more complex molar models.

The Second-Generation, born and raised in an egocentric society, nonetheless grew up in families and ethnic communities with sociocentric values. These participants spoke in more individualistic terms, often highlighting the tension between their individual yearnings and the confines of sociocentric familial obligations. Overall, the Second-Generation expressed the assignment of a higher value on individualism as evidenced also in the freelisting data (Table 5.2).

The foundational cultural model of sociocentrism present in each group helps generate the ensuing cultural model of democracy that same group holds. This process will be highlighted, where relevant, when discussing the emergence in each sample group of their cultural model of democracy.

Burmese Cultural Models of Democracy

Below I present the findings for each sample group, that is, recurring themes that appeared in both interview data and freelisting data. I conclude the discussion of each sample group with a list of propositions taken from each thematic category in order to construct a 'propositional story' or cultural model of democracy for each respective sample group, consisting of a number of statements reflective of the model. I then present the ways in which each group's story generates opinions on the democratic transition in Burma/Myanmar. Lastly, I conclude this chapter with a comparison of the different models elicited, and by returning to my research questions and hypotheses.

Elite Youth Cultural Model: *Opening the Floodgates*

This sample group spoke of 'democracy' as though it is some sort of release mechanism, suddenly flooding the country with novelties whether for good or for ill. Strauss' *true ambivalence* is apparent within the interview data, as participants consciously struggled with the positive and negative effects of democratic transition, such as: open borders, free speech, free markets, crime, and other issues. While democracy is generally viewed positively by the Elite Youth, there are degrees of uncertainty as to the ultimate limits of freedom.

The Elite Youth participants' *opinion community* appears to be their families in Burma/Myanmar since political commentary linguistically connected to mentions of family.

BK: I mean my family, like we all support NLD.

Many of their conventional discourses, as discussed below, reflect national discourses in Burma/Myanmar. It bears repeating that the Elite Youth group are temporary international students, all of whom reside on college campuses, which are rather encapsulated communities that tend toward politically 'liberal' values. While I conducted all interviews for this sample group in the Chicago area, some participants attended large, state universities in different areas of the United States, such as the East and West Coasts and other Midwestern areas. As such, another possible *opinion community* for ideas about democracy may be campus life.

Free and Fair Elections

The most salient term for the Elite Youth sample group (after 'freedom') is 'free elections' signifying historical processes in Burma/Myanmar (Table 5.2). Free elections have been a primary issue for pro-democracy forces in the country for many years, as explained in Chapter 2 (Taylor 2009:328-485). Following decades of rigged elections, and the refusal on the part of the military regime to transfer power to the National League for Democracy (NLD) in the 1990 election, it is revealing that the term 'free elections' would be the second most salient term. It can be argued that the 1990 election could be considered 'fair' insomuch as, despite censorship and other forms of government oppression, the NLD won a plurality of seats. This election cannot be considered 'free' since the military regime did not transfer power to the NLD. The 2010 election, while touted by the government as the first 'free and fair' election since 1960 did not include the NLD. Therefore, the seemingly first 'free and fair' election occurred in 2015 when the NLD participated, won a plurality, and assumed power.

There appears to be a general theme in which the NLD is considered more legitimate because the party had been elected freely and fairly. For example, while discussing the economy, one Elite Youth stated:

> EW: …because the first publicly elected government is now elected, I think they can be trustworthy, they are trustworthy…

While this passage focuses on the integrity of the "first publicly elected government," it also subtly portrays the former military regime as untrustworthy. Negative sentiments about the former military regime are consistent across all three sample groups, but it is only the Elite Youth who largely view the new government as legitimate.

Free Speech

While 'free speech' is a salient term and topic for all three sample groups, the concept is discussed somewhat differently within each group. For the Elite Youth, some described 'free speech' in terms of *Opening the Floodgates*:

> AB: Okay, so in the family life before, if, you know, like speak something with, you know, like with your family, and also in the like -- even in the city or like even in some discussions, even if you speak something-something about the government or the bad thing, your parents will be -- don't speak too loud or don't say whatever you want otherwise they will arrest you or put you to jail or something like that. So, right now you know, even the parent they don't care about when you speak or when you express your opinion, so it doesn't matter right now even in your family you have more freedom to speak whenever you want and also express your perspective, and also opinion for the every single, you know, daily life and cases. It doesn't matter right now. So before, if I want to say something to my friend or whatever and my parent is beside or something I cannot say because if I say something related with the bad thing or the government because once you get back home the parent say, "Oh no don't say like that again, whatever, because nobody know if they are the *tauq-lan ye* or something, intelligence agency or something." So that is the biggest change I think, yes.

It should be noted that AB referred to several topics as "the biggest change" in Burma/Myanmar, with the economy being the first mentioned. In the above passage, AB suggests that Burmese citizens are now free to express their opinion without worrying about government backlash. The above passage also suggests a generational change. AB mentions how he would only avoid free speech with his parents present, as though fellow youths engage in free speech with little fear of government retaliation.

While AB does not express a negative view of free speech, other Elite Youth participants struggled with the benefits and drawbacks of the introduction of free speech. DS explains how free speech has helped the country, but then transitions into drawbacks for a moment:

> DS: You know, freedom of speech has always been a big issue in Burma. With the last government, the military government, we never did get the chance to actually express ourselves and they censor everything. Um, so, as of right now, I think with social media and all that people started voicing their opinions more now, but then like some people don't have a filter and they took it far and start abusing the other side, you know.

This passage seems to reflect what Strauss termed *true ambivalence* as DS struggles with the benefit of free speech in terms of the Burmese people being able to finally express themselves, but then seems to suggest there should be a self-censoring limit in terms of civility. Another Elite Youth participant echoed this sentiment:

> FS: Hopefully we can redefine "freedom of speech" and what it covers. Spreading of misinformation part of freedom of speech? If so how about hate speech? How far will democracy go?

Here FS employs *true ambivalence* regarding 'free speech' with a possible suggestion that limits be placed upon it.

This conscious struggle with the limits of 'free speech' is not peculiar to this population considering that this issue is constantly debated also in the United States, with the 'Can't yell fire

in a crowded theater' off-cited example. For one Elite Youth participant, 'free speech' is described as an outward action that stops at the point of "invading" others:

> CB: Well, I think that democracy, you know, the freedom to express yourself, like, expressing your actions, expressing your speech, is like… Democracy is actually expressing your opinions without actually invading others. You know. You can express yourself but you don't have to like, um, think that your opinion is always right. Your opinion can actually be wrong sometimes and other people might have like better ones than yours. So, I think that's the main problem in Myanmar with what people are like, with people they think, they think, they think that they are always right, you know.

Firstly, for CB 'free speech' is directly equated with democracy itself. Secondly, CB expresses the 'marketplace of ideas' trope sometimes associated with democracy. Some Second-Generation participants also spoke of 'competing ideas' perhaps signifying a generational similarity transcending nationality.

It appears that while the Elite Youth participants view 'free speech' positively, they are also aware of immediate drawbacks. The lifting of censorship coinciding with the explosion of smartphones and thereby social media along with the transition to a democratic government seems to have the effect of *Opening the Floodgates* on self-expression. There is obvious concern that unbridled free speech may erode societal cohesion.

Free Markets

After decades of economic oppression through Ne Win's authoritarian version of socialism, it is perhaps not surprising that Elite Youth participants equate democracy with free markets. All Elite Youth participants agreed that the economy will improve in Burma/Myanmar due to the transition to democracy.

Discourse on the subject employed the open/closed metaphor in regard to the country, with economic disparity being equated to lack of trade with the outside world. To expand on EW's comments cited earlier:

> EW: …because the first publicly elected government is now elected, I think they can be trustworthy, they are trustworthy, and the other investors will think so. So, I think that the more foreign investments will be coming into Myanmar.

While this passage focuses on foreign investment, it clearly expresses the notion that Burma/Myanmar is a vessel which outsiders will now be able to enter.

Another Elite Youth participant employs the 'opening up' discourse in a long diatribe about the changing economy in Burma/Myanmar:

> AB: …so people are trying to change from the traditional business to the corporate business, so, you know, the modern business system. … And also, another system is the trading system which is imports and exports which is very important. So, everybody knows that once the country opens up to other international countries that sort of import and export trading just happens. And also, the GDP is like very raising like every year. That's the main thing right now. And also, right now everyone is trying to enjoy the economy expanding, which is also good for the economy that way, and is also good for that. And also, for the business and economic sectors, they are trying to cut down the foreign investment, which is like, they want to protect for the ethnicity, or I mean, the nationality of Burmese or something. So you know we have very rich people or like millionaires, but it's a very few amount like less than 20 or something that can invest or create a whole big like national corporation or something, So, like other foreign investment, they want to come in; they want to invest, they want to do their business in Myanmar, but you know the ethnicity, the nationality, they want to say okay, don't permit these things or we won't have any market share or any opportunity. You know, this is our country, or something like that. So, that is the main thing because people have started seeing the change in the economic state. At least in the United States, there are many foreign investors, you know like China, they're everywhere. And also, Japan, they have car companies everywhere. So, at least we need to let them invest or something. So that is one of the most important things.

Here AB is repeatedly expressing the importance of exchange with international entities in order to grow the Burmese economy. He also describes the stranglehold that the elite few have over most of the country's economic capital.

The notion that democracy, seemingly conflated with capitalism among Elite Youth participants, will automatically solve income inequality appears somewhat counter-intuitive to capitalism. I followed up by asking participants if they worried about foreign companies exploiting the country. The responses spoke to the necessity of safeguards on the part of the government, and the obligation that companies should have to train Burmese people in the business field. I also followed up by asking how international investment would help poor villagers. The responses constituted an urbanization discourse, that villagers would be able to move to cities to find better jobs. Since the Elite Youth are all well-to-do urbanites, this urbanization discourse is perhaps most likely inscribed in their thinking modes.

More Crime

Interestingly, among the Elite Youth sample group, all participants equated democracy with an increase in crime. The loose causation seemed to be that since people have more freedom, they are likely to commit more crimes.

> AB: …For over the last five years, it has just gone up. Crime. Because the president released the prisoners which is also, also the like political prisoner, hundreds, on, like, I think like twice a year or something. So, you know more criminal prisoners are released from the prison. So, they get into society and commit the crime again. So, it's like more and more, the rape criminals, the rape cases, and also the robbery, and invasion, or something like that. So, it's really high for the last five years but I'm not sure for the upcoming year if the president will still keep signing for the release of the criminal prisoner instead of the political prisoner so then it might still be like going up. Even the police were attacked by the criminal prisoner who were released by the president. So,

> like, I think 2 police officers killed in a single case, and also I think like 3 injured, so like many, many were counter-attacked by the criminals.

In the above passage, AB seems to be equating political prisoners with criminal prisoners. This odd conflation of rapists and robbers with political dissenters is repeated by other Elite Youth participants.

> DS: Well, I'd say the crime rate have drastically increased over the past few years, because before the new government take over the Congress, the old government just released like thousands of prisoners, like twice in just one year. So, those prisoners don't have any like place to go and they don't have any like properties in their hands, so they start robbing people again… There are still like a few political prisoners in the prison but they don't say anything about it until now, but they did release those criminals. They like reduced their prison years by like say if a person has to stay in the prison for like 10 years, they reduce it to like 5, and then just release them. Most of them has committed like really, really bad crimes, like serial crimes, like robbing. And like in some areas, people have started using guns. Yeah, which were not legal in our country. Except for the military and police no one is allowed to have guns, but they have begun to import those guns from the borders and use them to rob people. I heard like jewelry shop robberies with guns, so that' definitely not good.
>
> Me: So, are you saying the increase in guns relates to the country opening up more?
>
> DS: Yeah, I would say that because they have like released restrictions on the border, like import/export things. So, people just like try to get the guns from the other countries, like Thailand. And then get those weapons illegally through the I think like some people put like guns in the rice bags and export it as rice, but it's actually guns in the rice bags.

The recurring theme here, *Opening the Floodgates* in terms of borders, personal freedoms, and the like, also indicates an increase of more criminal activity.

Another recurring theme appears here that not everyone deserves freedom. Equality runs opposite to the notion of karma, in which certain people are inherently better than others. One participant explains the equivalence between democracy and crime:

> CB: So, uh, I think people are like, it's because people are mistaking about what democracy actually is, because like during that military regime, the military can just detain you, you know, without your consent, but right now they can't really do anything to you because, because, of this, you know, freedom of… freedom of… doing things.

> They will need, like, evidence and things like that to, in order to arrest you. So, there are many, there are more hit-and-run situations, you know, in Myanmar and things like that, yeah. And people try to like kill one another in the public. It's… everything is going on, it's like, like, like I said the… If I said like things like right now, um… that guy trying to stab her, his girlfriend, in public, it is unheard of. If you tell them, like, in like, during previous 5 or 6 years.

Here CB explains that crime will increase because people will be less afraid than when the military regime could arrest individuals without due cause. Of additional relevance, in Theravada Buddhism, the law of karma dictates that individuals deserve their lot in life, and thus a prisoner belongs in prison, which in turn implies that this 'lesser' person -- on a philosophical level -- does not deserve the same level of freedom.

An interesting notion about crime expressed by one Elite Youth participant, suggests that this awareness of an increase in crime constitutes less a matter of democratization and more so the results of free speech through the lifting of censorship and spread of social media:

> EW: I can see, like… in the past, most crime has been hidden, like for many, at least a few years, in the past, but now many people have like… because there's been like increases in social media, and there's been like, um, maybe they have courage now to say up, like previous, in like, previous like past years many people has been brainwashed by the military government, and they don't know like this is the right thing to say or the right thing to do. Like, when they are being hid, or like, they are being in the military since the age of 15, like, tiny children being put into the military, they just don't know if it is the right thing to do. They just think that it is the right thing for the country, and then right now they have like more exposure to social media. They get more education about, like, this is right and fair thing being done. They like, they like, they're being put in, they're being in this situation so… um… in recent years I think many more people have opened up, and there's been a lot of crime, seen in social media, but I think these are, um, definitely happen in the past year, they just like show up in the recent year because many people like want to show up, want to like express this – their own judgments and the feelings of the majority.

No other Elite Youth participants made this connection between newly acquired free speech and sudden awareness of crime. The general sentiment that too much freedom can have negative results, such as more crime, leads to *true ambivalence* as to the uncertain limits of freedom.

The Uncertain Limits of Freedom

The previous three sections underscore a repeating theme of uncertainty as to the limits of freedom. *Free speech fosters democracy but threatens social cohesion. Free markets bring prosperity but should be regulated to prevent foreign exploitation. More individual freedoms and more open borders result in more crime.* This *true ambivalence* regarding the unknown limits of freedom reveal a certain level of anxiety over the *Opening of the Floodgates*. During interviews, Elite Youth participants consciously struggled with conflicting ideas, working toward some sort of cognitive resolution. As Elite Youth participant, FS, said in the previous section on free speech, "How far will democracy go?"

The Face of Democracy

It appears from both interview data and freelisting data that Aung San Suu Kyi and the National League for Democracy (NLD) are conceptualized to be the embodiment of 'democracy' in Burma/Myanmar. These two terms are fourth and fifth most salient in the results of the freelisting task among the Elite Youth sample group (Table 5.2). Every interview with participants from this sample group contained at least one mention of either Aung San Suu Kyi or the NLD.

The most extreme support for Aung San Suu Kyi appeared in one particular Elite Youth interview. Throughout the interview, EW mentions 'Daw Suu' sixteen times, legitimizing Aung Sang Suu Kyi as a ruler, even though 'Daw Suu' does not hold the office of president:

> EW: Daw Suu is a good example for many citizens. She just like, uh, pick up trash, pick up rubbish. She has just been educating everyone to do the same thing, and a lot of places have been doing like that. So many citizens have seen many changes.

Most of EW's responses amounted to 'Daw Suu will fix everything,' such as evidenced here:

> EW: Daw Suu, often say that she's gonna change the education system but I think we have already started seeing the changes, and will see more even after this year, because like a lot of good teachers, like um, like teachers who has graduated, who has come over from abroad has been brought into this new school that Daw Suu has created through her mother foundation, Daw Khin Kyi Foundation. I think she's been like working so hard on making education better and then not just like, not just like the old one where we have to learn everything by heart. She's making education into something that's, like many people can like brainstorm and allow them to do a lot of things beyond exams, like presentations and stuff like that. It's gonna be effective.

Here EW is explaining how Aung San Suu Kyi will fix the educational system, and throughout her interview the default answer to all problems, from the economy to traffic to privacy issues amounts to Daw Suu will fix them.

This sentiment indicates a return to the theme of Aung San Suu Kyi and the NLD as 'legitimate' government. Her legitimacy originally stems from her role as daughter of General Aung San, viewed as the founder of Burmese independence from the British colonizers, thereby capitalizing on founders' cult ideology. Aung San Suu Kyi further increased her legitimacy through Buddhist themed lectures, capitalizing on the Burmese history of the *dhammaraja.* In these speeches she effectively utilized key Buddhist teachings to portray the military regime as illegitimate rulers under the Dharma.

<u>Elite Youth Propositional 'Story' of Democracy</u>

By aggregating the core propositions outlined above, the Elite Youth cultural model of democracy emerges:

> *Democracy means opening up to the world thanks to free elections. Democracy is freedom, but freedom can threaten social cohesion to unknown degrees. Free speech fosters democracy but can also generate societal discord. Democracy means opening up to the world, bringing economic prosperity through free markets, but free markets should be regulated to protect national interest. Since democracy provides individuals with freedom and opens borders, democracy increases crime. Aung San Suu Kyi and the National League for Democracy are the embodiment of democracy in Myanmar. Democracy will bring positive changes to Myanmar, such as new technologies, better education, and peace.*

This cultural model of democracy is one in which the country is suddenly awash in unbridled freedoms, the limits of which are unknown, resulting in *true ambivalence* among the Elite Youth group.

Optimism toward Democratic Transition in Burma/Myanmar

The Elite Youth cultural model appears to generate optimistic attitudes toward the democratic transition in Burma/Myanmar. Of the 11 Elite Youth participants, nine expressed utter optimism, while two expressed cautious optimism. While consciously struggling with potential harmful unknowns in regard to the limits of freedom, the Elite Youth nonetheless conveyed a general message of hopeful progress, citing improvements in education, technology, the economy, and other aspects of Burmese life.

This optimism appeared not only in interview data but in freelisting data as well, with such terms as ‘education,’ ‘technology,’ ‘peace,’ ‘job opportunities,’ ‘equality,’ ‘harmony,’ and

‘together’ appearing highly salient (Table 5.2). As one Elite Youth participant, DS, said, “Midnight is the darkest hour,” meaning ‘it is always darkest before the dawn,’ and that better times are on the horizon.

Migrant Cultural Model: *Subordinating the Military*

While the Elite Youth cultural model is one of opening the floodgates, the Migrant model may be described as a struggle to lift the gates. This struggle against the oppressive ‘gates’ of the military regime is one of bloodshed, sacrifice, loss, and death. This anti-military sentiment is present within most of the major topics as outlined in the sections below. It only appeared absent, at times, when discussing family life, but is always looming in the background like a shadow.

The *opinion community* for Migrant participants appears to be the tight-knit Burmese community in Fort Wayne. ‘Little Burma,’ situated on the south side of the city, is in an area surrounded by poverty and crime. While the United States government may have chosen Fort Wayne as a refugee site due to low crime rates, the area in which the Burmese community resides is the crime-ridden area for Fort Wayne. This fact, coupled with their lesser status as ‘refugees,’ seems to have worked to further encapsulate the community. While the other two sample groups echoed sentiments, this group often repeated phrases verbatim. One participant, the only self-identified Muslim in the group, appeared in no way as an outlier. His use of conventional discourses of the Burmese of Fort Wayne remained consistent with that of his fellow participants.

Freedom from Oppression

For the Migrant sample group, the gloss of 'freedom' implies freedom *from* something, namely the military regime. The second most salient term after 'freedom' for this group is 'no military control' (Table 5.2). It may seem surprising that some form of 'elections' is not ranked at high salience with this group, but it is likely that 'no military control' is synonymous with 'free and fair elections.' For this group, 'Burma' will not be truly democratized until all vestiges of the military are removed from positions within the civilian government.

The Migrant sample group all agreed that the military in Burma/Myanmar must be completely subservient to the civilian populace.

NH: We will not be satisfied until Burma is totally free of military control. Totally free…

One Migrant participant detailed the specific ways in which the military must cede control to the civilian government:

> LF: Burma will not be free until the military totally gives up power. What I mean to say, is that the constitution must be changed. The 2008 constitution gives the military still considerable power. I don't know if you realize, but, the, uh, military is guaranteed seats in parliament, they, also are guaranteed the vice-presidency, they, uh, still control ministries, and, while, uh, all of this, is, you know, frightening, the worst, the most, probably the most frightening is that they can take control of the government at any time.

These comments by LF are factually accurate. Other Migrant participants reiterated these comments, which helps to explain the general pessimism toward reforms in Burma/Myanmar. The 2008 constitution does guarantee that the military retain 25% of seats in parliament as well as one of two vice-presidential posts. The military controls three ministries: Defense, Border Administration, and Home Affairs. The military can also take control of the government by declaring a state of emergency if the country is threatened, or even if order needs to be restored

(Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar 2008). Migrant participants as a group all expressed pessimism about a future change to the constitution to diminish such military power.

Participants within the Migrant sample group voiced criticism and refutation of what I characterized as 'the new democratic government.'

> OL: Democratic? If, if it is so, so democratic, why is Aung San Suu Kyi cozying up with the military? Why, why are there, still, still wars going on? People dying? No, no, the military is still in control. Even, even if it is, to say, behind the scenes.

This anti-Daw Suu sentiment is prevalent among this group, who articulated clear skepticism about not only her ability to reform the government but of her character in general.

> RS: I, well, I am sorry to say it, but she, she is just out for herself. She, she is, will bow down to the military behind closed doors for power. I am sorry, but that is, it's just what is happening.

The simple fact that the NLD is power-sharing with the military renders Aung San Suu Kyi and her political party complicit in the eyes of Migrant participants.

Life is a Struggle

'Struggle' and 'bloodshed' are the third and fourth most salient terms among this group (Table 5.2). While participants within the Elite Youth sample group had lost relatives to the military regime, the closest related term produced by that group, 'blood,' appeared as the 73rd most salient term. This seems to suggest that Elite Youth participants are also aware of violence at the hands of the military regime, but for the Migrant sample group this awareness is much more salient. As one Migrant participant said:

> NH: When there is death, we realize the price of the coffin.

Here NH is expressing the high cost of liberty paid for in the death of loved ones.

The theme of a 'struggle' continues across topics within this group beyond the struggle for democracy in Burma/Myanmar. For example, sometimes the lexical item 'struggle' actually appeared in the transcript:

> LF: You know, I have been here nearly thirty years and we still feel… unwanted, unwelcomed. You would think that they, uh, would be used to us by now, but we still have problems. I feel, I guess I feel luckier than most because of, my job, and uh, and my role in the, uh, larger community – I mean beyond just the Burmese community, I have had less trouble fitting in here, but I know my, my community still struggles against discrimination all the time.

Other times, the notion of 'struggle' is produced by Migrant participants without using this specific keyword. While one might equate the recurring theme of 'struggle' to experiences in Burma/Myanmar, the migration experience can also be characterized as a struggle for any individual as they attempt to adapt to a new social landscape. Migrant participants struggled against the military regime, struggled for democracy, struggled to come to the United States, struggled to fit into American society, struggled to survive in the United States, and struggled to raise children here. Their lives seem overly characterized by struggle.

Free Speech

The fifth most salient term for the Migrant group participants is 'free speech'. These participants discussed free speech mostly in terms of being able to openly engage in political dissent. Unlike the Elite Youth sample group, no Migrant participants mentioned anything remotely negative about free speech. The right to political dissent seemed to be an American value that is greatly respected.

> QW: Here you can just, just say whatever. Make fun of president. Express political outrage. Protest in streets. The military does not, does not kill you or, or throw you in jail. You are free! Free to, to say, to speak your mind.

The above passage by QW is fairly straightforward and self-explanatory. What is unique among Migrant participants is that even when discussing free speech, the military is mentioned.

The Migrant view of censorship in Burma/Myanmar seems to parallel how Elite Youth participants described their parents. Here there may exist views about censorship and free speech shared by a generation of Burmese regardless of location. Such conjecture would have to be corroborated by data from the Migrant age-set living in Burma/Myanmar today.

The American Dream

For the Migrant participants, 'American Dream' is the sixth most salient term, followed by associated terms such as 'opportunity' and 'success' (Table 5.2). Some Elite Youth participants mentioned the American Dream, with the term appearing as the 42nd most salient term in that sample group's freelisting data. The Migrant conceptualization of the American Dream is not unlike that of others, which is to say the dream is not only for individual success, but for the success of their children, and their children's children.

> NH: That is why, and, it is so, so… frustrating, because it is why we work so hard, and we just want to make for a better life for our children, and it is frustrating, they, they do not see, they don't understand the sacrifice, and that it is painful, to see, for us, to see them with this just… wasted life.

The above passage by NH is a common sentiment echoed by Migrant participants who expressed frustration with offspring not taking life seriously enough or with them getting into trouble.

> MG: He was doing drug. He was doing, doing alcohol – running around, running around. Very bad, you know. Then, you know, he gets involved with, you know, robbings and gangs. He, I mean, he, I heard he got two girls pregnant. It's very bad. How to embarrass your family like this?

MG concludes this statement with the importance of the shame such actions bring upon the family, the above passage clearly ending on a sociocentric note. Other Migrant participants also spoke of the American Dream in sociocentric terms:

> LF: …that's the whole reason I became a teacher, to, to help others achieve the American Dream…

Strictly speaking, the American Dream is one of upward mobility and individual success, and less so of social responsibility, while here it is characterized in terms of family and group success.

Unequal Access to Equal Opportunity

It is apparent that the Migrant sample group underestimated the difficulties awaiting them in the United States. As the ultimate destination of their journey, the 'land of the free' must surely be a place of equal opportunity. Interacting with American society rendered such impressions more nuanced over time. Participants acknowledged that more opportunities for self-advancement are present in the United States, but there are still barriers to accessing equal opportunity:

> PC: I am grateful for, you know, the equal opportunity in the United States, that, you know, this is not like Burma, but I am grateful, but still, even here, you have to have, a car, or someone who drives, you know, transportation, and I, then, you also need, for example good English, and some people are, you know, they, they are better to learn, or, I mean to say, people have different, different levels of English skills, and on top of all this, you need the experience. They [Catholic Charities] told me it is very easy to get a

> job here [Fort Wayne], but then, you know, they don't help you, they don't really even help. I mean, I, I am grateful, but we do need it. We do need the help… Here, you do need the experience, and if you want better job you need to go to college and you need to, uh, not only know how all that works, but also you need the English and the transportation for that too.

Here PC is explaining his experience of American 'equal opportunity,' outlining barriers such as language skills, education, and transportation. Burmese society has traditionally consisted of interdependent support networks, and PC's statement above illustrates how immigrant support organizations do not provide as much help as he anticipated. The gist of the above passage is that the onus is on the individual in American society.

While PC describes specific traits that prevent people from succeeding, others described success in American society as a matter of pure chance, as one participant put it: "Like a blind chicken stumbling into a pot of rice." One participant expressed dismay over migrants being left to flounder on their own in an unknown environment:

> LF: Many Burmese have talents but here they just go to waste, due to, to circumstance, like a red-hot coal covered in ash. These people do, they just, just do not have enough support to, to flourish.

Here LF seems to be expressing that lack of success is not always a problem at the individual level, but rather one of society failing the individual. The metaphor she employs of the 'wasted resource' appears similar to PC blaming the non-profit organization for not helping enough. Such sentiments harken to the interdependent social networks that exist in Burma/Myanmar, which do not exist in the United States. Herein the sociocentric foundational cultural model is clashing with the propensity for American egocentrism – read also as self-reliance. Interestingly, this clash has resulted in a conventional discourse that illustrates what Strauss and Quinn termed

integration, with seemingly contradictory discourses consciously fused into a singular concept. Yes, there is more equal opportunity in the United States than in Burma/Myanmar, but access to opportunities is not entirely equal. Individuals are free to climb the social ladder, but without certain skills or random chances, many remain at the bottom of this proverbial ladder.

Migrant Propositional 'Story' of Democracy

By connecting the themes present within the abovementioned topics, key propositions of the Migrant cultural model of democracy emerge:

> *Democracy is freedom from oppression. Democracy entails free and fair elections. Achieving democracy is a struggle in which blood is shed and people are martyred for the right to self-governance. Democracy means the military is subservient to the civilian government. Democracy allows the populace to openly engage in political dissent. Democracy allows for the American Dream of individual success through upward social mobility. Democracy provides equal opportunity for prosperity, but access to opportunity is not equal. The recent transition to democracy in Burma/Myanmar will not bring about positive changes because the military is still in control, with the NLD and Aung San Suu Kyi still beholden to the military.*

While the primary theme of this cultural model of democracy is no military control, the model also contains components of American life such as opportunity. While American life is viewed as a positive alternative to life under an oppressive military regime, the immigrant experience nonetheless continues to challenge Burmese people in the United States.

Absolute Pessimism toward Democratic Transition in Burma/Myanmar

While the Elite Youth cultural model of democracy generated optimism toward transition to democracy in Burma/Myanmar, the Migrant cultural model generated absolute pessimism. There is no hope among these participants that any significant changes will occur with this transition. This 'transition' is not viewed as true democratization, but rather as a new façade for the military to appear more palatable. At minimum, a new constitution would have to be drafted, with military guarantees to power omitted.

Second-Generation Cultural Model: *Individualization*

For the Second-Generation sample group, the gloss of 'freedom' is more in line with the notion of individualism (Table 5.2). As noted previously, this sample group comprised American citizens, born and raised in the United States, having attended American schooling, but with Burmese parents. Implicit assumptions among this group revealed a greater focus on the individual and on notions of independence, both at the national and personal levels. The egocentric foundational cultural model predominates, with participants switching to sociocentrism around family and the Burmese community. The existence of two foundational cultural models is expressed more in terms of tension than of smooth transitions. The overall theme seemed to be one of yearning for greater independence, while feeling guilt or shame if not adhering to 'traditional' social norms of their family and the Burmese community.

The *opinion communities* for Second-Generation participants appear to be more complex than the previous two groups. From the linguistic data and the freelisting data, their *opinion communities* seem to be: American schools, American workplaces, American media, fellow

Second-Generation friends, with some opinions stemming from Burmese family and Burmese community. It is perhaps not surprising that many of their ideas of 'democracy' echoed that of American high school civics class, with the freelisting containing current political figures in the United States. Their views on crime may also be indicative of the area of Fort Wayne in which they grew up, where crime happens to be more prevalent. While relegated to specific place, these participants nonetheless appeared to have more *opinion communities* than the other two groups.

Individuals Voting for Individuals

The second most salient term for Second-Generation participants is 'voting' (Table 5.2). It should be noted that the term 'voting' did not appear at all in either of the other two sample groups' freelisting data. Also, unlike the other two groups who spoke of politics more in group terms, Second-Generation participants spoke in personal terms:

> XG: I tell my parents, you know, I vote, but I am embarrassed to say I have like never voted. I really liked Obama, you know, he was like, my president, but I didn't, sorry, but I just didn't even want to vote in the last election.

While XG is expressing a sentiment common to most American youths who do not vote, it is interesting to compare this passage with those of the Elite Youth, all of whom spoke about political affiliations in terms of their families. Here XG is highlighting a schism with his family in terms of politics.

Other Second-Generation participants illustrated the very personal, and thereby individualistic, experience of voting:

> AS: To be honest, I, I used to think it didn't really matter if I voted... I know that sounds bad, and, maybe, maybe it is bad… but, but ever since Trump, like all immigrants are scared. Maybe not all, but, at least, a lot are scared. Our votes do matter! I hate that, well,

> it took… like, that to make me realize, and now it's too late, but it is also still confusing, and I guess… that is my fault, like I should know, should know how my government like works more. I just feel like the whole, the whole system is messed up. Like whoever gets the most votes should just win. Then we wouldn't be in this mess, and so, well, now I feel… I feel like… I come back full circle to, to my vote doesn't matter.

This passage by AS demonstrates his conscious struggle, and what Strauss calls *true ambivalence,* regarding whether individuals voting matters or not. There is some recognition of responsibility for the immigrant community to which he is connected, with perhaps some guilt expressed, but ultimately, he is stating that it is his own internal decision-making process which determines whether to vote or not. Arguably, AS resolves his *true ambivalence* by the end of this passage. It should be noted that there is no mention of his family, but only the mention of the immigrant community. This passage seems to point to AS transitioning from an egocentric stand to a sociocentric one and then back to an egocentric.

Independence and Self-Determination

The third most salient term for Second-Generation participants is 'independence' (Table 5.2). At first the associated meaning might be presumed to mean national independence. Burma/Myanmar technically gained independence from the British in 1948 but having fallen under a dictatorship for over sixty years, the term is perhaps not associated with democracy. The interview data from Second-Generation participants seems to indicate that the association of 'independence' with 'democracy' is about more than just national independence, but also and especially independence on an individual level.

This theme of independence appears mostly in relation to discussions of family life. Here again is the tension between egocentric aspirations and sociocentric obligations.

> YC: Return there? Um, no. It is not safe, and, also, my parents would never, well, you know it is just not safe over there. There are still, like, ongoing wars. They still persecute the people. There is no real change still.

This passage by YC seems very telling about Second-Generation switching between models. Speaking about Burma/Myanmar seems to trigger her sociocentric foundational model as she begins to mention her parents. She stops herself and instead issues a general proclamation about safety.

In regard to conflicting models, some Second-Generation participants expressed a feeling of being two different people, or of being split in two.

> WF: …I didn't want to be seen as Burmese because I didn't want to have to deal with all that, uh, you know negative, um, stereotype. I mean, I was born here, I'm an American. I never asked to be some kind of… in-between person, but, I still, you know, like never wanted to upset my parents so I would just go to things, go to you know religious ceremonies and stuff, and, sometimes, sometimes I felt like, well, still do feel like two, well, yeah, I guess two different people.

Here WF states that he feels like two different people, but the above passage very clearly illustrates that his preference is to be viewed as American and not Burmese. Again, there is the tension between egocentric and sociocentric models. The preference is for the egocentric foundational cultural model, but WF switches to sociocentrism for his family's sake. Here WF is caught between centripetal and centrifugal cultural forces, feeling opposite pulls of sociocentrism and egocentrism.

Another Second-Generation participant, while speaking about his friend, expresses the sociocentric familial obligations in very negative, if not hyperbolic, terms.

> ZL: He had to do, like, everything, and I mean, like everything for his parents. He had to talk to the landlord, he had, he had to talk to the doctor. They had, like, no English, and never even bothered to, like, learn. They just relied on [their son] to do literally

> everything, and then, they're like constantly yelling at him and, like, like, treating him like a dog. I really felt bad for him. He was like… a slave, basically. I mean, yeah…

The gist of ZL's statement here is that his friend had little to no independence, and in fact, his parents completely depended upon this friend. ZL, who had a different family experience than that of his friend, views this seemingly extreme interdependency as slavery. Within his statement there is an inherent value on independence, that parents should not be so reliant upon children. As with an egocentric foundational cultural model, individuals should fend for themselves, and it is parents who take care of children until the children can take care of themselves.

Competing Ideas

'Free speech' is the fifth most salient freelisting term for Second-Generation participants, lower than that of the other two sample groups (Table 5.2). Within the interview data, the concept of 'free speech' appeared to be interrelated to the ninth most salient terms 'arguments' and the nineteenth most salient term 'ideas':

> AS: One thing my family never understood about America is about… arguing. I don't mean like families arguing, well, I mean, I guess I mean that too. They just don't seem to, and they like don't understand that arguments are like competing ideas and that's what politicians even do, they, um, make their arguments and then people decide who to vote for. It's like, hello, debates! So, my family, well, I think like Burmese, well, older Burmese people here see arguments as fighting but they just don't get the process, and they like hate it when we argue with them, like we are being disrespectful, and, well, I mean, that is the word they use, but I try to tell them it doesn't make any sense. They came here to be able to, well, so that we, like their kids, could speak freely and have free minds, and all kinds of freedom, so why do they get upset when we exercise those freedoms? I mean I am an adult. I should be able to, you know, say what I think. It is like they want it both ways, or, more like, like they are only willing to meet freedom here half-way.

Here AS is suggesting that "competing ideas' are a key aspect of the American way of life, and that as such Burmese families should adopt such a model. He directly ties "arguments" to freedom. The inability to argue is equated to an inability to be free. This sentiment about "old" Burmese ways as outdated is echoed by participants, such as WF earlier, who only attended community functions to please his parents.

Individual Rights and the Rule of Law

The sixth and seventh most salient freelisting terms among the Second-Generation participants are 'laws' and 'rights' (Table 5.2). Probably through a combination of stories from Burma/Myanmar and American education, Second-Generation participants have an awareness of individual rights under the rule of law.

> TS: I mean, that's why my parents came here. In Burma, they can, you know, just like pick you up off the street and kill you or throw you in jail or burn your village with like no, like having no good reason. Burma has laws, but the military just does whatever it wants. They don't need like warrants or whatever like here. I mean I know we have like police problems and, you know, like, America has problems, but it's not, it's not like the same as Burma.

Here TS makes an important distinction between a country having laws, and a country abiding by the rule of law. Dictatorships have laws, just as they have constitutions, and governing bodies. Such regimes use laws to justify their own desires, rather than abiding by the law. This sentiment is perhaps most embodied by one Second-Generation participant's story.

> SC: They murdered him. They (the military regime) just killed my uncle in the street and they got away with it! My mom is still so messed up about it to this day. I hear all the, the like stories. I guess I should, you know, be angry, but it really, it really just makes me sad for my mom…

For SC, the military regime committed murder, a crime, not in accordance with the law, a transgression never punished. This view of the military as lawless thugs, while very apparent among the Migrant sample group, also appeared at times with the Second-Generation participants.

Second-Generation participants seemed to be aware that a healthy democracy is dependent upon a system of checks and balances.

> WF: My parents always complain about how, uh, like the military like controls, well, like, uh, is the whole government in Burma. America has like, uh, you know, like, uh, a really big military but, but the military doesn't control the government. Like the president is in control of the military, but like you learn in school, the government has, uh, branches to make sure nothing gets out of control, like, we can even impeach presidents. So different from Burma…

In the above passage, WF is illustrating that in Burma/Myanmar the government has been dominated by a singular force, the military. He contrasts this with the United States system of co-equal branches of government, in which civilian representatives have the power to impeach the president. All of these passages illustrate how in a democracy, the rule of law protects the rights of individuals.

<u>Second-Generation Propositional 'Story' of Democracy</u>

As with the previous sample groups, combining the gist propositions results in the Second-Generation cultural model of democracy:

> *Democracy is independence. Democracy means individual constituents voting in elections for individual candidates. Democracy is a political system of checks and balances between equal branches of government. Democracy means people argue over*

competing ideas. Democracy safeguards free speech and individual rights through constitutional law. Democracy means individuals have the right to self-determination and can choose to be whoever they want to be. Democracy means parents take care of children through love, support, and autonomy. Democracy means freedom from the past, such as outdated norms and customs. The recent transition to democracy in Burma is unlikely to bring about positive changes because it is not the same type of society that exists in the United States.

I would propose that for the most part this cultural model of democracy is in line with a general American model of democracy. The propositions that relate to the Second-Generation experience are that of parents taking care of children, and freedom from outdated customs. These two propositions clearly reflect the schism experienced by Second-Generation participants as Burmese homelife clashes with that of surrounding American society.

Relative Pessimism toward Democratic Transition

The Second-Generation participants expressed pessimism toward the democratic transition in Burma/Myanmar, but not to the degree of their parents' generation. Having grown up with a foot in two worlds, these participants seemed to have a more nuanced view. They recognized that American and Burmese society are culturally different, having experienced these differences first-hand.

Conclusion

Three distinct cultural models of democracy are active within the sample groups. While the Elite Youth and Migrant participants reveal evidence for a sociocentric foundational model,

the Second-Generation participants seem to default to egocentrism. There does appear to be switching between foundational cultural models dependent upon context. These foundational cultural models help generate ensuing cultural models of democracy, which in turn generate opinions on the democratic transition in Burma/Myanmar.

The Elite Youth participants spoke in very sociocentric terms, whether in relation to their family, or in relation to their country. Burma/Myanmar itself is portrayed as a homogenous society, despite a stark history of perpetual civil war between various ethnic groups. The *Opening of the Floodgates* through democracy is one of wide sweeping changes, swallowing all of the country, and rising all tides. Such a rush of the tidal waters of freedom brings with it uncertainty as to the limits of such freedom, and perhaps the necessity of partial floodgates in certain areas, such as free markets and crime. Still, since democracy is equated with progress, innovation, and income, the transition is viewed positively.

The Migrant participants also spoke in very sociocentric terms, mostly about family and community. Their view of Burma/Myanmar seemed to be that of the military versus everyone else. The military still comprises individuals, but participants never acknowledged this fact. Regardless, this group expressed awareness of circumstances in Burma/Myanmar, having witnessed the military regime change façades in the past. As illustrated, they detailed specific ways in which Burmese democracy is yet to be achieved. Some of the freedoms that American democracy affords are recognized, but not to the degree of their offspring.

The Second-Generation participants' cultural model of democracy contains more nuanced implicit assumptions in line with what might appear within an American high school civics course. This group not only mentioned voting, but emphasized it. They seem to possess a

general awareness of American politics, as well as the responsibility to participate in the electoral process. As the children of immigrants, some of their model pertained to their unique life experiences as different from other American children. At heart, their cultural model of democracy is individualistic in nature, rooted in an egocentric foundational cultural model.

Such evidence appears to answer my research question that there are shared implicit assumptions about democracy among Burmese residents in the United States, but that these shared assumptions vary greatly between my sample groups. In this study, I found the clearest differences based upon the grouping of participants according to exposure to Burmese and American society respectively. There clearly are foundational cultural models at work within these groups as evidenced in this study, corroborated by the anthropological literature on Burma/Myanmar and Southeast Asian diaspora studies (Keyes 1977; Spiro 1977; Canniff 2001; Ong 2003; Seekins 2006; Hickey 2007; Swearer 2010).

While rights of the individual may not be absent from Burmese cultural models of democracy, implicit assumptions about such individual rights vary greatly among the three groups. For the Elite Youth, the limits to such individual freedoms remain unknown. For the Migrant participants, such rights are upheld when there is no military oppression. This group seemed to draw a line in the sand as to their children having too much individual freedom. For the Second-Generation group, these participants are very much aware of their individual rights, rights which only seemed to be impinged upon by their Burmese families and Burmese community.

CHAPTER 6

DISCUSSION

The three cultural models of democracy described in the previous chapter characterize each group's implicit assumptions of democracy, grounded in foundational cultural models ranging from sociocentrism to egocentrism. While the Elite Youth and Migrant groups exemplify the foregrounding of a sociocentric foundational model, the Second-Generation participants appear to default to an egocentric model, backgrounding it when in Burmese contexts, and foregrounding it in American contexts. This 'model-switching' results in a sort of general and perpetual cultural tension, rather than a seamless flexing between the two. This tension is due to what Strauss and Quinn (1997) referred to as centripetal and centrifugal forces. These two forces pull upon individuals, compelling Second-Generation participants to engage in a sort of ongoing cultural pole-shift. The centripetal force of American egocentrism pulls Second-Generation individuals toward its core, with the centrifugal force of Burmese sociocentrism pulling when in the context of family or ethnic community. For example, some Second-Generation participants described being two different persons: a typical American at school and/or work, and as adhering to the 'old ways' when around family or the Burmese community. Other Second-Generation seemed less aware of the 'model-switching' in which they engaged, as though it were a wholly subconscious process.

The fact that the Elite Youth and Migrant groups tend toward sociocentrism while the Second-Generation group tends toward egocentrism seems to indicate that foundational cultural

models are internalized largely from the greater society in which an individual is raised. The Second-Generation participants, while raised in Burmese families and Burmese communities, appear to be influenced more by larger American society in the shaping of their cognition. These foundational cultural models generate more complex cultural models. The participants within each sample group exhibited different forms of reasoning when giving opinions about the transition to democracy in Burma/Myanmar, generated by their own unique cultural models of democracy.

In the *Opening the Floodgates* cultural model, the Elite Youth group are those who stand to benefit from the transition to democracy. While self-identifying as middle class, these temporary students in the United States are of a much higher socioeconomic status than the average citizen of their home country, and as such their conventional discourses reflect those of elite members of Burmese society. While the *Opening of the Floodgates* may be frightening in some respects, it is clearly also exciting for these participants. For the Elite Youth, opening up to the world brings with it a host of opportunities in such areas as the economy, technology, education, from which the elite are likely to benefit. The fear factor involved in the *Uncertain limits of freedom* proposition within this model is illustrated by the *true ambivalence* demonstrated within the speech events of this group. Participants consciously debated with themselves as to the benefits and drawbacks of free speech, as well as how far the 'freedoms' inherent within 'democracy' will possibly go.

Ultimately, the Elite Youth view of the transition is less about democratic transition, and more about the transition from a broken and illegitimate government to one that will work for the people. This proposition is one that has been cultivated by Aung San Suu Kyi over the years

through her speeches denouncing the military government as illegitimate in Buddhist terms. Theravada Buddhist notions of power have helped 'Daw Suu' to legitimize her claim to rulership, initially substantiated through her father's legacy as founder of Burmese independence and thereby capitalizing on centuries of founders' cult ideology, but then expanded by her through Buddhism-laden political speeches. Rulership in Burma/Myanmar is steeped in centuries of a dual-leadership sociopolitical model comprising a spiritual and a political component. If the political 'wheel' is broken, then it must be fixed or replaced in order for the country to keep moving forward, and thus the transition to a legitimate government which happens to be democratic. For the Elite Youth, their cultural model is largely reflective of the time into which they were born.

The *Subordinating the Military* cultural model of the Migrant group cannot be divorced from the history which shaped it. While their cultural model of democracy resembles American democracy insomuch as the military is subservient to the civilian government, such is not the primary feature of American democracy. For the Migrant participants, the 'transition' in Burma/Myanmar is not a true transition to democracy since the military retains so much control. For these participants, the transition is not even a partial transition since Aung San Suu Kyi and the NLD are viewed as having conceded to the military regime in exchange for power. While the Elite Youth see a new legitimate governing body taking power, the Migrant participants do not share this view.

Despite having lived in the United States for nearly two decades, the Migrant participants have largely not succumbed to the centrifugal force of American culture, such as evidenced in views on family life, livelihood, and crime. This resistance is likely due to the experience of life

under the military regime. In fact, the conventional discourses and freelisting data suggest that the Migrant participants exhibit all five tendencies of centripetal cultural force as per Strauss and Quinn (1997). The salience of the military has clearly remained durable over decades. The cultural model is deeply embedded within individual participants due to intense negative emotional experiences, which have clearly resulted in a motivational force that generates viewpoints. These views have been passed down to the Second-Generation who have interpreted Burma/Myanmar as being unsafe. The military casts a long thematic shadow across Migrant cognition, coloring their worldview even in regard to life in the United States as a struggle. Lastly, this anti-military theme is very strongly echoed by all Migrant participants as evident in the results of the analyses of my data.

While the anti-military theme has remained durable, other beliefs have been altered by way of the migration experience. For example, before immigrating to the United States, Migrant participants viewed 'America' as a place of equal opportunity. Having lived in the United States, however, this belief became augmented to include seemingly heterogenous conventional discourses by way of *integration,* combining seemingly contradictory beliefs into the proposition of *Unequal access to equal opportunity.* The previous, external view of the United States as a place of equal opportunity had to be reconciled with the lived experience of encountered limitations of social upward mobility. While these limitations varied from individual to individual, Migrant participants nonetheless blame American society for not providing the appropriate support for success. This view is likely due to the sociocentric history of Burmese interdependency, such as through moral obligation to family and patron-client relationships. Burmese migrants view the U.S. government and Catholic Charities as patrons, expected to help

a great deal with American life. I argue that this view is still intact, with these entities now being viewed largely as unreliable patrons. This disruption has forced individuals to either struggle on their own in American society to succeed, or to rely more on the local Burmese community for financial help to simply survive through 'odd job' networks.

The *Individualization* cultural model of the Second-Generation is starkly different from the other groups' models. Second-Generation cognition can be characterized as predominantly American, with some Burmese influence. For example, the Burmese moral obligation to help kin is viewed by Second-Generation participants as a point of frustration since it clearly conflicts with American notions of self-reliance. These participants seem somewhat burdened by their Burmese-ness, begrudgingly attending religious ceremonies and other community events out of a sense of familial obligation. Livelihood patterns are viewed very differently from their Migrant parents, with Second-Generation participants yearning for self-determination instead of parental determinism. Democracy implies liberation from the "old ways" of Burmese social norms, with the Second-Generation group viewing their parents as either unwilling or unable to adapt fully to the American way of life.

This conflict between self-determination and familial obligations results in tension and fighting between parents and children. Child-rearing in Burma/Myanmar, with absolute obedience to emotionally distant parents, contrasts greatly with the propensity for affectionate and interactive parenting in the United States. Second-Generation American egocentrism conflicts with Burmese focus on other-than-ego, and thus results in tensions that are only further exacerbated by a posture that may suggest lack of affection from Burmese parents when compared to other American children. While Second-Generation participants clearly love and

care about their parents, they express a seeming sense of resentment over their parents' lack of Americanness. Such evidence as found in my study suggests that the individualized aspect of American culture is the centripetal force for Second-Generation participants, with egocentrism having a greater pull, despite these participants exhibiting occasional sociocentric behaviors. The Second-Generation group desires a life of self-determination, but they do not always express it, especially within Burmese contexts.

These results suggest that foundational cultural models play a significant role in the migration experience, thus supporting my original hypothesis. The Second-Generation data, however, indicate that the dynamics of foundational cultural models are more complex than I had initially assumed. The transition from a foundational cultural model focused on other-than-ego to one focused on ego results in different cultural models, as is the case with democracy. The 'group-think' mentality of the Elite Youth and Migrant participants contrasts with the individualized mindset of the Second-Generation participants. Due to a lifetime of exposure to surrounding American society, Second-Generation participants gravitate toward a foundational cultural model rooted in the exaltation of self-reliance.

My findings indicate that there are a wide variety of stances on the transition to democracy. Some Burmese, such as the Migrant participants, do not view this as a transition to democracy at all. For others, such as the Elite Youth, the transition is a big step forward. Interestingly, the Second-Generation participants seem to have a very nuanced view, suggesting that Burmese democracy will never fully resemble American democracy because Burma/Myanmar and the United States are such different countries with very different worldviews. While this statement appears necessarily true, it should not be overlooked as the

Burmese continue on a path toward self-governance. Democracy in Burma/Myanmar appears to have roots in Theravada Buddhist philosophy, signifying that Burmese democracy, at least among the Bamar, may continue to maintain such elements. The individualization process that occurred with Second-Generation participants in this study is not yet present in Burmese society and may never be. The 2015 election in Burma/Myanmar did not instantly transition the nation to American-style democracy, whatever that may be, but rather served as a step toward a more 'legitimate' government in Burma/Myanmar, in the sense of gradually building toward a government that is of, by, and for the people.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

I conclude this study by returning to my research questions and hypotheses I presented in Chapter 1.

1. *What are the implicit assumptions about 'democracy' among Burmese residents in the United States?*
2. *Are there commonly shared implicit assumptions about democracy?*
3. *Is there variation among these implicit assumptions?*
4. *If so, what are the variations and why do they exist?*

The results of my study indicate that these implicit assumptions, i.e. cultural models, vary by life experience. I distinguished life experiences among three distinct groups, each of whom had different implicit assumptions. These life experiences appear to be the reason why different implicit assumptions exist and are commonly shared within each group. For example, in terms of the transition to democracy in Burma/Myanmar, the optimism of the Elite Youth is contrasted against the absolute pessimism of the Migrants due to very different experiences with the nation-state of Burma/Myanmar. Similarly, the Second-Generation discourse of Burmese-American differences seems to reflect their own life experiences as American-born citizens living in Fort Wayne, having grown up being 'othered' with such labels as 'refugee.'

I was also interested in the effects that preexisting worldviews might have on the construction of cultural models of democracy and the possibility of foundational cultural models also influencing implicit assumptions about democracy.

1. *Does an indigenous Burmese worldview influence implicit assumptions?*
2. *Does this foundational worldview change over the migration experience?*
3. *If so, to what degree and in what form?*

I found that an indigenous Burmese worldview does affect implicit assumptions about democracy, but only in the cases of the Elite Youth and Migrant participants. For the Elite Youth, founders' cult ideology, the *dhammaraja* tradition, and Buddhist notions of power appeared in their views of the democratic leaders in Burma/Myanmar. For the Migrant participants, Burmese social organization seems to be more of an influencing factor, with individual-family norms and patron-client systems transposed onto American governmental and non-governmental organizations. The Second-Generation group marks the point in the migration experience at which the Burmese, sociocentric foundational cultural model and predominant worldview shifts to that of a more American egocentric outlook. The Second-Generation participants have not been fully 'Americanized,' cognitively speaking, since they still default to a sociocentric model when in the presence of Burmese family and/or community.

As stated earlier, I generated three hypotheses to test aspects of my research questions. Firstly, I hypothesized that a foundational worldview exists among the Bamar that is sociocentric. This hypothesis appears correct as per the results of the analyses of my data, and as the content of corroborating literature (Keyes 1977; Spiro 1977; Canniff 2001; Ong 2003; Seekins 2006; Hickey 2007; Swearer 2010). Secondly, I hypothesized that due to this

sociocentric disposition 'individual rights' would be largely absent from implicit assumptions of 'democracy.' I was somewhat incorrect with this hypothesis, insomuch as 'individual rights' are mentioned, but each group conceptualizes this notion differently. Thirdly, I hypothesized that variation of implicit assumptions would be present across members of the diasporic communities due to different life experiences. As to this last hypothesis, the evidence suggests that life experiences very much influence cultural models, as suggested by Strauss and Quinn (1997) among others. Each of my three sample groups had very different life experiences, and while some overlap of implicit assumptions occurred, each group's cultural model largely differed from that of the others.

My findings in this study highlight some key insights into the migrant experience. It would be interesting to expand this study with larger sample sizes, and possibly increase the number of field sites within the migration process, such as refugee camp participants. The findings in this study contribute to diaspora literature which, other than in some educational studies, often does not focus on cognition (Canniff 2001; Ong 2003; Hickey 2007). With a focus on cognition, the problems that migrants experience are better illuminated, thereby presenting potential opportunities for applied solutions. It is my hope that diaspora study research such as my own will help policymakers make better decisions by gaining an emic perspective of migrant experiences, such as the incoming expectation of greater levels of assistance in transitioning to life in the United States.

The variation in implicit assumptions about democracy is important for policy-makers and political actors. Since different social groups have different conceptualizations of democracy, blocks of voters may be motivated to the polls by means of their implicit

assumptions about democracy. Beyond voter mobilization, awareness of heterogenous definitions of democracy can be used to engender political trust by speaking to the values of specific communities. Such differing views of democracy can also aid in nationhood-building efforts in the United States by ensuring inclusivity of refugees and immigrants through common associations rather than assumed or coerced definitions of democracy. In terms of American foreign policy, the findings of this study can be employed to shape strategies for aiding countries in self-governance capacity-building by approaching statecraft from an emic perspective.

This study is grounded in cognitive anthropology as well as social psychology, two fields within which one finds studies of societies that tend toward foregrounding either ego (egocentric) or other-than-ego (sociocentric). My own data validate the findings of researchers such as Triandis (1989, 1995, 2001), Bennardo (2009, 2014), Shimizu (2011), and others who have postulated that certain societies tend to prefer egocentrism over sociocentrism or vice-versa. This is not to say that societies can be broadly portrayed as personalities-writ-large as per Ruth Benedict (1934) and Margaret Meade (1935), but rather that egocentrism-sociocentrism is a continuum, within which individuals and social groups may be situated.

I am not arguing that Burma/Myanmar is a sociocentric society, but rather that relatively speaking, aspects of Burmese society value other-than-ego, such as the interdependency exhibited in individual-family and patron-client relationships. Even still, intracultural variation will be present. Certain members of a relatively sociocentric society may be more egocentrically inclined. Conversely, members of a relatively egocentric society may be more sociocentrically inclined due to personal experiences that have left a profound emotional trace.

Through the course of conducting analyses, I realize that the data I have collected could also be used to answer other research questions, for example, examining how language choice influences responses, both within interviews and in freelisting. Roughly half the participants in this study chose to respond in Burmese to the freelisting task, with the rest in English. Many participants also engaged in a great deal of code-switching during interviews between English and Burmese. As such my data could be examined for patterns, and ultimately explain the reasons for opting to switch at that linguistic instance.

This research could also be expanded to examine the influence of national and international discourses on cultural models of democracy. The investigation could include other ethnic groups in Burma/Myanmar. How would their cultural models of democracy compare with the Elite Youth participants? What sort of variation exists between different ethnic groups' implicit assumptions of democracy? Is a sociocentric foundational cultural model present among these groups? Likewise, different religious groups in Burma/Myanmar could be examined, such as Muslims and Christians. Such research could have relevance for peace and conflict studies in terms of the ongoing ethnic and religious strife that continues to plague the nation to this day.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Allot, Anna J. *Inked Over, Ripped Out, Burmese Storytellers and the Censors*. New York: PEN American Center, 1993.

Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism.* London: Verso, 1991.

Asian Foundation. *East Timor National Survey of Voter Knowledge (Preliminary Findings).* Report produced in Dili, East Timor, 2001. https://asiafoundation.org/resources/pdfs/EastTimorVoterEd.pdf

Asia Foundation. *Democracy in Cambodia – 2014: A Survey of the Cambodian Electorate.* Report produced in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, 2014a. https://asiafoundation.org/resources/pdfs/DemocracyinCambodia2014.pdf

Asia Foundation. *Myanmar 2014: Civic Knowledge and Values in a Changing Society.* Report produced in San Francisco, CA, 2014b. https://asiafoundation.org/resources/pdfs/MyanmarSurvey20141.pdf.

Aspinall, Edward. "Money Politics, Patronage and Clientelism in Southeast Asia." In *Routledge Handbook of Southeast Asian Democratization,* edited by William Case, 299-313. New York: Routledge, 2015.

Associated Press. "Fort Wayne Store Apologizes for 'No Burmese' Sign." *Herald Bulletin.* 13 March 2010.

Aung San Suu Kyi. *Freedom from Fear*. London: Penguin, 1991.

---. "The Glass Splinters." *Times Literary Supplement.*12 July 1991.

---. *Letters from Burma*. London: Penguin, 1995.

---. *The Voice of Hope*. New York: Seven Stories Press, 1997.

Aung-Thwin, Michael and Maitrii Aung-Thwin. *A History of Myanmar Since Ancient Times: Traditions and Transformations*. London: Reaktion, 2012.

Bartlett, F.C. *Remembering: A Study in Experimental and Social Psychology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1932.

Bartlett, Lesley and Gabriella Novaro. "Ethnographies of Migration and Education in the United States, Disrupting Discourses of Assimilation and Inclusion." In *Comparing Ethnographies, Local Studies of Education Across the Americas,* edited by Kathryn Anderson-Levitt and Elsie Rockwell, 91-118. Washington D.C.: American Educational Research Association, 2017.

Bello, Walden. "Asia's Diverse Democratic Transitions." In *Transitions to Democracy in East and Southeast Asia,* edited by Kristina N. Gaerlan, viii-xiv. Quezon City: Institute for Popular Democracy.

Benedict, Ruth. *Patterns in Culture.* New York: Routledge, 1934.

Bennardo, Giovanni. *Language, Space and Social Relations: A Foundational Cultural Model in Polynesia.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.

---. "Cultural Models Theory." *Anthropology News.* 17 July 2018. DOI, 10.1111/AN.919

Bennardo, Giovanni and David B. Kronenfeld. "Types of Collective Representations, Cognition, Mental Architecture, and Cultural Knowledge." In *A Companion to Cognitive Anthropology,* edited by David B. Kronenfeld et al., 82-101. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011.

Bennardo, Giovanni and Victor De Munck. *Cultural Models, Genesis, Methods, and Experiences.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014.

Benson, Janet. "Reinterpreting Gender, Southeast Asian Refugees in American Society." In *Reconstructing Lives, Recapturing Meaning, Refugee Identity, Gender, and Culture Change,* edited by Linda A. Camino and Ruth M. Krulfeld, 76-96. Amsterdam: Gordon and Breach, 1994.

Bogue, Ellie. "The Burmese Community 23 Years After the First Refugees. *News-Sentinel.* 4 June 2015.

Bourdieu, Pierre. *Outline of a Theory of Practice.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977.

Brac de la Perrière, Bénédicte. *Les Rituels de Possession en Birmanie, du Culte d'Etat aux Cérémonies Privées.* Paris: Éditions Recherche sur les Civilisations, 1989.

---. "The Taungbyone Festival: Locality and Nation-Confronting in the Cult of the 37 Lords." In *Burma at the Turn of the Twenty-First Century,* edited by Monique Skidmore, 65-89. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2005.

Brac de la Perrière, Bénédicte . "Being a Spirit Medium in Contemporary Burma." In *Engaging the Spirit World, Popular Beliefs and Practices in Modern Southeast Asia,* edited by Kristen W. Endres and Andrea Lauser, 163-183. New York: Berghahn Books, 2011.

---. "Spirits versus Weikza: Two Competing Ways of Meditation." *Journal of Burma Studies*, 16, no. 2 (2012): 149-179.

Brettell, Caroline B. "Theorizing Migration in Anthropology, The Social Construction of Networks, Identities, communities, and Globalscapes." In *Migration Theory, Talking Across Disciplines,* edited by Caroline B. Brettell and James F. Holland, 113-159. New York: Routledge, 2008.

Brewer, William F. "Schemas versus Mental Models in Human Memory." In *Modeling Cognition,* edited by P. Morris, 187-197. New York: John Wiley, 1987.

---. "Schemata." In *MIT Encyclopedia of the Cognitive Sciences*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1999.

Brewer, William F. and G. V. Nakamura. "The Nature and Function of Schemas." In *Handbook Of Social Cognition Vol. 1,* 119-160. Hillsdale: Lawrence Erlbaum, 1984.

Brohm, John. "Buddhism and Animism in a Burmese Village." *The Journal of Asian Studies,* 22, no. 2 (1963): 155-167.

Brown, R. Grant. "The Taungbyon Festival, Burma." *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological* Institute of Great Britain and Ireland, 45 (1915): 355-363.

Bruce, Matthews. "Myanmar's Agony: The Struggle for Democracy." *The Round Table*, 82:325 (1993), 37-49.

Burmese American Community Institute. "Myanmar Population in the U.S. Growing, College Enrollment Rate Rising." *Burmese American Community Institute,* 3 August 2017.

Callahan, Mary P. *Making Enemies, War and State Building in Burma*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005.

Case, William. "Democracy's Mixed Fortunes in Southeast Asia, Torpor, Change, and Trade-Off." In *Routledge Handbook of Southeast Asian Democratization,* edited by William Case, 3-23. New York: Routledge, 2015.

---. *Populist Threats and Democracy's Fate in Southeast Asia*. New York: Routledge, 2017.

Casper, Gretchen. *Negotiating Democracy: Transitions from Authoritarian Rule.* Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1958.

Chambers, Auriel and Auriel Croissant. *Democracy Under Stress, Civil-Military Relations in South and Southeast Asia.* Bangkok: Institute of Security and International Studies, 2010.

Cheah, Joseph. "The Function of Ethnicity in the Adaptation of Burmese Religious Practices." In *Emerging Voice, Experiences of Underrepresented Asian Americans*, edited by Huping Ling, 199-217. New Brunswick: Rutgers, 2008.

Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar (2008). Ministry of Information, 2008.

Crouch, Melissa and T. Lindsey. *Law, Society and Transition in Myanmar.* London: Hart, 2014.

D'Andrade, Roy G. "A Folk Model of the Mind." In *Cultural Models in Language & Thought,* edited by Dorothy Holland and Naomi Quinn, 112-150. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987.

---. "Some Methods for Studying Cultural Cognitive Structures." In *Finding Culture in Talk, A Collection of Methods,* edited by Naomi Quinn, 83-104. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005.

Dahl, Robert A. *A Preface to Democratic Theory.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1956.

---. *Democracy and Its Critics.* New Haven: Yale, 1989.

Davies, Lynn. "Gender Relations in Schools, Educating for Democracy in Developing Countries." In *Voices of Democracy, A North-South Dialogue on Education for Sustainable Democracy*, edited by Clive Harber, 94-103. Nottingham: Education Now, 1998.

Department of the Myanmar Language Commission. *Myanmar – English Dictionary.* Naypyidaw: Ministry of Education, 2011.

DeVoe, Pamela A. "Refugees in an Educational Setting, A Cross-Cultural Model of Success." In *Reconstructing Lives, Recapturing Meaning, Refugee Identity, Gender, and Culture Change,* edited by Linda A. Camino and Ruth M. Krulfeld, 235-250. Amsterdam: Gordon and Breach, 1994.

Diller, Janelle M. *The National Convention in Burma (Myanmar): An Impediment to the Restoration of Democracy.* New York: The League, 1996.

Dittmer, Lowell. *Burma or Mynamar?: The Struggle for National Identity*. Singapore: World Scientific Publishing Co., 2010.

Durrenberger, E. Paul and Nicola Tannenbaum. "Household Economy, Political Economy, and Ideology: Peasants and the State in Southeast Asia." *American Anthropologist* 94, no. 1 (1992): 74-89.

Egreteau, Renaud. "Transition, Praetorian Politics, and the Prospects for Democratic Change." In *Routledge Handbook of Southeast Asian Democratization,* edited by William Case, 410-425. New York: Routledge, 2015.

---. *Caretaking Democratization: The Military and Political Change in Myanmar.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016.

Farabaugh, Kane. "Tensions Follow Rohingya Refugees to United States." *Voice of America.* 6 October 2017.

Fierlbeck, Katherine. *Globalizing Democracy, Power, Legitimacy, and the Interpretation of Democratic Ideas*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998.

Fink, Christina. *Living in Silence in Burma: Surviving Under Military Rule*. London: Zed Books, 2009.

Foucault, Michel. *Power/Knowledge.* New York: Random House, 1972.

Freedom House. "Freedom in the World 2018, Methodology." Washington D.C.: Freedom House, 2018.

Ganesan, N. and Kyaw Yin Hlaing. *Myanmar: State, Society, and Ethnicity.* Hiroshima: Hiroshima Peace Institute, 2007.

Goodenough, Ward H. "Cultural Anthropology and Linguistics." In *Report on the Seventh Annual Round Table on Linguistics and Language Study,* edited by P. Garvin. Washington D.C.: Georgetown University, 1957.

Harris, Ian. "Introduction – Buddhism, Power and Politics in Theravada Buddhist Lands." In *Buddhism, Power and Political Order,* edited by Ian Harris, 1-9. New York: Routledge, 2007.

Harvey, Peter. *An Introduction to Buddhist Ethics Foundations, Values and Issues*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.

Held, David. *Models of Democracy*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006.

Hickey, M. Gail. "Burmese Refugees' Narratives of Cultural Change." In *Asian American Education, Acculturation, Literacy Development, and Learning,* edited by Clara C. Park, Russell Endo, Stacey J. Lee, and Xue Lan Rong, 25-54. Information Age, Charlotte, 2007.

Ho, Tamara C. "Women of the Temple, Burmese Immigrants, Gender, and Buddhism in a U.S. Frame." In *Emerging Voice, Experiences of Underrepresented Asian Americans,* edited by Huping Ling, 183-198. New Brunswick: Rutgers, 2008.

Hobbes, Thomas. *Leviathan.* London, Penguin, 1968 (1651).

Holland, Dorothy and Naomi Quinn. *Cultural Models in Language and Thought.* New York: Cambridge 1987.

Holliday, Ian. *Burma Redux, Global Justice and the Quest for Political Reform in Myanmar*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2011.

Holliday, Ian and Roman David. *Liberalism and Democracy in Myanmar.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018.

Hood, Steven J. "The Myth of Asian-Style Democracy." *Asian Survey*, 38, no. 9 (1998), 853-866.

Houtman, Gustaaf. *Mental Culture in Burmese Crisis Politics, Aung San Suu Kyi and the National League of Democracy.* Tokyo: ILCAA, 1999.

--- "Sacralizing or Demonzing Democracy? Aung San Suu Kyi's 'Personality Cult' In *Burma at the Turn of the 21st Century,* edited by Monique Skidmore, 133-153. Honolulu, University of Hawaii Press, 2005.

Hussain, Nausheen and Ryan Marx. "Data: Refugees in Illinois: More than 40% from Banned Countries. *Chicago Tribune*, 30 January 2017.

International Organization for Migration. "Myanmar." In *World Migration Report.* Geneva: IOM, 2018

Johnson-Laird, P.N. *Mental Models and Human Reasoning, Towards A Cognitive Science of Language, Inference, and Consciousness*. Cambridge: Harvard, 1983.

---. "Mental Models." In *MIT Encyclopedia of the Cognitive Sciences*, edited by R. A. Wilson and F. C. Keil, 525-527. Cambridge, MIT Press, 1999.

Jordt, Ingrid. *Burma's Mass Lay Meditation Movement: Buddhism and the Cultural Construction of Power.* Athens: Ohio University Press, 2007.

Kalupuhana, David J. *A History of Buddhist Philosophy: Continuities and Discontinuities.* Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1976.

Keyes, Charles F. *The Golden Peninsula: Culture and Adaptation in Mainland Southeast Asia.* New York: MacMillan, 1977.

Kigpen, Nehginpao. *Democracy Movement in Myanmar: Problems and Challenges.* New Dehli: Ruby Press, 2015.

---. *Myanmar: A Political History.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015.

---. *Democratisation of Myanmar.* New York: Routledge, 2016.

Kingsbury, Damien. *Politics in Contemporary Southeast Asia: Authority, Democracy and Political Change.* New York: Routledge, 2017.

Kronenfeld, David. "Cultural Models." *Intercultural Pragmatics*, 5, no. 1 (2008), 67-74.

Krulfeld, Ruth M. "Buddhism, Maintenance, and Change, Reinterpreting Gender in a Lao Refugee Community." In *Reconstructing Lives, Recapturing Meaning, Refugee Identity, Gender, and Culture Change,* edited by Linda A. Camino and Ruth M. Krulfeld, 97-128. Amsterdam, Gordon and Breach, 1994.

Krupa, Michelle and Bethlehem Feleke. "The US is on Track to Admit the Fewest Number of Refugees Since the Resettlement Program Began." *CNN.* 29 June 2018.

Kusserow, Adrie Suzanne. "Crossing the Great Divide: Anthropological Theories of the Western Self." *Journal of Anthropological Research,* 55 no. 4 (1999): 541-562.

Kyan, Winston. "Folklore and the Visual Culture of Burmese America, Domestic Buddhist Practices and the Dhammananda Monastery." In *Asian American Identities and Practices, Folkloric Expressions in Everyday Life,* edited by Jonathan H. X. Lee and Kathleen Nadeau, 15-26. New York: Lexington, 2014.

Kurtz, Donald V. *Political Anthropology: Power and Paradigms*. Boulder: Westview, 2001.

Lai, Whalen. "Political Authority, The Two Wheels of the Dharma." *Buddhist-Christian Studies* 30 (2010), 171-86.

Lakoff, George. Women, Fire, and Dangerous Things, What Categories Reveal about the Mind. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987.

Ledgerwood, Judy L. and Kheang Un. "Global Concepts and Local Meaning, Human Rights and Buddhism in Cambodia." *Journal of Human Rights*, 2, no. 4 (2003), 531-549.

Lehman, F. K. “The Relevance of the Founders' Cult for Understanding the Political Systems of the Peoples of Northern Southeast Asia and Its Chinese Borderlands.” In *Founders’ Cults in Southeast Asia, Ancestors, Polity, and Identity*, edited by Nicola Tannenbaum and Cornelia Ann Kammerer, 16-39. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003

---. “Anthropological Communities of Interpretation of Burma, An Overview.” *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies,* 39, no. 2 (2008), 239-254.

Levitsky, Steven and Lucan A. Way. “Elections Without Democracy, The Rise of Competitive Authoritarianism.” *Journal of Democracy*, 13, no. 2 (2002), 51-65.

Lintner, Bertil. *Outrage: Burma’s Struggle for Democracy.* London: White Lotus, 1990.

Locke, John. *Two Treatises of Government.* New York: Mentor, 1965 (1689).

Marecek, Jeanne and John Chambers Christopher. “Is Positive Psychology an Indigenous Psychology?” In *The Routledge International Handbook of Critical Positive Psychology,* edited by Nicholas J. L. Brown, Tim Lomas, and Francisco Jose Eiroa-Orosa, 84-98. London: Routledge, 2018.

Markus, H. R. and S. Kitayama. “Culture and the Self, Implications for Cognition, Emotion, and Movitavation.” *Psychological Review*, 98, no. 2 (1991), 224-253.

Maung Htin Aung. *Folk Elements in Burmese Buddhism.* Yangon: U Hla Maung, 1959.

Maung Maung. *The 1988 Uprising in Burma*. New Haven: Yale, 1999.

Mead, Margaret. *Sex and Temperament in Three Primitive Societies.* New York: William Morrow, 1935.

Miller, J. G. “Culture and Development of Everyday Social Explanation.” *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 46, no. 5 (1984), 961-978.

Miller, Michelle Ann. “Why Scholars of Minority Rights in Asia should recognize the limits of the Euro-American model.” *Ethnic and Racial Studies,* 34, no. 5 (2011), 799-813.

Minsky, Marvin. “A Framework for Representing Knowledge.” In *The Psychology of Computer Vision,* edited by P. Winston, 211-277. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1975.

Morawska, E.T. *The Sociology of Immigration: (Re)making Multifaced America*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.

Mortland, Carol A. "Cambodian Refugees and Identity in the United States." In *Reconstructing Lives, Recapturing Meaning, Refugee Identity, Gender, and Culture Change,* edited by Linda A. Camino and Ruth M. Krulfeld, 5-29. Amsterdam, Gordon and Breach, 1994.

Nang, Saw and Richard C. Paddock. "Myanmar to Free Political Prisoners, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi Says." *New York Times*, 7 April 2016.

Neher, Clark D. "Asian-Style Democracy." *Asian Survey*, 34, no. 11 (1994), 949-961.

Nisbett, Richard E. The Geography of Thought, How Asians and Euro-Americans Think *Differently – And Why.* New York: Free Press, 2003.

Nwe Nwe Aye. "The Role of the Media in Myanmar, Can It Be a Watchdog for Corruption?" In *Myanmar's Transition, Openings, Obstacles, and Opportunities*, edited by Nick Cheesman, Monique Skidmore and Trevor Wilson, 185-203. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2012.

O'Reilly, Karen. *International Migration and Social Theory.* New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012.

Ong, Aihwa. *Buddha is Hiding: Refugees, Citizenship, the New America*. Berkley: University of California Press, 2003.

Park, Gilbert C. "Towards the Model Minority, Asian Americanization of Burmese Immigrants as a Model Minority in a High School." In *Killing the Model Minority Stereotype, Asian American Counterstories and Complicity,* edited by Nicholas D. Hartlep and Brad J. Profilio, 3-18. Charlotte: Information Age.

Pew Research Center. "Burmese in the U.S. Fact Sheet." Washington D.C.: Pew Research Center, 2017.

Pye, Lucian W. *Southeast Asia's Political Systems.* Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1967.

Quinn, Naomi. "How to Reconstruct Schemas People Share." In *Finding Culture in Talk, A Collection of Methods,* edited by Naomi Quinn, 35-82. New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2005.

---. "Emotional Arousal in the Making of Cultural Selves." *Anthropological Theory* 16, no. 4 (2016), 359-389.

Rousseau, Jean-Jacques. *The Social Contract and Discourses.* London: JM Dent and Sons, 1913.

Schedler, Andreas. *Electoral Authoritarianism: The Dynamics of Unfree Competition.* Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2006.

Schober, Juliane. "The Legacy of F. K. Lehman (F. K. L. U. Chit Hlaing) for the Study of Religion and the Secular in Burma." In *Journal of Burma Studies* 15, no. 1 (2011a), 43-58.

---. *Modern Buddhist Conjectures in Myanmar: Cultural Narratives, Colonial Legacies, and Civil Society.* Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2011b.

Seekins, Donald M. *Historical Dictionary of Burma (Myanmar).* Toronto: Scarecrow, 2006.

Selth, Andrew. *Transforming the Tatmadaw: The Burmese Armed Forces Since 1988.* Canberra: Australian National University, 1996.

Shimizu, Hidetada. "Cognitive Anthropology and Education, Foundational Models of Self and Cultural Models of Teaching and Learning in Japan and the United States." In *A Companion to Cognitive Anthropology,* edited by David B. Kronenfeld, Giovanni Bennardo, Victor C. de Munck, and Michael D. Fischer. London, Blackwell, 2011.

Shore, Bradd. *Culture in Mind: Cognition, Culture, and the Problem of Meaning.* New York: Oxford, 1996.

Smith, Karl. "From Dividual and Individual Selves to Porous Subjects." *The Australian Journal of Anthropology* 23 (2012): 50:64.

Smith, Martin. *State of Fear, Censorship in Burma*. London: Article 19, 1991.

Spiro, Melford E. *Burmese Supernaturalism: A Study in the Explanation and Reduction of Suffering.* Englewood Cliffs: NJ, Prentice-Hall, 1967.

---. *Buddhism and Society: A Great Tradition and Its Burmese Vicissitudes.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970.

---. "Is the Western Conception of the Self 'Peculiar' within the Context of the World Cultures?" *Ethos* 21 (1993), 107-153

---. *Kinship and Marriage in Burma: A Cultural and Psychodynamic Analysis.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977.

---. "Ethnographic Notes on Conceptions and Dynamics of Political Power in Upper Burma (Prior to the 1962 Military Coup)." *Ethnology,* 36, no. 1 (1997), 31-47.

Sperber, Dan. *On Anthropological Knowledge: Three Essays*. Cambridge: Cambridge, 1982.

Sperber, Dan. "An Objection to the Memetic Approach to Culture." In *Darwinizing Culture: The Status of Memetics as a Science*, edited by Robert Aunger. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.

---. "Conceptual Tools for a Natural Science of Society and Culture." *Proceedings of* the British Academy, 111 (2001), 297-317.

Stockman, Dan. "Seeking Refuge, Fitting in Without Losing Roots, Burmese Refugees Advance in Indiana." *National Catholic Reporter*, 19 July 2018.

Strauss, Claudia. "The Cultural Concept and the Individualism-Collectivism Debate, Dominant and Alternative Attributions for Class in the United States." In *Culture, Thought, and Development,* edited by L. P. Nucci, G. B. Saxe, and E. Turiel, 85-114. London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2000.

---. *Making Sense of Public Opinion, American Discourses About Immigration and Social Programs.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012.

Strauss, Claudia and Roy G. D'Andrade. *Human Motives and Cultural Models.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992.

Strauss, Claudia and Naomi Quinn. *A Cognitive Theory of Cultural Meaning.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.

Steinberg, David. "Democracy: Power and Economy in Myanmar: Donor, Dilemmas." *Asian Survey,* 31:8 (1991), 729-742.

Swearer, Donald K. *The Buddhist World of Southeast Asia.* Albany: State University of New York Press, 2010.

Tambiah, Stanley J. *World Conqueror and World Renouncer.* Cambridge: Cambridge, 1976.

Taylor, Robert H. *The State in Myanmar.* Singapore: NUS Press, 2009.

Temple, Richard C. *The Thirty-Seven Nats: A Phase of Spirit-Worship Prevailing in Burma.* London: W. Griggs, 1906

Thant Myint-U. *The River of Lost Footsteps: A Personal History of Burma.* New York: Farrrar, Straus and Giroux, 2006.

---. "White Elephants and Black Swans, Thoughts on Myanmar's Recent History and Possible Futures." In *Myanmar's Transition, Openings, Obstacles, and Opportunities*, edited by Nick Cheesman, Monique Skidmore and Trevor Wilson, 23-38. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2012.

Thompson, Mark R. "Dead Idea (Still) Walking, The Legacy of the 'Asian democracy' and 'Asian values' debate." In *Routledge Handbook of Southeast Asian Democratization,* edited by William Case, 24-37. New York: Routledge, 2015.

Triandis, H. C. "The Self and Social Behavior in Different Cultural Contexts." *Psychological Review*, 96 (1989), 269-289.

---. *Individualism and Collectivism.* Boulder: Westview Press, 1995.

---. "Individualism-Collectivism and Personality." *Journal of Personality*, 69, no. 6 (2001), 907-924.

Triandis, H. C., Botempo, R., Vllareal, M. J., Asai, M. and N. Lucca. "Individualism and Collectivism, Cross-cultural Perspectives on Self-Ingroup Relationships." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 54 (1988), 323-338.

United States Census Bureau, 2017.

van Dijk, Teun A. *Macrostructures: An Interdisciplinary Study of Global Structures in Discourse, Interaction, and Cognition.* Hillsdale: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1980.

---. *Discourse and Context: A Sociocognitive Approach.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.

Walker, Peter and Kate Hodal. "Burma Announces Amnesty for More Than 6,000 Prisoners." *Guardian*, 11 October 2011.

Walton, Matthew J. *Buddhism, Politics, and Political Thought in Myanmar.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017.

Weisner, T. S. "Childhood: Anthropological Aspects." In *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences*, edited by Neil J. Smelser and Paul B. Baltes, 1697-1701. Amsterdam: Elsevier, 2001.

Weymouth, Lally. "The First Interview With Burma's Reforming President, Thein Sein on the Sweeping Changes He Has Brought to Burma, Including Freedom for Aung San Suu Kyi." *Slate*, 19 January 2012.

Wilson, Trever. *Myanmar's Long Road to National Reconciliation*. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2006.

Wintle, Justin. *Perfect Hostage, A Life of Aung San Suu Kyi*. London: Hutchinson, 2007.

World Bank. "Myanmar." The World Bank, 2018.

World Factbook. “Myanmar.” Central Intelligence Agency, 2018.

Wolters, O. W. *History, Culture, and Region in Southeast Asian Perspectives*. Ithaca: Cornell, 1999.

---. *Early Southeast Asia: Selected Essays*. Ithaca: Cornell, 2008.

Zar Ni. “Confronting Burma/Myanmar’s Security Dilemma, An Integrated Approach to National and Human Security Issues.” In *Civil Society, Religion and Global Governance, Paradigms of Power and Persuasion,* edited by Helen James, 202-212. New York: Routledge, 2007.

Zaw Aung. “Emerging Democracy and Ethnic Identity Crisis in Myanmar.” In *Globalization and Democracy in Southeast Asia, Challenges, Responses and Alternative Futures,* edited by Chantana Banpasrichote Wungaeo, Boike Rehbein, and Surichai Wun’gaeo, 157-176. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016.

Zaw Oo. “Exit, Voice and Loyalty in Burma, The Role of Overseas Burmese in Democratising Their Homeland.” In *Myanmar’s Long Road to National Reconciliation*, edited by Trevor Wilson, 149-176. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2006.