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	Sommario/riassunto	Burma, also known as Myanmar, strategically located between China and India, is one of the largest and most richly endowed states in Southeast Asia. Yet it remains both economically and politically underdeveloped. Why is this so? We argue that much of the reason has

to do with an ongoing struggle for national identity. This struggle involves not only whether the state should be authoritarian or democratic, but how Burma's myriad ethnic minorities should be accommodated within it, what external reference national reference groups the country should identify and align with, and how it should mov