

The Cambodian Challenge for Party & Party System Institutionalization

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(Preliminary Draft for Discussion only)

Introduction:

This paper analyses party and party system institutionalization in Cambodia. The question to be dealt with is whether the country's parties and party system have become institutionalized. The concept of institutionalization is still subject to debate,¹ but this paper works within framework developed in this volume. Party and party system institutionalization as a key variable is a political process not associated with democratization. Institutionalization is defined more or less as a process of stabilization whereby political parties become more and more cohesive as well as disciplined in organizational terms, electoral systems become more and more stable, and electoral competition becomes less and less volatile because of growing public support and their deepening social roots. In my view, institutionalization should also be associated with growing political unity among elites within political parties.

Both Allen Hicken and Erik Martinez Kuhonta make additional insightful observations, one of which is that institutionalization can proceed in semi-democratic or semi-authoritarian states (such as Malaysia and Singapore) because dominant parties can undermine the opposition's ability to compete in electoral processes and become institutionalized over time. What they also suggest is that party systems that are increasingly institutionalized are those that become increasingly stable because hegemonic parties not only become institutionalized over time but also push opposition parties to become institutionalized as well. Institutional types also do not matter significantly, but institutional or historical legacies do. Existing political parties that were institutionalized at an earlier point in time, for instance, tend to develop a higher level of institutionalization relative to those that emerged after or later.

These insightful observations fit nicely with the theoretical tradition of historical institutionalism, but the key question is whether they enjoy strong empirical support. Cambodia as a case study can help shed further light on these observations. Almost twenty years after a democratic transition began on 23 October 1991 (when four armed factions and 18 other foreign states finally signed the Paris Peace Agreements) the process of democratization in this country remains unconsolidated. The country held its first national election in May 1993, after which a coalition government was formed and a fairly liberal constitution was adopted,² but the regime led by Prime Minister Hun Sen of the Cambodian People's Party (CPP) has become increasingly authoritarian. The country's multiparty system now looks more like a hegemonic one, "in which a relatively institutionalized ruling party monopolizes the political arena, using coercion, patronage, media control, and other means to deny formally legal opposition parties any real chance of competing for power."³ "Other parties are permitted to exist, but as second class, licensed parties."⁴ As of 2008, Cambodia had held elections on a regular basis, but they allowed the CPP to establish itself as the dominant party. The ruling elite, led by Hun Sen, have been quite successful in consolidating their political power base across the country.

This political development has also resulted from the fact that Cambodia's party and party system institutionalization remains extremely limited. Historical institutionalism helps shed light on the CPP's political successes in the process of power consolidation, shows that institutional or historical legacies matter, but further reveals that it also has weaknesses. Historical legacies matter in that they help explain the fact that the CPP has been running the country for thirty years and still looks set to continue ruling unchallenged in the foreseeable future. However, historical institutionalism does not adequately explain why the CPP has been far more successful than the previous dominant parties in recent Cambodian history. Normative institutionalism has similar weaknesses, one of which is that it cannot explain why states that used to have similar cultural norms have taken different paths: some have institutionalized their parties and party systems, but others have not. Their capacity to explain institutional variations is one of historical and normative institutionalisms' strengths, but their inability to explain why states with similar historical and cultural legacies do not always experience the same degrees of party and party system institutionalization is also their common weakness.

We must thus turn to complex realist institutionalism for more insights. Although he has successfully consolidated power and has now gained near-hegemonic power status through his attempts to limit institutional development, Hun Sen shows no interest in building institutions that constrain his exercise of power. The opposition parties, still in disarray, seem to have not become more institutionalized. Complex realist institutionalism recognizes contributions made by normative institutionalism in that cultural norms have some explanatory power, but go beyond cultural explanations to propose that the limits of party and party system institutionalization have more to do with *how* political elites adopt strategies toward their opponents in the battle for political supremacy and *why* some succeed in achieving their political goals while others fail. This paper argues that the CPP under the leadership of Hun Sen has proved far more successful than other parties (including those under previous regimes) not only because of Cambodia's historical and cultural legacies but also because of domestic and international politics.

I. Cambodia's Emerging Hegemonic Party System

A multiparty system established for electoral competition in 1993 has given way to a hegemonic party system. Although it lost the election then, the CPP has since managed to consolidate power by tightening control over the political arena.

1.1. Toward a Hegemonic Party System: Since the early 1990s, Cambodia has held four national elections: 1993, 1998, 2003, and 2008, but trends in electoral politics reveal power monopolization. The CPP lost the election in 1993, but has since kept gaining more seats in the national elections (from 51 in 1993 to 64 in 1998, to 73 in 2003, and to 90 in 2008). The 2008 election saw a 30 and 40 percent decline in the vote turnout at 65.4 percent. In addition, the CPP has nearly monopolized the commune seats since the local council election in 2002. It has since held tight control of close to 1,600, or nearly 99 percent, of all commune chiefs.⁵ The second election for 1,621 communes and sub-districts, held on 1 April 2007, gave the CPP another landslide victory: it retained most of the commune councils, collecting 1,591 council chief positions. The other parties combined received only 30 positions.

There is no doubt that the Cambodian state has now become more institutionalized, but it remains under-institutionalized. According to a report, "Inefficient, opaque procedures create confusion and impatience and encourage

firms and individuals to pay 'speed money' and bribes...procedural mistakes are common in the Customs Department, creating clear invitations to bribe. Despite a 2001 law requiring environmental and social impact studies before forest and agricultural concessions are approved, 'inefficiency' in the Ministry of Agriculture has essentially waived this requirement." The report states that, "Inefficiency...helps to limit information resources, maintain Government control and justify shoddy administrative procedures." Moreover, "Inefficiency of the Ministry of Finance in carrying out its duty in reviewing major government contracts means sloppy procedures and overpriced contracts go unquestioned. Inefficiency so extreme that veterans' pensions aren't paid for three years enables unscrupulous ministry employees to 'buy' pension rights from their rightful owners." "Inefficient procedures in the judiciary ensure reports of investigating judges and trial court judgments are difficult to access, or are not accessible at all. Inefficiency in passing internal regulations for parliamentary operations hamstrings opposition parties."⁶

Overall, state institutions remain weak. World Economic Forum's *Global Competitiveness Report* (2005-2006) ranks Cambodia's public institutions 114th among 117 countries.⁷ According to one study published in 2008, Cambodia ranks 34th among 141 developing countries in terms of state weakness - weaker than Timor-Leste (43rd) but stronger than North Korea (15th) and Myanmar (17th).⁸ These rankings may not be accurate (Cambodia seems institutionally stronger than Timor-Leste), but still reflect a high degree of state institutional weakness in Cambodia. According to one report, the Hun Sen regime "developed a full array of outside institutions - captive firms, controlled media, party-affiliated NGOs and unions - as well as the police, military, judiciary and parliament to support the corrupt system."⁹ As shall be discussed next, three state institutions - executive, legislative, and judicial - remain weak and subservient to the interests of the CPP.

More recently, there is no evidence of progress in the process of institutionalization at the state level. The executive has emerged as the strongest of the three branches of government (including the legislature and judiciary). Still, government leaders have generally proved unable to make effective policy decisions and implement them successfully. Hun Sen, for instance, pledged to press for the adoption of anti-corruption law in June 2003, but has so far failed to make good on his promise. In another instance, the prime minister declared a 'war against land-grabbers' in March 2007, but has proved unable to win the war. Land-grabbing continues. According to Lao Mong Hay (a long-time observer of Cambodian politics), "forestry land-grabbing has been on the increase in almost all provinces."¹⁰ State institutions remain deeply corrupt and highly politicized. Not much evidence shows any genuine progress in the area of military and police institutional reform, either. A series of surveys during the first half of the 2000s show that Cambodians regarded the police forces as one of the most dishonest and corrupt institutions.¹¹

1.2. CPP Domination over the Executive and Legislative Branches: Hun Sen has managed to build his personal institutions that have helped strengthen his executive power. Within the executive branch, his loyalists have served senior positions. For instance, the Senior Minister in charge of the Council of Ministers, Sok An, is a powerful and wealthy politician who has controlled the main state machinery of the government, and he is one of Hun Sen's in-laws. Another loyalist of the prime minister is Cham Prasidh, the long-time minister of commerce. His ministry is considered to be one of the most corrupt and lucrative ministries in the country and has often been called the 'ministry of Cham Prasidh's family' because his relatives (including his sons, daughters, nephews and nieces and also those of Sok An) hold top-ranking positions. They have allegedly provided Hun Sen with financial support.

Hun Sen has also succeeded in building an armada of additional institutions, such as a bodyguard force of well armed 3,500 soldiers who would protect his life at

all cost and the Pagoda Boys who have served his political interests. Known for their staunch defense of his regime, the Pagoda Boys were prepared to launch counter-attacks on any anti-CPP demonstrations. The prime minister has also tightened his control over the national police in different ways, including building a family alliance with top officials, most notably General Hok Lundy (Police Chief), through marriage of their children. After the plane crash on 9 November 2008 that killed Hok Lundy, Hun Sen quickly appointed Deputy National Police Commissioner, General Neth Savoeun, as the new police chief, who is married to one of Hun Sen's nieces.

Hun Sen has also dominated the military and has shown no hesitation to use them as a key instrument to strengthen his political power base. At first, his party succeeded in getting FUNCINPEC to agree on a power-sharing deal after the 1993 election and in getting former resistance forces integrated into the national armed forces. After Hun Sen staged a successful coup against his coalition partner, First Prime Minister Norodom Ranariddh, in 1997, the royalist forces were decimated. The Khmer Rouge movement disintegrated soon after that. All factional armed forces have been integrated into the national armed forces, which have now been put under the CPP's complete control. The military's Commander-in-Chief has always been a member of the CPP. Until his dismissal early in 2009, General Ke Kim Yan was the military chief, and he was a CPP member. The new Commander-in-Chief, General Pol Saroeun, is still a CPP member, but he is one of Hun Sen's staunch loyalists. In addition, the prime minister appointed seven new deputy commanders-in-chief (Generals Chea Dara, Mol Roeu, Meas Sophea, Hing Bun Heang, Kun Kim, Ung Samkhan, and Sao Sokha) - all of whom are loyal to him. The CPP has also achieved full control of the ministry of defense led by one of its generals, Tea Banh.

Institution building within the legislature has also experienced limited progress. The bicameral legislature remains a rubber stamp both willing and ready to take orders from the executive branch. Members of parliament who dare to challenge the executive branch in general and Hun Sen in particular always face the prospect of being sued and having their parliamentary immunity lifted. In August 2004, for instance, CPP and FUNCINPEC MPs agreed in a majority vote to exclude the opposition SRP from positions on the nine assembly commissions. In February 2005, the two ruling parties succeeded in lifting three SRP MPs' parliamentary immunity using a show of hands that violated the parliamentary rule of secret ballot. Most recently, in June 2009, Hun Sen got his way again by forcing the CPP-dominated National Assembly to lift the parliamentary immunity of two SRP members of parliament (MPs), for reasons to be discussed later. Meanwhile, Hun Sen has also succeeded in getting business tycoons with close personal ties to him elected to the Senate, which saw a reduction of non-CPP seats to 12 from 28 out of the 61 senators (four of whom were appointed by the National Assembly and the King).

1.3. CPP Domination over the Judicial and Legal System: The CPP has also successfully tightened its control over the judicial and legal system, which remains subservient to the CPP elite's interests. Ample evidence suggests that the court system in Cambodia remains deeply politicized and has proved increasingly useful to the ruling party's pursuit of hegemonic power. In 2005, for instance, Sam Rainsy (and another SRP member) fled the country. The SRP leader was sentenced in absentia but was "granted amnesty only to be sued after in 2008 by a senior minister for defamation."¹² CPP leaders tend to win in their lawsuits, but anti-government lawsuits have always failed. For instance, when Sam Rainsy Party MP Mu Sochua filed (on 27 April 2009) a lawsuit against Hun Sen for defamation, the Phnom Penh Municipal Court indicated that it had received the complaint, but Hun Sen's counter-lawsuit prevailed. The Court informed Mu Sochua that her lawsuit against the prime minister was rejected; however, the same Court laid charges against her and requested that her parliamentary immunity be lifted. According to Radio Free

Asia on 10 June 2009, Hun Sen's lawyer made it clear that the counter-lawsuit would not end. The prime minister then managed to get the National Assembly to lift her parliamentary immunity and succeeded in doing so on 23 June. The parliamentary immunity of another SRP MP (Ho Vann) was also lifted; he was alleged to have made the false claim in April 2009 that 22 senior military officers had obtained meaningless awards from Vietnam. Hun Sen was subsequently reported to have said that, "Although you are MPs, when you act wrongly, you will be punished by the court."

The trouble with justice in Cambodia is that the judicial and legal system also remains subject to the CPP's tight control. The CPP appointed most of the current judges and prosecutors. The law on the statute of judges and prosecutors has yet to be enacted. The President of the Supreme Court is still a member of the CPP's standing and central committee. The Supreme Council of Magistracy (SCM) remains dominated by the CPP, because most of the nine members were nominated (three by the king, three by the National Assembly and three by the SCM) and are still affiliated with the CPP. The SCM has little power to select and discipline judges. The Minister of Justice (CPP), not the SCM itself, runs the SCM secretariat. The Constitutional Council (CC), tasked with the constitutional responsibility to uphold the separation of powers and judicial independence, has proved ineffective. Almost all of the nine CC members are affiliated with the CPP. The overall legal system also remains institutionally weak. The legal community remains small, poorly equipped, and even politicized: the whole country has little over 100 judges, 100 prosecutors, and about 250 private lawyers. The Council of Ministers controls the Royal Academy for Judicial Professions, which trains judges, prosecutors, and court clerks. The Cambodian Bar Association has now become more professional but has also become politicized, having admitted politicians without any legal credentials (such as Prime Minister Hun Sen) as its members enjoying the full right to practice law.

1.4. CPP Control of the Media System: The CPP has also successfully brought the media under its political control. Opposition parties have had limited opportunities to make their policy platforms adequately heard. After the coup in 1997, the CPP moved quickly to dismantle their media outlets and still restricts their access to the media sector. The SRP has not even been authorized to open a radio station. Because Cambodians watch television and listen to radio more than they read newspapers, the CPP has thwarted any attempts to level the playing field by maintaining its domination over the country's broadcast media.¹³

The situation has not improved much. The CPP still controls the media, making it difficult for the opposition to conduct an effective election campaign. Prior to the 2008 election campaign period, for instance, opposition party candidate and editor of a newspaper *Moneaksekar Khmer* Dam Sith was arrested and detained because of his report on a speech by Sam Rainsy. The SRP leader himself received a threat because of that speech. OHCHR issued a statement after the 2008 election, expressing its concern "about deeply entrenched inequalities among the political parties in their access to, and control of, both electronic and print media, and the consequent effect upon the voters' right to an informed electoral choice."¹⁴

In short, the multiparty system that emerged in Cambodia during the 1993 national election has now given way to an electoral authoritarian system in which the CPP has monopolized power in the political arena (the executive, legislative, and judicial branches) and the legal system, using coercion, patronage, media control, and other means to deny formally legal opposition parties any real chance of competing for power. Opposition parties are still permitted to exist, but they have become second class or satellite licensed parties. The next question to be dealt with is whether the overall trend toward a hegemonic party system has also encouraged greater institutionalization within the party system and political parties.

II. The Effects of Hegemonic Party Politics On Party & Party System Institutionalization

The process of party and party system institutionalization can be 'measured' by different indicators, but one of them is used in this study: *electoral volatility* – a key measure of stability in the party system from election to election. This section assesses the extent to which the political party system in Cambodia has become institutionalized or whether the recent pattern of inter-party competition has become stable over time, because political parties have growing links with voters and receive consistent levels of electoral support from election to election. The party system has not become highly institutionalized, not only because links between parties and voters remain weak and electoral support varied, but also because the opposition has become more fragmented. The CPP seems to have become more institutionalized, but still remains institutionally fragmented because of intra-party disunity.

1.1. The Limits of Party System Institutionalization: Elections now seem to be 'the only game in town,' as shown by the fact that they have been held more or less on a regular basis. None of the significant elite members in the country, including those within the opposition, has given serious thought to any other alternatives to electoral politics. No one is prepared to take up arms and start war, although coup attempts are still a possibility. Levels of political violence, before, during and after elections, have decreased over time. Violent protests against election results from 1993 to 2008 have also declined noticeably.

Negative trends in the multiparty system, however, include the fact that public interest in electoral politics has declined: the 2008 election saw a 30 and 40 percent drop in the vote turnout (at 65.4 percent). The declining number of political parties registered to compete in elections reveals another negative trend. During the 1998 election, 38 parties competed with the CPP, but the number shrank to 7 in the 2002 election. In 2003, 23 parties registered to compete in the election. In the 2008 election, only 11 political parties were registered to compete for power.

In report after report, the electoral process has become more institutionalized but is still under-institutionalized. The Election Administration (made up of the National Election Committee, 24 Province Election Committee and 1,621 Commune Election Committees whose role and capacity include organizing and administering elections) has become more institutionalized over time, especially after the 1998 election, when assessed in terms of technical, legal, and organizational development. Overall, however, the level of party system institutionalization remains low. A report by the International Republican Institute, for instance, states that "the NEC's accomplishments appear to have been largely technical in nature. Many NEC actions – and just as frequently its inaction – reinforced concerns regarding the NEC's political neutrality and contributed significantly to the climate of impunity that allowed for widespread political violence, election law violations, and intimidation of voters."¹⁵ The NEC hardly enforced the electoral laws and its own directives. Often based on appeals from its chairman, the NEC issued Directives, but hardly imposed sanctions on violators. According to a report by the UN Special Representative, "While the 2003 elections saw the first application of sanctions by the National Election Committee and its provincial commissions, the electoral authorities were largely ineffective in dealing with serious breaches of the 'Electoral Law'."¹⁶

Prior to the 2008 election, observers had remained skeptical about the institutional independence of the more technically competent NEC, because its members were still appointed by few political parties, especially the CPP; the NEC headquarters was still located within the CPP-controlled ministry of interior; the NEC

had no sub-national structure and still relied on commune councils, which were dominated by the CPP and took orders from the ministry of interior.

Moreover, decisions made by electoral authorities and policy actions taken did not show adequate transparency. During election times, for instance, the rule of transparency often came under challenge when electoral officials refused to implement complicated regulations and procedures, investigate complaints, were reluctant to issue sanctions, and preferring instead to rely on conciliation.

Electoral authorities have shown little accountability for their actions, particularly those related to intimidation and violence during election times. The investigation of criminal acts, including politically motivated killings by local police and CPP elements, has stalled.¹⁷ Few such killers, if any, have been brought to justice. If violence has become less widespread and frequent, one factor may help explain this development: the security apparatus has shown considerable success in suppressing any political challenges to the CPP regime. Before the 2003 election, for instance, the National Police Chief, General Hok Lundy, had made it clear to the public in general and the electorate in particular that post-election protests and violence would not be tolerated. The Ministry of Interior has also shown more willingness to ban peaceful demonstrations, strikes, and any form of protest against the regime. There still exists a political atmosphere of insecurity in the country, as people have become increasingly hesitant to raise voices critical of government policies. Hun Sen has even threatened on several occasions to abolish the monarchy whenever the king signaled that he would not go along with any of his major policy decisions. Less violence means more political stability but does not necessarily mean more elite compliance with the democratic norm of peaceful conflict resolution.

1.2. The Opposition's Institutional Fragmentation: The political opposition has grown institutionally weaker over the years. From the beginning, the royalist party (FUNCINPEC) depended on the personal charisma of its top leader, Prince Norodom Ranariddh whose party won the 1993 election, largely because of his royal status as a son of Norodom Sihanouk, who founded the party first as a resistance movement after the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia in late 1978.

Also due to the fact the party emerged as a resistance movement with the aiming of overthrowing the socialist regime led by Hun Sen and others, FUNCINPEC had never developed as a political party with real institutional structures and completely depended on one man. After 1997, FUNCINPEC lost almost all of its political and military muscle and badly disintegrated. Ranariddh also had trouble maintaining his political legitimacy because of various scandals, such as corruption and extra-marital affairs, as well as his fallout with Hun Sen. The prince, ousted from his party in 2006, formed a new party after his name – Norodom Ranariddh Party – which performed badly: it received only two seats (one seat less than what the new Human Rights Party received). In December 2008, after having decided to leave politics, the prince was appointed chief advisor to King Norodom Sihamoni.

FUNCINPEC can no longer hope to play the role of an effective party in politics. Badly split, it received only two seats in the 2008 election and weakened further after that. The new party leader, Keo Puth Rasmey, and its Secretary General, Gen. Nhek Bun Chhay, have enjoyed little political legitimacy within the party. Keo Puth Rasmey is relatively unknown in Cambodian politics. After the poor performance in the 2008 election, a faction within the party was rumored to have sought to oust him.¹⁸ Meanwhile, senior party officials belonging to FUNCINPEC have also been wooed away from their party or put under pressure to support or defect to the CPP. A series of defections by leading royalists continued unabated. As recently as 2008, about 20 high-ranking FUNCINPEC officials had reportedly decided to leave their party for the CPP. In December, for instance, Gen. Serei Kosal of FUNCINPEC (who commanded royalist troops in the fight against Hun Sen's forces after the coup

in 1997) finally decided to defect to the CPP. He was reported to have said that he “now recognize[d] the achievement of the national and international policies of the CPP...a party with good discipline...”¹⁹ In early 2009, Sun Chanthol (a former minister of transport and public works) also defected to the CPP, followed by the defection of another former minister and former ambassador to Japan, Pou Sothirak.

The other opposition parties have not grown much stronger, either. Having gained 26 seats in the 2008 national election, the SRP has now emerged as the main opposition party still incapable of challenging the CPP and remains highly under-institutionalized. The party is known for its heavy dependence on the personal charisma of Sam Rainsy. As for the other smaller opposition political parties, during the past elections they lacked internal institutional accountability and transparency, were organizationally ineffective, and operationally unsustainable. Political party under-institutionalization deeply reflects their inability to compete effectively in the elections. The CPP also funded ‘satellite parties’ to ensure its electoral victory.

Hegemonic party politics seem to have thwarted institutionalization of the opposition. Initially, Hun Sen turned against the political opposition by supporting and relying on FUNCINPEC’s quarrels with the Sam Rainsy Party. The SRP leader was also accused of treason in public places. Hun Sen even threatened to arrest Sam Rainsy and warned that he would shoot down the plane if the latter were to return home. Other political critics were subjected to threats, lawsuits, and imprisonment. Although the level of political violence during the 2008 election was lower when compared to the previous elections, the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Cambodia reported that “since the beginning of the year [2008] OHCHR...observed an apparent campaign of pressure, threats, intimidation and inducements against political activists at every level in an attempt to persuade them to change parties.”²⁰ As noted earlier, the CPP has also successfully brought the media under its political control, and this has limited opposition parties’ institutionalization. After the coup in 1997, it moved quickly to dismantle the opposition’s media outlets. The SRP has not been authorized to open a radio station. The CPP still controls the media, making it difficult for the opposition to conduct effective election campaigns. But has the CPP become more institutionalized?

1.3. The Limits of Party Institutionalization within the CPP: Even though it has so far grown institutionally stronger than other parties, the CPP remains under-institutionalized, as intra-party personal power politics has become more evident and has often led to speculation about its long-term survivability.

There is no doubt that the CPP ‘has the best political organization in the country,’²¹ when compared to other parties. Following the UN intervention in the early 1990s, the CPP developed its party structure at the provincial, district, commune, and village levels. According to one NEC member, ‘the CPP proved far more effective than the other parties of its solid organizational structure.’²² The party has developed the ability to sustain itself better than other parties. It has had the money to maintain its members’ loyalties. The party and its Central and Provincial Offices owned businesses, such as renting transportation and real estate.²³

The ruling party has also become more effective in terms of its ability to mobilize people, especially during election times. This certainly reflected its impressive victory during the 2003 and 2008 national elections and the 2002 and 2007 commune elections and its continued domination over villages across the country. When compared with other political parties in the country, the CPP has the best system of disciplining its party members and has the strongest party network in the country. Defection from the party to other parties has hardly taken place. Until the mid-2000s, only a few CPP officials had defected to other parties, including CPP Economic Police Department Deputy Director Nhim Kim Nhol (CPP police colonel), who joined the SRP (Sam Rainsy Party) in October 2002. Because of its tight control

over its members, the CPP has developed the capacity to prevent the defections experienced by other political parties, most notably FUNCINPEC and the SRP.

The CPP, however, remains far from sufficiently institutionalized. Its 'local structure represents a distinct organizational advantage for the party over that of its partners in the coalition government. Yet, local party structure...provides only a framework for activities. Without activities, party members become passive and unmotivated.'²⁴ During the 1990s, the party hardly convened local meetings. Moreover, CPP members at the local level did not seem to have an effective communication system with their national party leaders. According to the NDI report, 'CPP members expressed frustration that national leaders in the government and the parliament spend little time in the provinces...Local leaders are uncertain about how to work on behalf of the party when national leaders remain invisible and unaccountable to party members and voters in the provinces.'²⁵

Throughout the 2000s, party building appears to have remained a low priority for the CPP. Evidence during the first half of the decade showed that the party did not reach out to party members at the provincial level. CPP MPs' provincial offices hardly functioned; their staff members remained too few in numbers, could not provide information asked for, and had no or little contact with their MPs, 90 per cent of whom lived in Phnom Penh on a permanent basis.²⁶ Moreover, the local party structure appears to remain rudimentary. There exists no financial transparency. Sources of funds and expenditures get disclosed only to the finance committee and the Central Committee. Party members do not receive financial information.

Party disunity remains a constant problem. Few top CPP leaders supported Hun Sen's 'coup' in July 1997. According to Gordon Longmuir, "The most perilous period for Hun Sen came immediately after the 1997 coup de force, which had been opposed by Sar Kheng, the co-Minister of the Interior, General Ke Kim Yan, the Armed Forces Commander, and, most importantly, Chea Sim, the President of the Party." Longmuir adds: 'Hun Sen's loyal military and police forces stood behind him and this persuaded "moderate" CPP forces to stifle their reservations. Hun Sen also came under criticism in 1998 for having failed to win majorities in areas previously considered CPP strongholds.'²⁷ Before the 2003 election, the question of party leadership had surfaced and the internal struggle for power continued unabated, as two dominant CPP factions sought to overcome each other. In 2005, Hun Sen publicly attacked General Ke Kim Yan, saying that if disobeying his order, the general would be fired because the armed forces were in the prime minister's hands. Even after the 2008 election, the struggles for power within the party continued, finally leading to the dismissal of General Ke Kim Yan from his military post in 2009.

Another of the CPP's institutional weaknesses lies in the fact that the party leadership may not be sustainable in the long term. The party structure remains dominated by aging individuals with revolutionary credentials, such as Chea Sim and Heng Samrin, who excluded young party members from the party's decision-making process. There is sufficient evidence to suggest that the party has not successfully promoted young party members to senior party or government positions.

Overall, Hun Sen has so far been quite successful in terms of his ability to consolidate political power. His effective efforts at consolidating power seems to validate the conventional theory holding that the process of personalizing of power works best before democratic institutions (capable of checking executive power) become solid.²⁸ What all this further suggests is that hegemonic party politics has not allowed the ruling party and the opposition to become more institutionalized or institutionally mature. The political elites remain divided, and those that have emerged as the winner have sought to personalize power instead of institutionalizing it. Hun Sen in particular has succeeded in consolidating his power by relying on both frontal attacks on his opponents as well as a 'divide and conquer' strategy. In short,

the party and party system in Cambodia remain highly under-institutionalized, when qualitatively assessed in terms of their political roots within society, their organizational effectiveness, and intra-party political unity. If there is any evidence of growing stability, it seems to have less or little to do with a higher degree of institutionalization but more to do with personalization of political power.

III. Factors Affecting Institutionalization

The next question is why the CPP under the Hun Sen leadership has been able to adopt and execute a strategy and tactics that prove highly successful. It is worth noting that the CPP is not a political party dominated by any ethnic group seeking to control other ethnic groups.²⁹ Cambodia faces no crisis of national identity.³⁰ The country had experienced all of what the countries in Latin America, Southern Europe and post-communist Eastern Europe experienced: a long history of monarchical and colonial rule, socialism, poverty, and war.³¹ Cambodia shows that its historical and cultural legacies persisted after the election in 1993, and this helps historical and normative institutionalists explain the limits of party and party system institutionalization.³² But complex realist institutionalism helps shed more light.³³ There are still possible answers to the question, so let me offer a critical evaluation.

3.1 Historical Institutionalism: Historical institutionalism places emphasis on historical trajectories or 'path-dependent' directions. Policy choices being made today are constrained by choices made early in the development of a particular institution. This theoretical approach can also help explain particularities and specificities or the diversity of party systems in different countries.³⁴ It can also help explain the limits of party and party system institutionalization in Cambodia.

Until the end of World War II, Cambodia never developed a party system. The country had a long history of institutional weakness, most notably after the Khmer Empire began to go down on its path to permanent decline. French colonial rule further undermined traditional political institutions and did not contribute much to the process of modern state institution building. Between World War II and 1953 when they granted Cambodia independence in, the French allowed political parties to be established and elections to be held. But the political parties and the party system were soon subject to repression by King and later Prince Sihanouk, who sought to strengthen his own political party (*Sangkum Reastniyum* based on Buddhist socialism) as the hegemonic one. Left without any hopes for political victory, members of the opposition led by Marxist leftists either sought to cooperate with Sihanouk or carried their activities underground. Sihanouk's hegemonic rule did not help strengthen his party and the party system, either. As he increasingly personalized power, he increasingly came under challenge from those in the Left and those in the Right. Finally in 1970, he was overthrown. A civil war began, but a new wave of electoral politics emerged and a new multiparty system was established. Once again, Cambodia was subject to republican authoritarianism, which left the party and party system under-institutionalized. The civil war also did not help.

The extensive destruction throughout the 1970s culminated in the disappearance of any modern institutions, especially after the Khmer Rouge regime (1975-1978) took power in 1975. The new regime destroyed almost all existing institutions. The Pol Pot government brought down all the pre-1975 bureaucratic institutions. This does not mean the Khmer Rouge never sought to build any new institutions, but its efforts to do so focused on building state and party institutions in a highly centralized fashion. The Communist Party of Kampuchea (PKK) emerged as the dominant political institution, seeking to control the cooperative but apparently unable to do it effectively. The PKK members numbered only 14,000 and found it impossible to control the population, but the new institutions had no chance to

develop, either, as internal struggles for power grew intense.³⁵ The war with Vietnam also consumed Khmer Rouge leaders and led to their downfall in early 1979.

The new socialist regime, the People's Republic of Kampuchea (PRK), came to power in 1979 and had to start building new institutions, virtually from scratch. But all new institutions served as the collective political instrument of the PRK regime. The military and police in particular existed to ensure regime security. The National Assembly played a role "limited to a ratification of the decisions of the government, both for the election of high-ranking officers and for the adoption of laws."³⁶ The judiciary enjoyed no political independence: "the local people's committees (which in turn report to the Council of Ministers), the Party, the Front and other mass organizations...exercise[d] a large degree of influence and control" over it.³⁷

The party system was established, but remained rudimentary. The PRK established electoral procedures and electoral authorities (the highest of which was the Electoral Council) to hold the first and only national assembly election in May 1981. This election administration never evolved into a politically independent institution. Representatives of the Central Committee of the People's Revolutionary Party of Kampuchea, the United Front for the Construction and Defense of the Kampuchean Motherland (whose role was to provide "solid supports of the state" and to follow the Party as the Front's "leading core") and the mass organizations (which came under the auspices of the Front), all made up of the Electoral Council.

All this historical development helps explain why the parties and party system in Cambodia remain under-institutionalized. Prior to 1993, the party system had never enjoyed enough time to become increasingly institutionalized. Under the Sihanouk and Lon Nol regimes, multiparty systems were adopted but were quickly kept weak. The Khmer Rouge came to power only after five years of war and sought to strengthen the communist party by destroying all opposition, but their leaders found themselves in violent political struggles and self-destructed. The PRK regime then started from scratch in 1979, immediately found itself at war and until 1998, and thus had little time left in its hands to institutionalize the party. In short, one of the great difficulties facing the process of party institution building in Cambodia after the first national democratic election in 1993 resulted from the fact any institutions that survived the decades of war and the Khmer Rouge regime were left underdeveloped and the newly established ones hardly had time to develop.

The CPP has now become the most highly institutionalized party relative to other opposition parties, and the above historical legacies help explain the CPP's successes in consolidating power and institutionalizing itself. It is the successor of the party under the People's Revolutionary Party (PRK) that came to power in 1979, after the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia in late 1978 and after the new socialist regime led by Cambodians who are still political leaders of the CPP. By the time Cambodia held its first election in 1993, the CPP had more than ten years to prepare itself as a political party. The CPP has now had 30 years to institutionalize itself. Moreover, the fact that the CPP has become relatively more institutionalized than any of the opposition parties has something to do with the fact that it emerged as the only party in the country that has relatively deep political and social roots: it had controlled most of the country's population and land area after 1978.

The opposition, however, began as a resistance movement whose small armed forces and populations were scattered along the Thai-Cambodian borders and were subject to military attacks from the PRK and Vietnamese forces. The resistance factions (mainly FUNCINPEC, KPNLF, and MOLINAKA) turned themselves into political parties when they prepared to compete in the 1993 election, but operated within the state structure dominated by the CPP from the beginning. After the coup in 1997, FUNCINPEC never managed to recover from its military and political defeat and continued to lose more and more seats in the subsequent national elections.

The question remains: is party and party system institutionalization simply a matter or product of time (namely, the party system becomes institutionalized after a series of elections have been held uninterruptedly)? To what extent does this factor matter? As noted earlier, the CPP remains institutionally fragmented. The passage of time matters, but it also depends on other factors, such as historical circumstances. From 1979 to 1993, the CPP devoted little of its time, energy and resources to institutionalizing itself. The war efforts left the Hun Sen regime preoccupied with its survival. The only state institutions that seem to have become more coherent were the military and the police created for the purpose of defending the socialist regime first and foremost. Both time and historical circumstances thus matter.

3.2. Normative Institutionalism: Normative institutionalism can help shed more light on the challenge for party and party system institutionalization. Proponents of this theory tend to explain politics in terms of how individuals behave in a way that conforms to cultural norms and values. In other words, individuals do not behave rationally; their behavior is largely shaped by “values, norms, interests, identities and beliefs.”³⁸ Therefore, there are limits to institutional reform.

For some, Cambodia’s cultural norms explain the CPP’s relatively successful institutionalization. Cultural authoritarianism existed in the country for centuries and has no doubt worked against modern institutional development.³⁹ Its political culture does not promote compromise, “an alien concept.”⁴⁰ The monarchy remained highly centralized. Cambodians viewed their kings as divine. Khmer soldiers in ancient Cambodia historically fought to serve their emperor. Civil society existed, when we take religious Buddhist institutions into account; however, social institutions generally remained politically passive or even subservient to elite interests. This helps explain the persisting character of politics based on leaders’ personal charisma. From Sihanouk to Ranariddh to Hun Sen and to Sam Rainsy, personal charisma - not political agendas or policy platforms - seems to matter in politics.

Cultural authoritarianism has also challenged the process of democratic institution building in a direct way. Cambodian leaders still behave in an authoritarian fashion. Even Sam Rainsy (leader of the Sam Rainsy Party, the only opposition party capable of annoying the CPP), for instance, is known for his inability to work with others in his party. Some executive leaders of institutions, including those within civil society, often behave in an authoritarian manner. Many of the HR NGOs with authoritarian leaders remain institutionally weak. They have resisted decentralization and tend to score low for institutional accountability and transparency. Their staffs appear less active and feel aloof from their leaders.⁴¹

Although it has some merit, traditional authoritarianism as a constraint on institution building does not have all the explanatory power. Cultural determinists exaggerate the normative role of traditional culture as the key explanatory variable. Traditional culture resists the introduction of modern cultural values, but it does not explain why party and party system institutionalization in some societies where traditional values used to persist.⁴² Culture seems more dynamic than static.⁴³ When manipulated by elites to serve their ends, traditional values may be discredited.⁴⁴

The ideological norms of socialism offers further explanatory power. Cambodia came under the revolutionary totalitarian rule of Maoists, who sought to break free from its centuries-old cultural traditions perpetuated by monarchism. The Khmer Rouge revolutionary regime, having abolished individualism (a key ideological foundation of liberal democracy)⁴⁵ quickly sought to rebuild a new classless society based on collectivism by centralizing its communist power through violence. The PRK (renamed the State of Cambodia, SOC in 1989) remained a socialist dictatorship. A political report of the Fourth National Congress of the Front, for instance, stated that the Party had “a line and policy based on the creative application of a genuine Marxism-Leninism to the specific conditions of Cambodia.”⁴⁶ Critics have also

attributed the lack of institutionalization to the fact that "the CPP is tightly disciplined along classic Stalinist lines – a structure that it has used to its advantage."⁴⁷

Ideology thus matters, but this non-material factor does not explain why other socialist states in Eastern Europe failed to maintain or restore their socialist dictatorial orders and why they adopted democracy and maintain democratic gains. It seems that from the beginning the CPP enjoyed the upper hand in terms of institutional control and its ability to maintain and enhance its capabilities.

Overall the explanatory power of traditional and socialist cultural norms remains indeterminate. While the Cambodian case study may validate normative institutionalism, cross-country analyses point to variations in post-communist states that have moved in different ways. Although post-communist states did come from similar starting points in terms of ideology - single-party systems - they have moved in diverse and radically different directions, "ranging from prosperous social democracies to sultanistic or even dynastic regimes."⁴⁸ Normative institutionalism may help explain why socialist authoritarian politics may persist and why hegemonic parties in Cambodia continue to exist, but it cannot explain why hegemonic parties fall or disintegrate and give way to multiparty electoral politics in other countries.

3.3. Complex Realist Institutionalism: Neither historical institutionalism nor normative institutionalism can provide adequate insight into the critical question of why hegemonic party politics persists. Historical legacies can help shed light on the structural fragility of Cambodian institutions, but Cambodian history shows that politics is about the struggle for political supremacy, especially within states where the incumbent government does not enjoy political legitimacy and especially when the rule of law exists weakly. Hegemonic party politics in Cambodia is neither culturally unique nor historically determined. The absence of a legitimate government tends to give rise to national anarchy or an extremely weak rule of law and perpetuates the politics of survival. This led me to advance complex realist institutionalism,⁴⁹ and recent empirical evidence still seems to validate it.

The Hun Sen-led elite have not done anything that is different from what their predecessors had done or from what political elites in failing or weak states still do today. Within the electoral arena, as noted, the CPP has worked its way to consolidate power at the expense of the winner of the 1993 election and other opposition parties. The CPP first sought to personalize rather than institutionalize power by first conspiring with Prince Ranariddh in their joint attempt to weaken the other coalition partners. As the political opposition weakened, Hun Sen then began to adopt the next strategy to weaken FUNCINPEC. The process of democratic institutionalization broke down when Hun Sen staged a coup in 1997, ousting his main coalition partner: Prince Ranariddh. The new First Prime Minister (FUNCINPEC), Ung Huot, was installed by Hun Sen, who was still the man in charge.

Hun Sen has succeeded because he became stronger than the opposition in military, political, and economic terms. On the military front, the CPP has been the dominant force, especially after the 1997 coup and the Khmer Rouge disintegration in 1998. On the economic front, the country has enjoyed good economic growth. The overall trend in economic growth has been quite positive (with high GDP growth rates: 6.2% in 2002, 8.6% in 2003, 10.0% in 2004, 13.4% in 2005, 10.7 % in 2006, and 10.1 in 2007, 6.5% in 2008). The economy has benefited from growth in few sectors (mainly the construction, garment, and tourism industries), fiscal stability (although inflation rose in recent years), and fairly balanced budgets.

The survival of the subsequent political regimes in Cambodian history also depend on they support they receive from other states in the international political environment. After gaining independence and during the Cold War, Cambodian politics was still influenced by international politics. Prince Sihanouk emerged as the most popular political figure and proved successful in consolidating power in the

1950s. But Cambodian politics soon became factionalized with the rise of leftist and rightist elements. Not only did the prince have little time to build his political party (Sangkum Reastniyum), but he also had to face political challenges at home and abroad. The rightists sought to eliminate the leftists supported by socialist states like North Vietnam but then sought to weaken Sihanouk and succeeded in ousting him in 1970, when Gen. Lon Nol staged a coup in 1970, with the support of the United States. North Vietnam, China and other socialist states also supported the Khmer Rouge during the civil war that lasted until 1975. When it came to power, the Khmer Rouge continued to enjoy the support of China, but its bilateral relations with Vietnam turned sour. The Khmer Rouge's hegemonic power was quickly undermined by the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia, with full support from the Soviet Union. The balance of power in Indochina shifted in favor of the anti-China and anti-US Soviet bloc. Vietnam created a new Cambodian socialist regime in its image.⁵⁰

The domestic balance of power after the signing of the 1991 Peace Agreements also shifted in favor of the SOC/CPP, because of external factors. First, the Agreements were imposed by the UN Security Council. Second, the Agreements turned three resistance factions (which had until 1991 formed a coalition government-in-exile) into separate parties competing for power in the electoral process, but left the SOC/CPP intact. Third, the Agreements included the Khmer Rouge, but the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) did not do enough to disarm the rival political factions and thus left the CPP in the best military position to weaken its old opponents.⁵¹ Fourth, UNTAC played a role in allowing the CPP to force the royalists to share power after the party had lost the election. The UN decision was more of *realpolitik* than democratic politics. In a weaker position in every possible way, FUNCINPEC had no choice but to accept the CPP as the major coalition partner, with Hun Sen as Second Prime Minister.

The CPP's subsequent successes have also had much to do with the growing support it has received from members of the international community, especially donors – both bilateral and multilateral. First, the international community has, from the beginning, been less concerned about the CPP's power consolidation than about the return of the Khmer Rouge. Although the Peace Agreements made no mention of the need to put Khmer Rouge leaders on trial for their crimes committed during the second half of the 1970s, there was an implicit commitment to doing so. It is important to remember that the United Nations and other member states, especially those in the West, have been supportive of the idea of putting Khmer Rouge leaders on trial. The Extraordinary Chambers in the Court of Cambodia (ECCC) was finally established in 2007 with the aim of putting away surviving Khmer Rouge leaders, but the ECCC has no commitment to trying any of the CPP leaders who are also former Khmer Rouge officials (including Hun Sen, Chea Sim, and Heng Samrin). The Court not only leaves them untouched, but has also found itself subject to political control by the Hun Sen government, which has threatened to end its cooperation.

Second, the international donors have been increasingly supportive of the CPP government, despite their public displeasure with its poor human rights record. Between 1993 and 2008, Cambodia received more than \$7 billion in foreign aid. After the 1997 coup, Japan and other donors suspended their aid to Cambodia, but resumed it soon after that. The donor community has even increased its aid in recent years, despite the evidence of Hun Sen's authoritarian behavior. In 2006, the donor community pledged to give Cambodia US\$601 million for the development of the country in 2007. In 2007, they pledged to give Cambodia even more: \$689 million. In December 2008, they increased their pledge for 2009 to \$951.5 million. All this seems to have conferred further political legitimacy on the Hun Sen regime.

Third, international assistance for the development of Cambodia is based not only on the realities of power in the country but also on donor's security interests.

Rivalries between China and both Japan and the United States are discussed elsewhere in my work, but it is worth stressing that both Japan and the United States seem to worry about the rise of China and seem so reluctant to push the CPP into the Chinese camp. China in particular has made efforts to keep Cambodia away from Western influences in recent years and has now become the biggest donor in this country. In 2008, China pledged to give Cambodia \$256.7 million, more than what the EU pledged (\$214 million) and what Japan did (\$112.3 million). China has now become the biggest source of military aid to Cambodia (giving the latter more than \$5 million a year), sponsors about 40 Cambodian soldiers every year to study military strategy in China, all apparently with no strings attached.⁵²

For its part, the United States has sought to improve bilateral relations with Cambodia. Washington has now considered Cambodia to be most cooperative on the war against terrorism. Before Gen. Hok Lundy's death in 2008, the US government had invited him to Washington and even awarded him a medal. This was a face-about in that Washington had previously rejected his visa applications to visit the United States, because he was one of the leaders allegedly involved in criminal activities. In 2008, Washington provided Cambodia with 31 trucks to Cambodia's ministry of defense, along with \$7 million in military aid. Then in January 2009, Washington signed an agreement with Cambodia to establish a military attaché between the two countries. A confidential source also indicated that Washington wanted to build a military base in Cambodia, although this strategic thinking is unlikely to materialize. In spite of the trend toward hard authoritarianism, the Obama administration has also sought to warm up its ties with Cambodia, apparently in an attempt to counter growing Chinese influence over Southeast Asia.

In short, then, domestic and external political factors, including the Hun Sen regime's security interests and other states' security interests, help explain why the ruling party in Cambodia has been highly successful in both personalizing and consolidating power by deinstitutionalizing or without institutionalizing it.

Conclusion

Cambodia's democratic multiparty system established for electoral competition in 1993 (mainly among four former armed factions) has now given way to hegemonic party politics. The country's political parties and party system seem to have become more institutionalized than any time in the pre-1993 period, when qualitatively assessed in terms of electoral regularity or growing stability in inter-party electoral competition and in terms of their social, technical, as well as legal development. Still levels of party and party system institutionalization remain quite low: the political parties and the electoral system still do not have deep social roots (even though the CPP has developed some mechanisms to mobilize social support far more effectively than the opposition) and, more importantly, their institutionalization is limited by high degrees of political disunity among members of party elites. Moreover, the Cambodian case study further calls into question the proposition that hegemonic parties can become more institutionalized over time and can also push opposition parties to become institutionalized. Cambodia and other countries in Southeast Asia seem to question this proposition. Party system institutionalization under Prime Minister Thaksin, for instance, "was blocked by a de facto one-party rule."⁵³

Overall, levels of party and party system institutionalization in non-democratic or semi-democratic countries are generally low. We need to think more carefully about what we mean by institutionalization and whether it should be separated from personalization of power. It is unclear whether political party and party system institutionalization can be equated with electoral stability, which can

occur when authoritarian leaders personalize power without institutionalizing it. My work makes a distinction between autocratic and democratic institutionalization. Autocratic states can develop institutions that can become stable, but political bases still rest largely on their dominant leaders' personal control of power. Democratic institutionalization takes place when political leaders increasingly comply with democratic principles, norms and rules, and when organizations, including political parties, become politically independent, operationally effective and politically influential to the extent that they can achieve their objectives and ensure sustainable institutional stability within an effective system of checks and balances.

Theoretically, both normative and historical institutionalisms help shed light on the extremely limited process of party and party system institutionalization in Cambodia, but they cannot explain why other states that have experienced similar historical and cultural legacies have succeeded better than this country. Institutional types also matter. If Cambodia, Malaysia and Singapore have become more institutionalized in recent decades, it may be because their parliamentary systems have also helped made this possible. Parliamentary systems may contribute to the rise of electoral authoritarianism because they tend to allow party leaders to play a dominant role in politics. Complex realist institutionalism further shows that the struggle for security and power, especially in institutionally weak states, is usually intense and that international politics can have real impacts on institutionalization. The CPP's successful consolidation of power has resulted from its perceived insecurity and its capacity to weaken the opposition in the struggle for political supremacy, as well as the international environment in which states still place their national security interests over and above their normative commitment to institution building.

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ENDNOTES

- ¹. In my work, for instance, I develop the concept of democratic institutionalization. See Sorpong Peou, *International Democracy Assistance for Peacebuilding: Cambodia & Beyond* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2007)
- ². Democratic transition did take place in Cambodia, beginning with the signing of a democratic peace agreement by four warring factions (The Royalists known as FUNCINPEC, the Khmer People's National Liberation Front (KPNLF), the Khmer Rouge or Democratic Kampuchea (DK), and the State of Cambodia (SOC) and ending with the first election of a Constituent Assembly in May 1993. The peace agreement provided a framework whereby the four Cambodian signatories would compete for power through the ballot box rather than bullets in a free and fair political environment. The 1993 election, judged by the United Nations as a qualified success, led to an expected defeat of the former communist party, the Cambodian People's Party or CPP (offspring of SOC) and a victory for an opposition party, FUNCINPEC. Critics of the UN were largely proven wrong at the time. Personalized politics appeared to have given way to institutionalized politics in the form of liberal democracy. A Constituent Assembly came into existence and was subsequently transformed into the National Assembly (whose members then numbered 122), which adopted a liberal democratic institution and approved the formation of a new coalition government made up of four political parties (the peace signatories). The new two-headed coalition government (with Prince Norodom Ranariddh of FUNCINPEC as First Prime Minister and Hun Sen of the CPP as Second Prime Minister) had its defects and flaws, but was perhaps the best the country could get under the circumstances at the time. The arrangement overcame the CPP threat of territorial secession and maintained political stability, at least until the mid-1990s.
- ³. Larry Diamond, "Thinking about Hybrid Regimes," p.25
- ⁴. Giovanni Sartori, *Parties and Party System: A Framework for Analysis*, p.230
- ⁵. For more details, see UNDP, *Report on the Elections of the Commune Councils*; National Democratic Institute, *The 2002 Cambodian Commune Elections*, p.22.
- ⁶. Machiel Calavan, Sergio Diaz Briquets and Jerald O'Brien, "Cambodian Corruption Assessment," p.7
- ⁷. World Economic Forum, *Global Competitiveness Report 2005-2006*.
- ⁸. Susan Rice and Stewart Patrick, *Index of State Weakness in the Developing World*, p.11
- ⁹. Machiel Calavan, Sergio Diaz Briquets, & Jerald O'Brien, "Cambodian Corruption Assessment," p.5
- ¹⁰. Lao Mong Hay, "Hun Sen's ineffective war on land-grabbing," p.2

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- ¹¹. Christine Nissen, *Corruption and Cambodian Households*, p.2, 48.
 - ¹². Asian Human Right Commission, "Cambodia: Judicial Independence Is the Key to Reducing Defamation Lawsuits Against Critics and Upholding Freedom of Expression" (17 June 2009)
 - ¹³. According to an EU report, "The CPP largely dominates Cambodia's broadcast media: apart from the state-owned TVK and the recently established CTN, the 5 other national TV stations are CPP-owned or affiliated. TVK can reach almost 90% of the population, and TV5 (Royal Armed Forces Television, privately owned) almost 80%. The other stations are: TV3 Phnom Penh, TV9 Khmer, TV Bayon and TV11 Apsara," EU Election Observation Mission, *Members of the National Assembly Elections*, 27 July 2003, p.41.
 - ¹⁴. UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Cambodia, "Public Statement" (29 July 2008), p.2
 - ¹⁵. IRI, "Cambodia 2003: National Assembly Elections," p.7 (*italics original*)
 - ¹⁶. Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Human Rights in Cambodia, "The 2003 National Assembly Elections," pp.4-5
 - ¹⁷. Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Human Rights in Cambodia, "The 2003 National Assembly Elections"
 - ¹⁸. *The Phnom Penh Post*, 15 December 2008.
 - ¹⁹. *The Phnom Penh Post*, 10 December 2008.
 - ²⁰. UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Cambodia, "Public Statement" (29 July 2008), p.1
 - ²¹. Interview, Dominic Cardy of NDI, 29 August 2003.
 - ²². Interview, Chum Bo Sun.
 - ²³. Interview, Channtha Muth, NDI Senior Program Manager, 24 January 2006
 - ²⁴. NDI (1994), 5
 - ²⁵. *Ibid.*, 7.
 - ²⁶. COMFREL (undated), 15.
 - ²⁷. Longmuir (Undated), 6.
 - ²⁸. See, for instance, Samuel P. Huntington, "Social and Institutional Dynamics of One-Party System," p.7
 - ²⁹. Dankwart Rustow, "Transitions to Democracy: Toward a Dynamic Model"; numerous countries like Russia continue to face this crisis, though.
 - ³⁰. See, for instance, Chou Meng Tarr, "The Vietnamese Minority in Cambodia"; Ramses Amer, "The Ethnic Vietnamese in Cambodia: A Minority at Risk?"
 - ³¹. See Valerie Bunce, "Rethinking Recent Democratization: Lessons from the Postcommunist Experience" "Comparative Democratization: Big and Bounded Conclusions"; Michael McFaul, "The Fourth Wave of Democracy and Dictatorship: Noncooperative Transitions in the Postcommunist World"; Timothy Frye, "The Perils of Polarization: Economic Performance in the Postcommunist World."
 - ³². See Zbigniew Brzezinski, "The Primacy of History and Culture"; Samuel P. Huntington can be seen as a cultural determinist. He, for instance, makes reference to Chinese Confucianism, asserting that, "Confucian heritage, with its emphasis on authority, order, hierarchy, and supremacy of the collectivity over the individual, creates obstacles to democratization," in his *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, p.238.
 - ³³. For more details, see Sorpong Peou, *International Democracy Assistance for Peacebuilding: Cambodia and Beyond*.
 - ³⁴. Jonathan Hopkin, "Comparative Methods," in *Theory and Methods in Political Science*, ed. by David Marsh and Gerry Stoker, p.263
 - ³⁵. Even the PKK itself did not become institutionalized, as purges within the party intensified and led to self-destruction. See Timothy Carney, "Organization of Power," pp.8, 93-94, 105-7; Kenneth M. Quinn, "Pattern and Scope of Violence," pp.197-207
 - ³⁶. United Nations, *Report of the United Nations Fact-Finding Mission on Present Structures and Practices of Administration in Cambodia*, p.135
 - ³⁷. United Nations, *Report of the United Nations Fact-Finding Mission on Present Structures and Practices of Administration in Cambodia*, p.135
 - ³⁸. J. March and J. Olsen, *Rediscovering Institutions* (New York: Free Press, 1989), p.17.
 - ³⁹. For cultural explanations, see Steve Heder, "Cambodia's democratic transition to neoauthoritarianism"; David Roberts, *Political Transition in Cambodia 1991-99: Power, Elitism and Democracy*.

⁴⁰. Abdulgaffar Peang-Meth, "Understanding Cambodia's Political Development," p.333

⁴¹. John L. Vijghen, *Cambodian Human Rights & Democracy Organizations*, p.21

⁴². For critiques of cultural determinism and relativism, see Hahm Chaibong, "The Ironies of Confucianism."

⁴³. Culture does not always determine political behavior, but can also be seen as constructed by elites to justify their authoritarian rule. The debate over 'Asian values', for instance, resulted from the strategy of Asian elites to maintain their authoritarian regime. See, for instance, Fareed Zakaria, "Culture is Destiny: A Conversation with Lee Kuan Yew"; Bilahari Kausikan, "Asia's Different Standard" & "Governance That Works"; Kishore Mahbubani, "The Pacific Way."

⁴⁴. Mark R. Thompson, "Whatever Happened to 'Asian Values'?" Asian elites do not accept the primacy of Asian values seen as anti-democratic, see Kim Dae Jung, "Is Culture Destiny? The Myth of Asia's Anti-Democratic Value."

⁴⁵. According to Kenneth Quinn, "What Pol Pot sought to achieve was the obliteration of individualism, for just like Mao, he believed that for communism to succeed it must eliminate individualism...Pol Pot saw that to achieve the full socialist transformation he had to strip the concept of individualism from the collective Cambodia psyche. It appears he believed that only by destroying every root, every vestige of individualist thought could a new society emerge consisting of persons totally dedicated to, and knowing only, a collectivist regimen," see his "Pattern and Scope of Violence," p.193

⁴⁶. Cited in United Nations, *Report of the United Nations Fact-Finding Mission on Present Structures and Practices of Administration in Cambodia*, p.86

⁴⁷. Julio A. Jeldres, "Cambodia's Fading Hopes," p.350

⁴⁸. Charles King, "Post-Postcommunism: Transition, Comparison, and the End of 'Eastern Europe,'" p.168

⁴⁹. Sorpong Peou, *International Democracy Assistance for Peacebuilding: Cambodia and Beyond*.

⁵⁰. For more details, see Sorpong Peou, *Intervention and Change in Cambodia: Toward Democracy?*

⁵¹. For more on this, see Sorpong Peou, *Conflict Neutralization in the Cambodia War*.

⁵². *The Phnom Penh Post*, October 2005.

⁵³. Andreas Ufen, "Political party and party system institutionalization in Southeast Asia: lessons for democratic consolidation in Indonesia, the Philippines and Thailand," p.343.