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KARAOKE COUNTRY:

The Failure of Democratization and Peacebuilding in Cambodia

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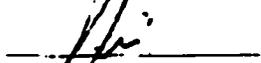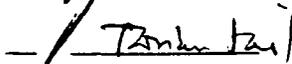
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Tania Theriault

KARAOKE COUNTRY: THE FAILURE OF DEMOCRATIZATION AND PEACEBUILDING IN CAMBODIA

ABSTRACT

This thesis examines attempts to foster democracy in post-conflict nations. Using Cambodia as a case study, it traces Cambodian history and examines the country's political culture to determine structures which may help or hinder the democratization process. Further it argues that the model of democratization attempted by the United Nations in Cambodia during the UNTAC mission from 1991 to 1993 was procedurally based and inappropriate to Cambodia given this history and political culture. The key theoretical argument is that the problem with the UNTAC attempt at democratization in Cambodia is found in the underpinnings of UN peacebuilding policy. Guided by the tenets of the New Orthodoxy school of theorists in political development, the UN did not undertake the kind of analysis of Cambodia's political, social and historical readiness for democracy offered by an alternative school of thought, such as the political economy school. In terms of reorienting policy, the thesis argues is that true democracy in Cambodia must be developed over a long time period, through a bottom up strategy. This strategy is the only effective method of developing a democracy with accountability and transparency in Cambodia which extends beyond the capital of Phnom Penh, to have a direct effect on the lives of Cambodia's 85 per cent rurally-based population.

Tania Theriault
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A huge crowd of foreigners have invaded the country. They are constantly to be seen in big, white cars with "UN" stamped on them. They have a stupendous amount of dollars in their pockets. They say we shall have to vote, that Cambodians should express themselves. But they know nothing. They will come and go like rainclouds. And we are the frogs. If there is no noise, if everything is quiet, we may dare to raise our heads above the water. But at the first noise, we had better hide. Raised heads are easily cut off. We know because we have seen it. All these people who have been, or dream of becoming our rulers again, are ready to cut each other's throats. There is room for only one water buffalo in the pond. And when big people fight among themselves small people die. Violence is everywhere lying in wait. Fear is everywhere too. It is not easy to be Cambodian.[1]

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[1] Serge Thion describes the influx of UNTAC from the Cambodian point of view in <u>Watching Cambodia</u>.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

How do states recover from decades of civil war? In what order should mechanisms for re-building states be undertaken? Should democratization precede economic development or vice-versa? Or can development and democratization be pursued simultaneously? What role should the international community play, if any? Is it possible for the international community to implement one standard approach for post-conflict peace-building that would be applicable to any country?

The purpose of this thesis is to address these questions using Cambodia as a case study. The Cambodian experience is used as a benchmark for tentative conclusions about development and democratization in a post-conflict peacebuilding context. In 1993, Cambodia became the target state of an international intervention to restore peace and prosperity and to implement democracy in the country. Cambodia had been in a state of civil war for over 23 years at the time.

The country had been subjected to a severe totalitarian regime, the Khmer Rouge, for four years from 1975 to 1979.

While this time period is relatively brief compared to other such regimes, the Khmer Rouge regime has since been revealed as one of the most brutal in recent history[1]. Their legacy in Cambodia of over a million dead in a country of approximately 7 million inhabitants at 1975, belies their longevity of power.

Cambodia alone did not free itself of the murderous Khmer Rouge regime. It was only through a Vietnamese intervention, which in the end became an occupation of ten years[2], that Cambodia escaped the terror of the Khmer Rouge. While ending what history has branded a genocide, the Vietnamese intervention brought Cambodia new problems. At the time, Vietnam was isolated from the West. Its relations with China were stormy. Its off and on alliances with the Soviet Union caused the ASEAN countries, and particularly Thailand, to view Vietnamese actions in Cambodia as a threat to their own security. In the end, the Vietnamese occupation isolated Cambodia almost completely and insured that the nation, drawn

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[1] The Khmer Rouge regime has been well documented by the Cambodia Genocide Centre and scholars such as Michael Vickery (Cambodia, 1975-1982, Boston: South End Press, 1984), Ben Kiernan (The Pol Pot Regime: Race, Power and Genocide in Cambodia under the Khmer Rouge, 1975-1979; New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), and David Chandler (The Tragedy of Cambodian History: Politics, War and Revolution since 1945; New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991). In addition the Khmer Rouge left behind records of their actions in torture centres such as Tuol Sleng in Phnom Penh.
[2] From 1979 till 1989 with Vietnamese influence extending well into the 1990s.

into the Cold War as a casualty of Vietnam's own war waged next door, would remain in Cold War limbo. Further, Cambodian society possessed a historical antipathy toward Vietnam and the Khmer Rouge, now in the role of rebelling against a foreign occupation, would draw on that anti-Vietnamese sentiment to recruit converts for over a decade after the intervention.

Cambodia began to emerge from its limbo in 1989 as negotiations for what would form the Paris Peace Accords of 1991 began. The Cold War was gearing down. There was perestroika in the Soviet Union, and a new spirit of cooperation between East and West was in the air. The bi-polar world would disappear as the USSR split apart and abandoned communism. The Vietnamese were tired of the ongoing costs of the civil war in Cambodia and no longer had Soviet support. They sought a way out of Cambodia and the Paris Peace Accords provided the route.[2] These Accords laid the foundation for a UN intervention in Cambodia.

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[1] Internal actors involved in the accords were: FUNCINPEC, the Prince Sihanouk led royalists; the State of Cambodia, a Hun Sen led government backed by Vietnam; the Khmer Rouge; and, the KPNLF led by Sonn Sann. For more information on the internal political factions see Appendix II. Also present in developing the Accords were Australia, Brunei, Canada, China, France, India, Indonesia, Japan, Laos, Malaysia, Thailand, USSR, Britain, Vietnam, Yugoslavia and the United States.

Between 1991 and 1993, Cambodia became the focus of a United Nations peacekeeping mission. While this mission was not specifically referred to as a "peacebuilding" mission, its objectives were sufficiently different from the traditional truce-monitoring activities of early peacekeeping to argue that this mission, the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC), was in fact the first attempt to put peacebuilding concepts into practice in the field.

UNTAC, charged with implementing the Paris Peace Accords to which all the parties to the Cambodian conflict had agreed in 1991 and with initiating societal reconstruction of Cambodia, provides a clear record by which to evaluate the success of peacebuilding in the field and the theoretical short-comings and strengths which supported the initiative's development. Further, in Cambodia the three goals of peace, development and democratization were undertaken simultaneously; therefore it is possible to draw lessons about the success of each individually and about their actual intersections in practice.

As over six years have passed since the United Nations mission closed down in Cambodia and the summer of 1998 saw a

second internationally-monitored, multi-party election take place in the country, sufficient time has passed and enough activity has occurred to warrant the expectation of certain positive developments. If these positive developments have not yet materialized then it is an opportune time to find out why that is the case.

With the signing of the Paris Peace Accords between all the major combatants in Cambodia, the United Nations, the international donor community and internal Cambodian actors found themselves faced with the problem of reconstructing the country and of integrating it into a 'globalized' world economy and modern society which had not existed on such a scale during Cambodia's previous peace. International actors were faced with a number of Cambodian internal factions which had little desire to interact peacefully with one another; the prime holdout in the peace process and rebuilding was the Khmer Rouge. Finally, the 1990s post-Cold War era had ushered in an international climate where democratic governance had become almost a "condition" of international legitimacy. Thus the first step in reconstructing Cambodia would be a speedy democratization via a UN conducted and monitored election.

The UN developed a prototype "peacebuilding" mission for Cambodia. At a cost of approximately $1.7 billion over a period of 18 months and with a personnel component of 22,000[4] military and civilians, UNTAC was the UN's most ambitious and most expensive mission in history. By its mandate, over the 18-month mission, UNTAC would provide a shadow civilian administration in Cambodia while designing, preparing and implementing a national election. In short, UNTAC was to keep the peace until after the polls. The rest, they hoped, would take care of itself.

The UN experiment with democratization and peacebuilding in Cambodia ended a seeming "success story". The 1993 elections were carried out relatively peacefully and the UN withdrew from Cambodia on schedule leaving the country with a democratically elected coalition government. Cambodia has since proven to be a prime case of the danger of premature elections and the difficulties of the peacebuilding process however. Despite UNTAC conducting, funding and monitoring the elections in 1993, the obstacles to democratization in the fragile country were largely ignored.

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[4] Berdal, M. and M. Leifer. "Chapter 2: Cambodia" in Mayall, J. (Ed.) The New Interventionism 1991-1994: United Nations experience in Cambodia, former Yugoslavia and Somalia. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1996. p. 25

According to Pierre Lizee, the conduct of the elections in 1993 was indicative of the international community attempting to force the many Cambodian factions to deal with one another peacefully through the imposition of a new social contract.[5] The Cambodian factions stringently resisted these attempts and continued to work largely in isolation. Almost six years later, the nation has yet to function as an effective, democratically governed state. Rather, almost immediately in 1993 violent in-fighting broke out between the rival factions who found themselves in a power-sharing arrangement. Rather than governing according to their power-sharing agreement, the CPP and FUNCINPEC amassed private armies and weapons and flirted with military alliances[6] in an attempt to prepare the ground for a coup to achieve sole power.

A CPP coup in July of 1997 did not end international misperceptions about the successful democratization of

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[5] Lizee, P. "Cambodia in 1995: From Hope to Despair." Asian Survey. V. 36(1): 83-88. 1996.

[6] One military alliance in the making was revealed between Prince Ranariddh of FUNCINPEC and the Khmer Rouge by the Phnom Penh Post in late May of 1998. The newspaper came into possession of Khmer Rouge documents discussing the alliance negotiations in which the Khmer Rouge suggested they would dupe Ranariddh into an alliance only to overthrow the hated CPP and later rid themselves of Prince Ranariddh and assume full Khmer Rouge rule. Bou, S. and P. Sainsbury. "Prince's KR deal laced with treachery: KR plotted to betray Prince's alliance and wage new war." Phnom Penh Post. May 22 – June 1, 1998.

Cambodia. A second internationally monitored and funded election was held in the summer of 1998. While the United Nations did not fund or conduct this election, it did send monitors and endorsed the election results. Western donor nations funded the majority of the election effort. Foreign aid funds were thus funneled back into the exact same democratic experiment in Cambodia that had failed in 1993.

Lizee has argued that some of the major problems encountered by the international community in democratizing Cambodia resulted from the dominant Cambodian political model of factionalism, i.e. power rooted in factional alliances, and the vested interest of these powers in ensuring the failure of democracy. The resistance of these groups to the democratization process, coupled with their ongoing attempts to strengthen their own positions within Cambodia, created a climate inhospitable to democracy.⁻

While I would agree that the dominant Cambodian elite political factions hampered efforts at many turns and are important actors, I chose not to focus on that level of activity and analysis in this thesis. Underlying this thesis

is the argument that even had factional conflict among political elites been absent, the great majority of Cambodian citizens (the *demos*) were not taken into consideration in the development of a model of democratization for Cambodia. Cambodia's political culture and level of development were overlooked in this model and democratization attempts came to mean little to the average Cambodian who could not ground the democratization process in his or her own personal experience. I sought to investigate what, if anything, the elections meant to the average Cambodian rather than the political elites.

Additionally, the thesis stresses that the UN and donor nations were also relevant internal actors in Cambodia with vested interests in the democratization process. Many of these international actors tried to deny their past roles in Cambodia.[3] Therefore, these nations cannot be viewed as benign actors trying to work around the many frustrating obstacles to democracy in Cambodia, but rather as equally important to, and responsible for, the failures and successes of the UNTAC election.

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[7] Lizee, *Op. Cit.*, p.83

Many UNTAC analysts[8] ignore, or give only passing note to, the fact that Western nations were instrumental in protracting the conflict in Cambodia through their de facto support of the Khmer Rouge from 1979 to 1989 and, as such, were hypocritical in their actions in Cambodia during and since the implementation of peacebuilding. The United States, the West and the United Nations should not simply be assumed to have been positive actors in this case, despite acknowledged problems with dominant Cambodian political factions. To add that other nations such as China, Thailand, the former USSR and, of course, Vietnam also played a part in prolonging the Cambodia conflict should not overshadow the actions of the West.

This thesis is concerned with why the UN attempts at democratization in Cambodia failed. Its key theoretical argument is that the central problem with the UNTAC attempt at democratization is found in the theoretical underpinnings of UN peacebuilding policy. This policy was guided by the

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[8] Most notably the United States but also France and to a lesser extent other donor nations.
[9] For example M.W. Doyle (UN Peacekeeping in Cambodia: UNTAC's Civil Mandate. New York: International Peace Academy Occasional Paper Series. 1995.), T. Findlay (Cambodia: The Legacy and Lessons of UNTAC. Oxford: Oxford University Press. SIPRI Research Report No. 9. 1995), S.J. Randall ("Peacekeeping in the Post Cold War Era: The United Nations and the Cambodian Elections of 1993." Contemporary Security Policy. V. 16(2): 174-191. 1995.) and P. Utting (Between Hope and Insecurity: The Social Consequences of the Cambodian Peace Process. Geneva: UNRISD Publishing. 1994.)

tenets of the New Orthodoxy school of theorists in political development. As such the UN did not undertake the kind of analysis of Cambodia's political, social and historical readiness for democracy offered by an alternative school of thought, such as Political Economy. Accordingly, democratization and peacebuilding in Cambodia were doomed to failure.

Alternatively, this thesis argues that a democratic regime must be adapted to local conditions in order to achieve stability, accountability and transparency — all of which are completely lacking in Cambodia today. Only a substantive attempt at democratization which addresses the deeper reality of the society in question can accomplish these objectives. Alternatively, simply trying to force an ahistorically-simplified Western model of democracy via a an election on a country is soon revealed as misguided and short-sighted.

Had an analysis of Cambodia's political, social and historical readiness for democracy been done it would have been clear that any attempt to implement democracy in the nation would, by necessity, be a long-term and complicated

process. Cambodia clearly exhibits characteristics which complicate the process of democratization. Failing to recognize these characteristics would render the democratization process fraught with problems, allow it to become increasingly complex, and in the end, implement a democracy with little likelihood of taking root permanently in the country. The complexity and uniqueness of the case, which UN policy failed to address, is outlined in Chapter 2 and 3 in order to provide insight into why the model of democracy implemented in Cambodia was inappropriate.

Chapter 4 then explains how the UN came to choose the model for democratization it used in Cambodia partially as a result of a rapidly evolving, post Cold War international order and the organization's desire to have a leading role in that order. The chapter outlines the shift in UN policy which was documented in three key UN publications — <u>Agenda for Peace</u>, <u>Agenda for Development</u> and <u>Agenda for Democratization</u>. With these documents the UN came to follow the tenets of the New Orthodoxy school of political development theorists in the creation of its democratization model within peacebuilding.

Chapter 5 presents the alternative to the New Orthodoxy approach to democratization, a Political Economy perspective. It explores the theories of the political economy school and how these might form the basis of a new paradigm. This chapter suggests that given the case of Cambodia, democratization would be best served through a long-term, bottom-up strategy which recognizes the uniqueness of the case and the need to broaden the concept of democratization as outlined by political economists. The thesis argues that had the UN considered a political economy approach to democratization it might not have overlooked the importance and specificity of the Cambodian case.

Chapter 6, the conclusion, summarizes the discussions in the previous chapters. It concludes with thoughts and recommendations on a change of approach to democratization in post-conflict societies.

CHAPTER 2: THE CASE OF CAMBODIA

Examining Cambodia thoroughly through its historical record and political culture reveals key traits and structures which might hamper the development of democracy in the country. Had such an analysis of the Cambodian case been undertaken in 1993 prior to the implementation of UNTAC a very different approach to democratization in the country may have been deemed necessary.

First, Cambodia has a long history of support for an absolute monarchy led by a God-king or *devaraja*, whose power and authority is god-given and beyond question. Secondly, Cambodia has known several sham elections, preceding even the country's independence, but no elections would stand up to international scrutiny today. Cambodians may have had lesser expectations of the 1993 and 1998 elections due to their past experiences with hollow elections.

History also shows that factionalism has driven apart political coalitions repeatedly dating back to the competing royals of the declining Angkor empire. Former allies will quickly turn to viciously battling one another. The political

climate is adversarial to the point that easily turns violent and is inherently unstable. Cooperation between factions is almost unknown.

Cambodia's history of almost constant strife and turmoil partially arose from its geographic position between two larger and stronger states which demonstrated expansionist tendencies: Thailand to the North and Vietnam to the East and South. The one time frame during which Cambodia was in the dominant regional position was during the Angkor Empire of the 9th to the 12th centuries A.D.

Cambodia, or Kambuja, had been established as an independent Khmer state in the early 9th century by King Jayavarman II when he returned from exile. Jayavarman II's vision for the empire was of a hierarchical, monarchist state ruled by a God-King or *devaraja*.[10] Aun explains:

> The doctrine of God-King is a concept of governance of a country based on the principle of the godination of an individual who is the supreme leader of the country, namely the King. All the powers in the country lie in the hands of the King who is the reincarnation of God coming down to reign on earth. The entire populace was led to believe and respect the King as God. Every command of the King is tantamount to the command of God,

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[10] Peddler. J. Part I in Cambodia: A Matter of Survival. Martin Wright. (Ed.) Essex: Longman Press. 1989. p. 10

the respect of which will bring good deeds to the individual.[11]

The Angkor empire, which reached its cultural height in the 11th century,[12] was built upon absolute obedience to the *devaraja* and to a large extent on slavery.[13] At its height under King Suryavarman II, the Khmer empire had consolidated rule over modern Cambodia, Thailand and Laos and had taken armies into Champa (now Vietnam) and the Malay peninsula. Cambodia's most enduring symbol, the temple complex *Angkor Wat*, was commissioned in 1150 AD. Interestingly, the stone buildings, which survive today as a testament to ancient architecture and enormous human effort, were never inhabited by humans. The Khmer people of the time lived in grass and bamboo shelters adjacent to the temples but not within the buildings because it was believed that stone buildings were intended solely for the gods.[14]

By 1177, however, the Angkor empire was beginning to unravel. The Chams liberated what portions of Champa the Khmers had taken and attacked the Khmer capital at Angkor Wat

[11] Aun, Porn Moniroth. Democracy in Cambodia: Theories and Realities. Phnom Penh: Cambodia Institute for Cooperation and Peace. 1995. p. 33
[12] Peddler, *Op. Cit.*, p. 10
[13] Thion, S. Watching Cambodia. Bangkok: White Lotus Press. 1993. p. 79
[14] Lonely Planet. Cambodia: A Survival Guide. 1997.

in that year.[15] War raged until the late 12th century when King Jayavarman VII restored the empire and annexed Champa. Champa, the Malay peninsula and Northern Thailand were soon lost however.

Through the height of the Angkor empire, the court adhered to Hinduism and Mahayana Buddhism in its religion and ritual. However, in the 15th century, Thais invaded Cambodia and imposed a new religion on the Khmers, Theravada Buddhism, which remains the dominant religion today. It is practiced by almost all ethnic Khmer or approximately 90 per cent of the population.[16] The capital was also moved at this time from Angkor Wat (Siem Reap) to its modern location at Phnom Penh.

Through the next three centuries Cambodia lay trapped between the stronger Thai and Vietnamese states, each of which wanted more and more Khmer land, and competing Khmer royals often acknowledged either Vietnamese or Thai leadership leading to internal turmoil as well as external security threats.[17] By the time the French became involved in Vietnam in the 1800s, there was a distinct possibility that

[15] *Ibid.*, p. 10
[16] ASEAN. Cambodia Information Archive. 1993. (*www.asean.or.id*)
[17] Peddler, *Op. Cit.*, p. 12

Cambodia might have been swallowed up by one or both of its neighbours, had it not been made a French protectorate in 1863.

The Khmer Experience with Colonialism

After 1863, Cambodia became a French-ruled colony and Khmer royals entrenched their positions by surrounding themselves with French culture. A new elite developed of Khmer who flourished under colonialism. This elite group was comprised of the royal family, civil servants and others who worked in close contact with the French in the capital city of Phnom Penh. It was only this small group of Khmers who were ever fully integrated into colonial life and only a tiny percentage of the population received schooling.[2] French sociologist Serge Thion's work on colonial Cambodia has been particularly useful to this thesis in establishing what made Cambodia's colonial experience unique and in what ways the colonial experience defines the modern state.

For the great bulk of the Cambodian people living in the countryside, French rule meant simply that taxes went to the

French instead of directly to the royals. The royal family, however, did not object to this situation and therefore the highly royalist peasantry, which continued to look to its *devaraja* as a divine leader, did not rebel.

According to Thion, the French never consolidated a hold over the peasantry due to Cambodia's highly informal system of land recognition. Cambodia's small population[19] and agriculturally blessed land meant that competition for land was not intense. The greater population were free to till their own land, and land ownership was recognized solely through local acceptance as proof of possession.[20] If land went uncultivated, ownership rights ceased. Taxation was based upon the peasant harvest as opposed to land holdings. Cambodia retained a feudal character where serfdom was widespread. Large colonial estates did not develop in Cambodia.[21]

[18] Thion, *Op. Cit.*
[19] Population density was 150 peasants per square km of arable land as compared to 210 in Thailand, 400 in Indonesia, and 730 in North Vietnam, according to Thion. S., *Op. Cit.*, p. 41
[20] *Ibid.*, p. 26
[21] *Ibid.*, p. 28

The French administrators did attempt to formalize land ownership in order to better harness a Cambodian economy for colonial capitalism. Thion writes:

> Beyond the short-term interests of the European colons, who were frequently given virgin lands on which to establish plantations, the general aim of the colonizers was to increase land-values; in other words, according to Marx, capitalized rents. It was also important to raise the level of production, so capital would be created for payment and credit that would become the necessary source of investment for colonial development.[22]

However, the French never really succeeded in imposing this land system on the country. By 1925 it was still embryonic.[23] Khmer custom continued to dominate French colonial rule, particularly in the rural areas where the colonial presence was minimal. In this manner Cambodia fits observations made by Boone and Geschiere that different pre-capitalist societies offered different "footholds" or "access points" for colonial and post-colonial regimes seeking to extend state power.[24]

[22] *Ibid.*, p. 30
[23] *Ibid.*, p. 30
[24] Boone, C. "State Building in the African Countryside: Structure and Politics at the Grassroots." Journal of Development Studies. V. 34(4): 1-32. 1998. And Geschiere, P. "Imposing Capitalist Dominance through the State: The Multifarious Role of the Colonial State in Africa" in Old Modes of Production and Capitalist Encroachment: Anthropological Explorations in Africa. (vanBinsbergen, W. and P. Geschiere Eds.) London: Routledge. 1985.

Boone and Geschiere argue that the relative strength or weakness of organization at the local level, and the ability to resist or evade the colonial presence, has a dramatic effect on the eventual shape of power relations in the independent state and the nature of relations between rural and urban areas. The result, according to Boone, is that state structures can emerge as "suspended above" rural societies rather than imposed on them.[25] Boone concludes that in Senegal, where rural interests were politically strong at the local level yet too weak to challenge the national regime, factional leaders were content to allow rural forces to capture sub-units of the state "even at considerable cost to efficacy and coherence."[26]

A series of Khmer kings in the early part of this century tolerated or endorsed the country's colonial status and maintained their position atop an elite designated by inheritance, limiting access to education and keeping rural Khmers in awe of the royal stature while they tended their subsistence plots.[27] Essentially, the elite were remote from the existence of the great majority of Cambodians and this

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[25] Boone, *Op. Cit.*, p. 24
[26] *Ibid.*, p. 25
[27] Peddler, *Op. Cit.*, p. 12

affected the shape Cambodia would assume as a modern state.[28]

The Cambodian elite were primarily urban, where the greater population was primarily rural. They were educated, while the majority were not. They interacted with Western society (via the French colonials), the majority did not. They vyed for power among themselves with little thought for the majority of the population who had little knowledge of them. These divisions between urban and rural realities and elite and average Cambodian citizens remain largely intact to this day.

Toward Independence

Distracted by war in Europe, the French colonials put 18-year-old Norodom Sihanouk on the throne in 1941, apparently surmising that his youth and inexperience would render him easily controllable.[29] Yet, sentiment toward independence was growing within Indochina and in 1942, Son Ngoc Thanh led a coup attempt against the French colonial structure. Although this attempt failed and Son Ngoc Thanh

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[28] While Boone notes that rural-urban divides and power struggles were an after effect of decolonization that seemed to cease in the late 1960s as rural areas were re-incorporated into regime-centred networks of political and economic dominance. I would argue that this process in Cambodia today is at a comparable level to Cambodia of the 1960s and has not progressed beyond that point due to the protracted conflict. This struggle between rural and urban elites is still present. As of 1999, rural elites are of no threat to dominant federal powers based in Phnom Penh. While rural-urban divides are present in numerous societies, I would argue that the scope of that divide at the turn of the millennium is uniquely large in Cambodia.

had to flee the country, Japan invaded in 1945, interning French troops and civil servants in Cambodia and granting limited independence to Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam. King Sihanouk proclaimed Cambodia independent on March 13, 1945 and made Son Ngoc Thanh his foreign minister and later prime minister. The situation was overturned two months later, however, when the victorious Allies returned the French to their colonial power position.

Sensing dissent, the French organized the country's first ever elections in 1946 for a 67-member Constituent Assembly but it was powerless. This was the origin of the hollow election phenomenon in Cambodia and it is worth noting that it was also foreign-imposed. According to Cambodia's first Constitution of 1947, the country now had a multi-party democracy restricting the power of the King. Within two years King Sihanouk dissolved this government and six cabinets were formed over the following two years.[30] This set an early precedent for how democratic outcomes might be overturned at the whim of political elites.

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[29] Peddler. *Op. Cit.*, p. 13
[30] *Ibid.*, p. 14

The seeds of independence were planted and a group of Khmer rebels known as the Issarak (which had splintered from a Thai Issarak group) waged a resistance war through 1954. The Issarak fought against the French and the King and, with approximately 5000 members, they controlled much of the countryside. The Issarak were internally divided with a strong rural component having communist sentiments and following Son Ngoc Minh, and a weaker urban segment behind Son Ngoc Thanh which was anti-Communist and anti-Vietnamese.

Despite the fact that the Issarak held a third of Cambodian territory and declared this an area independent, a second sham election was held in 1951 and Issarak factions competed. Around this time a third anti-colonial faction was developing in Paris among Khmers studying there including Saloth Sar (Pol Pot), Ieng Sary and Khieu Samphan. This group would later become the dominant clique of the Khmer Rouge.

In 1953, seeking additional power, Sihanouk dissolved the government and declared martial law, aligning himself with the right-wing Lon Nol. He began a crusade for independence which France granted on November 9, 1953 at a

conference in Geneva, and the framework for what would be known as the "Sangkum System" was laid out. Sihanouk pledged to institute a free and open political system but in the end the Sangkum system was, in fact, a one-party state based around Sihanouk's Sangkum Reastr Party. The King had abdicated his throne to assume a direct political leadership role, solidifying his position in an election in 1955. The Sangkum held all 91 seats in the National Assembly. The party repeated this stellar performance in elections in 1958, 1962 and 1966.[32]

Independence satisfied many of the former Issarak but others fled to Vietnam, becoming seemingly ingrained in the struggle for communism in Indochina. Sihanouk's party failed to satisfy right wing or left wing elements in Cambodia and throughout his rule he wavered from one side of the political spectrum to the other, sending many people into armed opposition through his occasionally violent purges of those in his current disfavour. Importantly, however, Peddler notes:

> The Sangkum system had firm support in the countryside where the highly traditional peasantry had responded positively to Sihanouk's portrayal of

[31] *Ibid.*
[32] *Ibid.*, p. 16

himself as the nation's provider and protector of Buddhism.[33]

Regionally, war was heating up in neighbouring Vietnam between the communists and the American-backed South Vietnamese government. Sihanouk chose a neutral path for Cambodia in this conflict initially but later became increasingly anti-American. In 1965, Cambodia ended diplomatic relations with the United States. Cambodia scholar, Michael Vickery, has suggested that this move was based on Sihanouk's assessment that an American defeat in Vietnam was imminent and, given a Vietcong victory, Cambodia would be in a better strategic position for relations with the neighbouring communists.[34]

Land use and distribution had changed little by 1962, when 84 per cent of agricultural families were still "owners only."[35] However, peasants had developed a debt problem as Thion notes:

> Even in an egalitarian society, a little capital (was) necessary for exploitation to initiate development. Credit (was) mostly borrowed from a Chinese merchant at an exorbitant rate, from 100

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[33] *Ibid.*, p. 18
[34] As cited in Peddler. p. 19
[35] Thion, *Op. Cit.*, p. 42

per cent to 200 per cent per annum. As a result the Khmer peasantry (found) itself deeply in debt.[36]

Despite this indebtedness, the peasants only revolted if their customary possession of land by occupation was challenged. This happened in 1967, resulting in a peasant uprising and a blow to the leadership of Sihanouk. In general, Khmer peasants simply carved out their existence on the fringes of society, distant from events in the capital.

The 1967 peasant revolt fueled the leftist anti-Sihanouk cause, however, and the secret American bombing campaign of suspected Viet Cong retreats in Cambodia from 1967 through 1970[37] further improved recruitment prospects for the leftist rebels, dubbed by Sihanouk the *Khmeres Rouges*. Retreat into peasant life was no longer possible given rampant carpet bombing and, to the peasants, it seemed now that Sihanouk, their *devaraja*, had forsaken them.

The country's right-wing elements were no more happy with Sihanouk's leadership than the left-wing and in 1970, while Sihanouk was outside the country, General Lon Nol deposed him and ordered all Vietnamese troops out of Cambodia. Lon Nol

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[36] *Ibid.*, p. 42

was decidedly anti-Communist and pro-American and ruled harshly with state-of-emergency generated powers. Lon Nol's government was almost universally unpopular; Cambodia became further embroiled in the war in Vietnam. Yet another sham election was held in 1970.

Sihanouk, joined forces with his former enemies, the Khmer Rouge, in the National United Front of Kampuchea (NUFK). He called for his supporters to take up arms. A government in exile was formed and quickly recognized by China and North Vietnam. Cambodia was now fully engaged in the Cold War battlefield. While the Khmer Rouge forces were a highly factionalized group of former Issaraks, Paris-circle Marxists, pro- and anti-Vietnamese groups, Sihanouk played a unifying role and the scale of the American bombing ensured a continuing stream of recruits. In 1971, Shawcross points out, a single B-52 squadron dropped half the tonnage used in the Pacific theatre of WWII in one year.[38]

By 1975, the Khmer Rouge had sufficient strength to overthrow the Lon Nol government. The American embassy in

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[37] For a full account of this terrible campaign see Shawcross, W. Sideshow: Kissinger, Nixon and the Destruction of Cambodia. New York: Simon & Schuster. 1979.
[38] Shawcross. p. 211

Phnom Penh was evacuated on April 12, 1975 and the West began
its lengthy desertion of Cambodia. The Khmer Rouge took the
city on April 17. Shawcross writes of the Khmer Rouge during
the bombing years:

> That summer's war provides a lasting image of
> peasant boys and girls, clad in black, moving
> slowly through the mud, half-crazed with terror, as
> fighter bombers tore at them by day, and night
> after night whole seas of 750-pound bombs smashed
> all around. ...They pushed toward the enemy's
> capital, urged on by their commanders, a small
> group of hardened zealous men who had lived up to
> ten years in the isolation of the jungles, whose
> only experience of alliance was betrayal, whose
> only knowledge of war was massive retaliation.
> ...Their attack on Phnom Penh was a madness born of
> desperate isolation, which bred a dreadful hatred
> of the enemy and a contempt for the attitudes of
> the outside world.[39]

The Khmer Rouge and Genocide

Never truly peaceful, Cambodia surely had little
expectation of the social experiment under the Khmer Rouge
which resulted in the death of at least 1 million people from
1975 to 1979. The cities and towns were emptied in a forced
exodus which included the bed-ridden and the hospitalized.
Time was stopped through the destruction of clocks and
watches. All modern technology was destroyed or abandoned.
All clothing was died black to a Khmer Rouge uniform often

described as "black pajamas." Long hair was chopped. Personal identity was erased; if not, death could be the result.

Family life and religion were abolished and the Khmer population were forced to work in mass labour camps for the benefit of Angkar, the "organization", a secretive group who remained faceless and unknown to the population under their control, continuing one aspect of the historical isolation of the greater population from the political elite. Labour camps across the countryside ranged in conditions from simple overwork and starvation to death camps ruled by the child soldiers considered by the regime to be the most effectively impressed with the importance of the Angkar way of life. It was "Year Zero" and life in Cambodia would never be the same.

The events of the Khmer Rouge years are known to some degree through the movie, _The Killing Fields_, or the meticulous studies conducted by the Cambodia Genocide Centre and numerous scholars.[40] It is impossible to recount in this

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[39] _Ibid._, p. 299
[40] See Michael Vickery's Cambodia, 1975-1982 (Boston: South End Press, 1984); Ben Kiernan's The Pol Pot Regime: Race, Power and Genocide in Cambodia under the Khmer Rouge, 1975-1979 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996); and, David Chandler's The Tragedy of Cambodian History: Politics, War and Revolution since 1945 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991).

thesis the full extent of the Khmer Rouge regime and its impact on the country.

What must be noted, however, is the regime's legacy. At least 1 million dead including primarily the educated, the former urban dwellers, tens of thousands of Cambodian minorities such as the Chinese population in Phnom Penh, the Khmer Loeu or mountain tribes, the Islamic Chams, and whatever unfortunate Vietnamese settlers remained in the country in 1975. Education was halted, with the exception of Angkar[42] indoctrination classes, and modern medicinal practices ceased in favour of "self-sufficiency." The Khmer Rouge believed that in order for Cambodia to develop, the country had to de-link itself from the rest of the world, abandon technology and focus on its traditional strengths of farming, while eliminating what they saw as its traditional weaknesses — religion, immigrants and the extensive class structure.

Any sign that a person was educated or urban — understanding French, or worse yet, admitting a former profession - could mean death. Falling into the favour of the

regime was no salvation as the factionalized, paranoid group

turned on itself and put many of its former insiders to death

in torture centres, such as Tuol Sleng, where over 20,000

photos were taken and confessions forced as the regime

murdered its own. Sihanouk, nominal head of state, was placed

under house arrest in 1976 where he would remain until the

Vietnamese liberated the country in 1979. Cambodia fell

silent. Thion writes:

> You had to do what you were told immediately. These
> youngsters with guns had no patience or humanity;
> walk, work or die. You were not supposed to utter a
> single word of comment. People could disappear
> because of a single frown. You even had to pretend
> to be happy. You were frightened all the time. And
> hungry. You had to hide everything, your past, your
> knowledge, your feelings, your tastes.[42]

Khmer Rouge regime ends, Cold War continues

The Khmer Rouge regime was undone not merely by its

paranoia and autogenocidal nature but also by its rampant

hatred of the Vietnamese. While certain Khmer Rouge factions

had fought alongside the Vietnamese communists, the secret

power at the top of the regime led by Pol Pot[43] harboured a

hatred of the Vietnamese and a desire to return to Cambodia

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[41] Angkar, or the organization, is the term used to describe the Khmer Rouge leadership.

[42] Thion, *Op. Cit.*, p. xii

[43] Often called the "Pol Pot clique" or "gang of six", these regime leaders were Pol Pot, his wife Khieu Ponnary, her sister Khieu Thirith and her sister's husband Ieng Sary, Son Sen and his wife Yun Yat.

(now renamed Democratic Kampuchea) lands lost to the Vietnamese centuries earlier.

The Khmer Rouge provoked Vietnam repeatedly with border attacks, until, fed up, the much stronger Vietnamese army pushed its way into the country taking over the capital and the bulk of the territory in the early days of 1979 and sending the remaining Khmer Rouge fleeing to the Thai border.

Vietnam found Cambodia decimated. Survivors of the Khmer Rouge atrocities wandered half-starved in search of their families. The country faced a severe famine, and the Vietnamese released information and began detailing the extent of the genocide. The West, however, still embroiled in the Cold War, led by the United States, still stinging from its Vietnamese defeat, branded the Vietnamese actions an "invasion" of Cambodia. Many countries suspended all aid to Vietnam.[44] When Western journalists verified the existence of famine conditions in Cambodia, the West insisted on channeling aid through refugee camps along the Thai border rather than through the Vietnamese-backed government in Phnom Penh. This strengthened the Khmer Rouge who had retreated to

the border and robbed Vietnam of the chance of unifying the country which was starved of resources. The United States and the United Nations continued to recognize the Khmer Rouge as the legitimate government of Cambodia. Cambodia could not escape Cold War posturing.

The Hanoi government installed former Khmer Rouge cadres (including Hun Sen, Chea Sim and Heng Samrin) from an Eastern Zone of the regime, which had rebelled in 1977 during the purges of that year, into leadership positions. Vickery has suggested that Vietnam's actions:

> ...were a legitimate act of self-defence undertaken in support of one faction of the previous Cambodian regime, just as the latter, when they were in revolutionary opposition, had accepted Vietnamese and Chinese help in their war against Lon Nol's Khmer Republic and in the same way that Lon Nol had required American, Thai and republican Vietnamese aid to maintain himself after overthrowing the legally constituted government of Prince Sihanouk. With respect to the reliance on foreign support for survival and the acquisition of state power by force, the status of the PRK (People's Republic of Kampuchea) is no more invidious than that of its two most recent predecessors.[45]

Western aid was thoroughly politically driven and in the end served to perpetuate civil conflict in Cambodia, arguably, through to 1998 by reinforcing the Khmer Rouge at

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[44] Peddler. *Op. Cit..* p. 38

the Thai border camps. The Phnom Penh government was almost

completely isolated. Peddler wrote in 1989:

> As a consequence, the UN and donor countries were
> encouraged to respond with emergency assistance to
> food shortages in Cambodia, but were obstructed in
> their efforts to provide the necessary equipment
> and training to prevent such shortages in the first
> place. With little long-term development, Cambodia
> has continued to be dependent on emergency supplies
> of aid to its poor agricultural areas.[46]

Khmer Rouge hardliners remained encamped along the Thai

border well into 1998 and continued to wage war against first

the SOC and later the FUNCINPEC-CPP coalition. They traded

across the border in illegal mining and logging and amassed

considerable wealth. Many suggest that corrupt Thai officials

assisted the Khmer Rouge when they fled across the border to

outrun government troops. Until 1999, it was impossible to

say that the Khmer Rouge were truly defeated. From 1979 to

1989 they gained once more through an alliance with Sihanouk

in the Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea (CGDK).

CGDK combined Sihanouk royalists (FUNCINPEC), Khmer Rouge,

and Son Sann's Khmer People's National Liberation Front

(KPNLF) in a 1982 alliance to oppose the Vietnamese-backed

Phnom Penh government of Heng Samrin and later Hun Sen.

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[45] Vickery as quoted in Peddler. p. 38

After the Khmer Rouge withdrew from the peace process in 1993 and began opposing the UNTAC mission, they grew gradually weaker due to mass defections,[47] continuing fighting with government forces and factional infighting.[48] The February 1999 capture of Ta Mok, a Khmer Rouge Hard-line leader also known as "the butcher," however has essentially ended the Khmer Rouge resistance - finally, 20 years after Vietnam's entrance into the country.

The legacy of the Khmer Rouge regime continues today in the country's decimated infrastructure and the absence of an educated class or middle class. This is only beginning to emerge as refugees who managed to escape to the West return to live alongside those who survived the decades of turmoil.

The continuing blind devotion of the rural population to the monarchy, the ongoing factional battles, the immense rural-urban divide, and the atrocious legacy of the Khmer Rouge all have severe implications for the success of development and democratization efforts in the country. Yet,

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[46] Peddler, p. 41
[47] The largest was that of Ieng Sary, who defected with thousands of followers in 1995 and retained control over the wealthy Cambodian area of Pailin although in cooperation with the CPP government.
[48] Such as the murder of Son Sen and his entire family ordered by Pol Pot which allegedly led to the Khmer Rouge trial of Pol Pot himself in 1997.

it seems the UN and the West, motivated most probably by guilt as well as a desire to achieve a peace agreement at any cost, to the point of including the Khmer Rouge as a legitimate political actor, ignored these factors and plunged ahead with UNTAC's democratization mandate under a blind faith in the political equivalent of neo-liberalism, the new orthodoxy.

Peddler set out in 1989 to ask groups of Cambodians how they felt about the possibility of a return of the Khmer Rouge as a political actor in the country.

> I realized from what I had already heard that I was embarking on an exercise in the absurd: to put it in Western terms, how does one ask a Jew if he would like the SS to share power in Israel? To ask such a question is in itself to give offence, to provoke - unless one can somehow exude such naiveté that the respondent believes it is necessary to give a serious answer.[49]

What Peddler found was that although many people were opposed to the Hun Sen government for one reason or another, they were completely behind the regime in refusing to deal with the Khmer Rouge. Neither the United Nations nor the other peace-brokers (US, Australia, Canada, Japan, ASEAN), it seems, bothered to ask the Cambodian people this question.

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[49] Peddler, J. "A Straw Poll" in Wright. *Op. Cit.*, p.68

The Khmer Rouge were included in the accords and as such gained a certain legitimacy despite past crimes against the nation. They maintained this legitimate role as a signatory to the Accords but withdrew from the peace process prior to the elections, taking an adversarial role to UNTAC and threatening to massively disrupt the polling with violence (a threat which largely never materialized).

The case of Cambodia examined historically then throws much light on Cambodia's current political culture and the parallels between the past and the present are uncanny despite the massive disruption the society experienced under the Khmer Rouge. It is as if the country, having survived such a massive cultural blow to all that was held sacred under the Khmer Rouge, emerged with a faith that the traditional ways were far better and a conviction to reclaim those traditions, and the negative political environment that went with them, in order to recover from 1975 to 1979. The old was new again, and it was more important than ever.

CHAPTER 3 — THE STRUCTURAL REALITY OF THE CASE

Structural impediments to democratization in Cambodia are, of course, inherently tied to Cambodia's historical experience; whether to the ancient record of the Angkor Empire or to the particular brutality which characterized the Khmer Rouge regime. These impediments were clearly overlooked in the development of a model for Cambodian democratization. The model chosen was a procedurally-based implementation of a national election. Several important structures within the case however, suggest this approach has little chance of success.

First, there is the acceptance within the culture of an established social order. Derived from a history of monarchy, slavery and some of the religious tenets of Buddhism, [50] it is a fact that prohibits class consciousness which would be necessary for Marxist analysis. Thion suggests:

> The backbone of the traditional political structure was the patron-client system of dyadic relationships. It has been noted that this system, both through the effects of its functioning and the psychological categories it implies, prevents the

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[50] For example, that it is Buddha's will that suffering occurs and conducting yourself rightly in spite of it, will be rewarded in future in lives. Merit is accumulated therefore, those in the elite must have earned their way to an honoured position through past accumulated merit.

rise of a global political consciousness. Only factional groups may emerge from personal linear loyalties.[51]

There is no escape from the ingrained pecking-order of Khmer society. It has been "drummed into everyone from birth," writes David Chandler. "Cambodian proverbs and didactic literature are filled with references to the helplessness of the individual and the importance of accepting power relationships as they are."[52] It is a conservative and elitist society.[53] Few Cambodians dream of changing their culture; rather they dream of a just ruler and stability.

> We think of (a) society at war with itself, or at peace… [But Cambodians] prefer to think of themselves in terms of a King and his subjects; in terms of a spectrum of relative merit; or as people scattered over time and space, sharing recognizable ideals that sprang, in turn, from being farmers, being lowly, being Buddhists and speaking Khmer.[54]

During the primary research for this thesis I asked one man who had gone to Treng's village chief to make his case for some recently cleared (of mines) land for his family

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[51] Thion, *Op. Cit.*, p. 78

[52] As quoted in Thion, p. 78

[53] Mehmet, O. "Development in a Wartorn Society: What next in Cambodia?" Third World Quarterly. V. 18(4): 673-687. 1997.

[54] Chandler, D. A History of Cambodia. Boulder: Westview Press. 1983. p. 89.

whether he cared about the election[55]. "It doesn't matter," he said. "I just want to feed my family."[56] When I posed the same question to those gathered at a village meeting, the group of about 10 men glanced warily back and forth at each other shuffling their feet. What should they say to this strange barang,[57] who knew what her interest in the election meant. Finally the village chief said:

> Some people don't care, they just want to do their work. It only matters that the area stays peaceful. But they worry and think a lot depends on the leader. Because safety has to be 100 per cent. There are concerns but what can you do?

Sadly, this barang, like so many others, had no answer.

A second little discussed impediment to democracy of Khmer society is violence. Violence in Cambodia exceeds even its prevalence in Cambodia's political history. It is everywhere and it is low-level. It is often a matter of revenge between otherwise ordinary citizens. It is exacerbated by the predominance of weapons in the country. Violent death can occur in the most bizarre of circumstances, partially, because of that phenomenon.

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[55] For information on the methodology used in the primary research component of this thesis please see Appendix III: Methodology Notes beginning on page 143 of this text.
[56] From an informal discussion in Treng, Battambang province, on May 7, 1998.

For example, the Phnom Penh Post carries a regular column called "Police Blotter" which relates crimes across the country over the previous two weeks. Almost every item involves at least one violent death. One caught my eye. A group of friends had stopped at a popular drinking stand in Kompong Som. Many libations later some of the revellers decided it was time to go home. One man angered, started waving his gun around in order to convince the others to stay longer. The gun went off and the man killed one of his friends.[58]

In the crimes of "Police Blotter," this one is rare, it was borne of drunkenness rather than the prevailing motive, always cited, revenge. According to Thion in Cambodian society, "an open conflict has no other end than killing."[59] He suggests when the term "Khmer Rouge" is interpreted in the context of horror, the 'Rouge' denoting the regime's communist ties is only half of the definition. "There is also Khmer – meaning a way to resort to maximum violence, not so much to resolve a conflict as to suppress its root cause."[60]

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[57] Cambodian slang word for foreigner.
[58] "Police Blotter" Phnom Penh Post. May 22-June 1, 1998.
[59] Thion. *Op. Cit.*, p. 197

Aun has also pointed to this legacy of wide-spread, low-level violence:

> Everyone knows that about 90 per cent of the population of Cambodia believe in Buddhism which is a highly tolerant religion and preaches clean moral values. Therefore, why do they constantly fight and kill each other and find difficulties reconciling among themselves? Why do they resort to knives, axes and guns in resolving their petty family disputes?[61]

Aun suggests that this violence occurs as the convergence of two Cambodian traits - egoism and militarism. Egoism is for Aun the promoter of killings that result from disputes and militarism is a seige mentality which developed in Cambodians as a result of their geographic location between two larger and stronger states in Thailand and Vietnam.

Scores of Cambodians die in violence ordinary to the country every month. Revenge is easily understood and the courts are not capable of handling the scope of the killing it motivates. Further, rampant corruption means that the killers might easily buy their freedom. Violence against those of Vietnamese ancestry - some of whom have roots in Cambodia going back 400 years - is almost encouraged and these crimes disappear quickly from media attention. During

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[60] *Ibid.*
[61] Aun, *Op. Cit.*, p. 35

my first week in Cambodia, there was a massacre in a Vietnamese fishing village just one hour outside the capital. I was horrified. Those more used to the realities of Cambodia were bored. It was soon blamed on the Khmer Rouge. Twenty people died in the massacre.

This level of violence attracts little international attention compared to the violence between organized political parties. 'If it is not politically motivated it must not be part of the country's greater problems' seems to be the rationale. Killings that are apparently politically motivated are hotly discussed for weeks and arguments flow about what their occurrence suggests. A woman's body found cut literally in half, which each half discarded in different ends of the city, merits only passing curiosity, however.[62]

This violent tendency is little discussed. However, Thion points out that a Khmer psychologist has written a book about it entitled The Warrior Heritage.[63] It seems clear however, that it is easily exacerbated by the prevalence of arms in the country and warrants noting due to the now commonplace acceptance of violent death which must surely be

a legacy of having watched one's entire population descend into autogenocide during the Khmer Rouge regime.

Finally, there is the enduring loyalty to the monarchy and the often unquestioning acceptance of royal leadership. This characteristic is, by nature, a top-down observation, but it is nevertheless the strongest unifier of rural Cambodian sentiments. Today, if one visits rural areas, the most common sight is that of a picture of King Sihanouk and his wife, Monique, tacked to a tree, a bamboo hut or a market stall. These pictures, often colour drawings of a 60s-era Sihanouk, are tattered or torn but they are displayed almost universally and with apparent pride of possession. Despite the poverty of these remote areas where there is no electricity, organized sanitation or luxury of any kind, it is not uncommon to see these pictures framed.[64]

This ongoing loyalty is perhaps a retreat to the pre-Khmer Rouge era, which seems brighter and more desirable viewed through much darker memories of Khmer Rouge atrocities. It is this loyalty which accounts for the ability

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[62] An actual occurrence in May 1998.
[63] Thion referring to a book by Seanglim Bit, p. 262
[64] Personal observation from time spent in Cambodia in the spring of 1998.

of the royalist FUNCINPEC party to continue to attract large numbers of voters despite the arguable greed and incompetence of FUNCINPEC leader Prince Ranariddh and the dramatic factionalism of FUNCINPEC from 1993 to 1998.[65]

Much of this loyalty stems from the historical legacy of the Angkor empire. Thion notes that many Cambodians still hold this as the ideal of government despite its autocratic nature. He suggests that French colonialism failed to adapt the Khmer culture to their system.

> ...Colonial authorities were for the most part unable to understand, much less adapt to, the basic working concepts of the Khmer political system. They repeated fruitless efforts to build up a system of private land ownership, based on notions of Roman law, bears interesting witness to this enduring misunderstanding. The Khmers for their part, ensconced in their own culture, naturally made few efforts to grasp the rules of the new political game. They stuck very much to their traditional leaders and ways of exercising a power that was now under the control of a foreign administration. In some ways, they behaved with the deep lack of realism that has up to now been a permanent factor in Cambodian politics. For a long time, they somehow pretended that the French went about their own business, and this business was unrelated to the real power struggle.[66]

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[65] FUNCINPEC splits have been numerous and Raoul Jennar notes that former FUNCINPEC members fronted 8 new parties in the 1998 election. From Jennar, R. "The UNTAC 1993 election in the prospect of the Cambodian 1998 election." Paper delivered at the Regional Seminar on National Elections, Phnom Penh, 22-23 May 1998.

[66] Thion, *Op. Cit.*, p. 123

This disjuncture is observable in contemporary Cambodia as well. While the capital can be seen to be globalising and there are constant interactions with the international actors in Phnom Penh, awareness of these dealings is abstract at best in the majority of the countryside. Further, even in Phnom Penh, one gets the impression that the Khmers are distracted by their own internal power games to an extent which outsiders cannot really recognize or appreciate.

Therefore, there remains an inherent power structure which emanates from the monarchy, the Angkor empire legacy and Theravada Buddhism. This structure is not one of democracy, open discussion or challenge of authority. This legacy is partially cultural, due to its symbolic importance to the great bulk of Khmer society and partially political, as factionalism continues to drive internal political elites into battles amongst themselves.

While the power groups play their games, the great majority of the Cambodian population continue to live with the enduring influences of the monarchy and of their religion.

> Southeast Asian Theravada societies never had an
> institutional framework of hierarchical relations,

like the Hindu caste system, but they had other
means for building up pyramidal relations, namely
patronage and slavery, which complemented each
other. The very elaborate system of slavery has
been formally abolished by the colonial authority,
but it has left a very deep historical imprint. It
is fascinating to consider how quick and easy it
was to turn Khmer society into a system having so
much in common with the old slavery, with its
hierarchical layers of slaves.[67]

Why do these ideas retain such powerful influence?
Consider that the 85 per cent of the Cambodian population who
live in rural areas have almost no exposure with "modern"
ideas which make it difficult for those of us in Western
countries to conceive how their cultural ties retain such
prominence.

Consider that the majority are unexposed to television
or radio; education is minimal; transportation hurdles
separate villages from exchanging ideas and information;
there are no telephones; no electrical outlets; no
bookmobiles; there is no Internet. For the majority of rural
Cambodians life is simple. There are rice and fish. There's
your family. There are religion and tradition and the village
and its leadership. There is the king and there are the

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[67] *Ibid.*, p. 135 in reference to the Khmer Rouge.

stories of Angkor, the ruins of which most Khmers will dream

of but never see. These legacies continue and Thion writes:

> There are certainly internal boundaries within
> which a political reorganization is unthinkable.
> Any proposal going beyond them, calling for some
> kind of modern representative system, had better be
> forgotten as unrealistic and probably dangerous. It
> is a time now in Cambodia when, having gone through
> the most excruciating experimental reforms, the
> people can think only of one thing: the past, how
> good it was, how peaceful, how unmurderous. The
> criticisms of this past may not be forgotten, but
> they are hardly relevant. The Khmers dream of the
> advent of a *dharmaraja*, maybe without a name, but a
> just and righteous ruler, a messianic figure they
> call *nak mien bon*, a source of harmony, a fountain
> of merit. The only candidate for such a wishful
> dream would be a king. This is not a matter of any
> particular person; nobody is looking for another
> politician. On that level they are all bankrupt.
> But let us for one moment entertain a sociological
> dream, and picture the royal palace with a great
> festival going on for the crowning of a young
> descendant of Ang Duong, the royal barges on the
> river, the monks chanting, the villages rejoicing,
> the dawn of a new era.... The decision makers in
> our world do not usually indulge in dreams, even if
> they are sociological. But who cares for the dreams
> of Khmers?[68]

In terms of political culture, then, several structures

hinder the possibility of democratic institutions taking root

in Cambodia quickly. The ingrained social order or "knowing

one's place" (neak chuo) is constantly present and Khmers

reinforce it by constantly reminding each other of their

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[68] *Ibid.*, p. 135

position in the order. Violence as the first recourse when faced with opposition and there is no judicial mechanism capable of dealing with the scope of violence in the country. Essentially, Cambodia lacks rule of law in that laws are almost unenforceable under current conditions and the population recognizes this fact. Finally, the enduring loyalty to the notion of a just autocratic ruler as the epitome of government means there is little demand within the nation for more representative government and certainly no organized forms of such a demand outside the capital.

The Party System

This section of the case study is limited to developments since the close of the UNTAC mission. It is particularly concerned with the contemporary political climate. Despite the occurrence of Cambodia's second, post-conflict, national elections in July 1998 – the first to be domestically organized – it is impossible to state that Cambodia is a working democracy, even for the most optimistic of analysts. The legitimacy of the 1998 elections has been questioned by opposition parties while being endorsed by international monitors. The election was neither perfect

enough for some to accept nor poor enough for others to reject.[69]

The opposition boycotted the parliament for over three months, freezing government by denying it the ability to form a quorum. Negotiations again had to be conducted outside of Cambodia to bring the parties to the table. The Sam Rainsy party outlined their position in an October 1998 statement:

> ...the ruling party (CPP) has ignored the rules, trampled human rights and paid lip service at best to the law and the constitution. It has refused to consider political reforms that are essential to real democracy. Despite winning a majority of the vote, it demands absolute power through control of every government mechanism. Such an unbalanced, unrepresentative outcome would be a mockery in democratic principles and a tragedy for the Cambodian people.[70]

It was not the case, however, that either the Sam Rainsy Party (SRP) or the party that Rainsy split from to form his own party, FUNCINPEC, won the election and was subsequently denied power. Rather, as American electoral observer Stephen Solarz pointed out, if SRP or FUNCINPEC had been willing to

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[69] Opposition politician Sam Rainsy led the rejection of the results. His arguments rested on pre-election violence that had not been investigated. He contends the National Election Commission and the Constitutional Council were biased toward the CPP and that there was a hasty judgment on legitimacy on the part of international monitors. See Solarz, S. "Cambodia: A Reasonably Fair Election." The Washington Post. September 4, 1998.; Goble, P. "Cambodia: Analysis from Washington - Monitoring Elections, Building Democracy." Radio Free Europe. August 17, 1998.

form an alliance as a single party before the election, they would have carried enough of the vote to win.[70] Instead, continuing the tradition of factionalism in Cambodia, the largest opposition parties split the vote and the 41 per cent of the popular vote garnered by Hun Sen's CPP was sufficient to take them to power again. The factionalism of Cambodian politics was a clear element in the outcome, given that 6 of every 10 voters cast their ballots for an opposition party.[71] With 38 opposition parties to choose from, however, a majority rejection of CPP could not succeed. Factionalism clearly played an equal, if not more important, role in the outcome than any intimidation campaign conducted by CPP as the majority of voters still felt confident enough not to vote for CPP.

Over 90 per cent of registered voters turned up at the polls on July 26. The National Election Commission – regardless of its many shortcomings – succeeded in registering over 90 per cent of eligible voters and 39 of a reported 55 political parties.[73] Cambodia's proportional representation system also played a role in the outcome, as

[70] Sam Rainsy Party statement. 'Compromise is necessary for the sake of the nation." October 16. 1998.
[71] Solarz, S. "Cambodia: A Reasonably Fair Election." Washington Post. September 4. 1998. p. A25.
[72] Ibid.

Tony Kevin, a former Australian Ambassador to Cambodia, pointed out as imminent before the vote:

> ...unless the opposition parties gain huge and improbable landslide swings, Cambodia's proportional representation system makes a multi-party coalition including Hun Sen's party in a major role, the likeliest outcome.[73]

Since the CPP won only a slim majority of the total seats, had the opposition parties worked within the parliamentary framework, they could have demonstrated immense power - provided that they had avoiding fighting amongst themselves. Instead, SRP and FUNCINPEC chose a boycott, freezing the country into a state of uncertainty. The actions of the opposition are those which at this stage seem to be most anti-democratic. For them it seems that political power other than their own cannot be legitimate.

Yet, regardless of whether or not the outcome of the 1998 election was legitimate, the focus on national level elections within Cambodia, touted as peacebuilding, was misplaced. The procedurally-based model of democracy implemented by UNTAC was ill-thought out and possibly damaging to the long-term stability of the country. As Paul

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[73] *Ibid.*

Goble reported for Radio Free Europe, many Cambodians are already claiming that they will not vote again in the future, "...since the elections do not appear to make any difference in either the people in power or their lives."[75] Proponents of procedural democracy as a first step toward greater democratization often fail to recognize the damage that a hollow election inflicts on a population's understanding of democracy and desire to strive for it.

Coalition governments have now been the result of two elections from which completely different outcomes were sought. As Pierre Lizee has written, the coalitions,

> ...maintain in place the two traditional centres of gravity in Cambodian political life - the factional hierarchy and the monarchy - to the detriment of groups pressing for an expansion of the political franchise.[76]

The elections held in 1993 and 1998 were not only imperfect but possibly detrimental to the future of democracy in the country. Beyond isolated incidents (for example registration hassles or officials preventing known opposition supporters from voting) which garnered a great deal of anti-

[74] Kevin, T. "An election is a good step no matter what the outcome." The Australian. July 22, 1998.
[75] Goble, P., "Cambodia: Analysis from Washington - Monitoring Elections, Building Democracy." Radio Free Europe. August 17, 1998.
[76] Lizee, Op. Cit., p. 84

CPP media attention, the critical failing in attempting to foster democracy in Cambodia has been the failure to establish the link between accountability and democratic governance.

Among Cambodians interviewed, I found little expectation of accountability on the part of politicians, regardless of how they came to power. The failure to link accountability to democratic governance was most clear in a complete disappearance of the communal elections, which were originally scheduled for 1997, with little to no outcry domestically or internationally. In a rurally organized country like Cambodia, no one yields more actual power over the day-to-day life of the average Cambodian than his or her respective village, district and commune chiefs. Yet, despite the occurrence of two national elections, problematic as they were, these rural positions of political authority continue to be made by political appointment.[77]

Sadly, many do not realize this contradiction. For example, the countryside surrounding Battambang, Cambodia's

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[77] District level elections were repeatedly delayed. In October 1995, FUNCINPEC and the CPP struck a deal to divide these powers equally between them (Lizee, *Op. Cit.*) A similar arrangement was made in

second largest city in the northern portion of the country, is one of the most heavily mined areas of Cambodia. When land is cleared by demining organizations it is handed over to the district or village chief to be distributed to families waiting for land. Normally, these families are returning refugees from the Thai border camps. I spoke with one family who had been waiting for land for six years. Yet at Chisang minefield - despite the 18-month clearing effort by the British Mine Action Group (MAG) and the newly safe 1.72 million square metres of land available for an intended 353 families - only about a dozen families had actually relocated to the field, the bulk of which was now being used a chili plantation producing for export to Singapore.[78] The chili farm was, naturally, the possession of the local politico who had been charged with redistributing the land. Families alternatively, lived in a neighbouring, uncleared minefield.

Despite this blatant abuse of power, no action is taken against the chief in question. Who would make the complaint? To whom would they complain? What expectation of success

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regards to provincial seats of power, leaving only the commune level leadership to be elected. However, these elections were cancelled.

[78] Information on the amount of land cleared and the number of intended families was posted on a sign in front of the field by MAG when they completed the job. My guide through the minefields, a Canadian military officer attached to the Cambodia Mine Action Centre (CMAC), told me that the chilies were being exported to Singapore.

would they have? There is no mechanism in Cambodia to check this man's power; therefore, there is no expectation of accountability. The lack of an expectation of accountability makes it impossible for "democracy" in Cambodia to tackle such a problem. Chisang minefield is but one example. I discussed Chisang with the manager of the CMAC demining unit in Battambang, Mam Neang. I asked him how CMAC attempted to counter these problems of land distribution and was told that the local authority could be reported. When I asked to whom, Mam said he didn't know but that in fact only a few abuses had been reported to Phnom Penh and no action had been taken to investigate or correct them.

> This is one of the problems with government. People don't understand the structures within the government right. I only know that the person is the chief of the district. I don't know how or why he got his position.[79]

Despite his own relative authority as a regional manager within the respected Cambodia Mine Action Centre, Mam Neang felt in no position to oppose such abuses. He could not answer whether the local authorities were predominantly from one party, although other sources confirmed that was the case. He did point out, however, that the local authorities had not changed following the 1997 coup with the exception of

one man who has gone permanently missing. At the close of the interview which was translated by one of Mam's underlings with excellent English skills, Mam stated: "Please understand that some of your questions, if answered, could put me in jeopardy."

The link between democracy and accountability is not only lacking in Cambodia but a more general understanding of how and why things operate the way they do in the provinces is also absent. People simply don't ask the questions; authority is just accepted as authority. Further, these provincial authorities have the most direct effect on the daily lives of Cambodia's 85 per cent rural-based population. Despite a national democracy of questionable legitimacy, people do not have the power to stop or reverse political abuses under current structures. There have never been communal or provincial elections despite the fact that it is this level of government which has the most direct effect on Cambodians.

A broader examination of the Cambodia case prior to attempting to impose a procedural democracy upon the country

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[79] Mam Neang, manager of the CMAC demining unit in Battambang, in an interview, May 7, 1998.

would have demonstrated these difficulties. The over-ambitiousness of international efforts at fostering democracy is clear in the analysis of one of Cambodia's own scholars, Aun Porn Moniroth, a Moscow-educated economist. He wrote in 1995:

> Changes of mentality, way of life and customs, unlike changes of political or economic policies and slogans, are hard to come by over a short period of time. This difficulty is essentially the main obstacle to the development of democracy in Cambodia.[80]

Yet, the main obstacle to democratization went ignored rather than addressed as a model of democracy as universally applicable across political cultures and historical experiences was introduced to the country. The price for this haste and lack of foresight will be paid in the decreasing probability of achieving democracy in the long term if these problems are not addressed. As Aun points out:

> ...It is a dangerous assumption as well to assume that the application of such doctrine will bring about only positive outcomes without encountering difficulties and obstacles.[81]

> ...It is a big fallacy to assume that just because a country has abandoned the concept of absolutism that the culture and tradition of democracy could

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Battambang.
[80] Aun, *Op. Cit.*, p. 52
[81] *Ibid.*, p. 6

move in and replace overnight what used to be the substance of the culture for centuries.[82]

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[82] *Ibid.*, p.34

CHAPTER 4 - THE UN RESPONSE

The model of democratization which the UN attempted in Cambodia through a peacebuilding mission signified a distinct shift in the organization's policy which emerged following the end of the Cold War. The UN chose to expand the scope of peacekeeping thereby increasing its responsibility in conflict-ridden nations. Further, for the first time the UN began to directly advocate democratic government. This chapter will discuss the context to the United Nations' dramatic policy shift. It will detail how UN came to rely on the tenets of the New Orthodoxy school of political development theorists in developing its post Cold War policy. In doing so, the United Nations developed a policy for democratization within peacebuilding which was unable to recognize the importance of, or adapt policy to, the social, historical and political reality of the case as presented in the preceding two chapters. As such, the model of democratization implemented was unable to recognize Cambodia's true level of readiness for democracy.

The Context of the UN's Actions in 1993

At the United Nations' 50th anniversary celebrations in 1995, it was clear the organization was struggling to define a meaningful role for itself within a world of a dramatically different constellation than that which existed at its founding. First, the number of UN member-states had blossomed from a mere 51 in 1945 to 185 nations in 1999[33]. This growth was primarily driven by a wave of independence movements which had spread rapidly through former colonies of France, Spain, Portugal and the United Kingdom in the 1960s. Between 1945 and 1977 for example, 70 former colonies declared their independence and took their seats as full member-states in the UN.[34]

The post-colonial world presented unforeseen challenges to the world body given the large number of young countries struggling to establish themselves. Their presence also changed the balance of power in the theoretically democratic United Nations given that wealthy, large countries were now far outnumbered by the countries of the developing world.

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[33] United Nations web page. Accessed March 1999. (*www.un.org*)
[34] Waldheim, K. The Challenge of Peace. New York: Rawson, Wade Publishers. 1977.

The United States and the USSR had been the uncontested giants of this world for the first 45 years of UN history. The two superpowers aggressively peddled their mutually exclusive political and economic philosophies to other nations in an effort to achieve the greater sphere of political influence. Foreign aid was almost completely politically driven as the Western capitalist countries and the Communist countries each sought to recreate their own images in nations hungry for developmental dollars, foreign investment, technology and, all too often, military aid.

The disintegration of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s, resulting in the end of the Cold War, brought down this existing balance of power. Two ideologically polarized superpowers no longer battled for influence across the globe. Almost simultaneously, a global economic phenomenon dubbed "globalization" took considerable economic decision-making powers away from states. While geographic borders continued to contain populations, they grew increasingly porous in terms of capital, trade and economic viability.

Globalization boasted a few success stories but many more disasters in the Third World. Debt crushed many

developing countries and for help they turned to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and its sister organization, the World Bank. These institutions had fallen under the domination of followers of neo-liberal economic policy in the 1980s. Their prescriptions for developing countries were uniform despite the wide variety of countries seeking assistance. International loans were conditional upon internationally demanded reforms grouped into packages called structural adjustment programmes (SAPs). The countries were told to re-orient to export-based economies and to dramatically shrink their governmental budgets and bureaucracies.

In the absence of Cold War competition and with struggles faced by wealthy countries to adapt to the forces of globalization, foreign aid budgets shriveled worldwide. When developing nations reduced their national budgets the aftershocks were dramatic and destabilizing.

Several countries with severe political problems were engulfed in civil wars including Angola, Liberia, Haiti, Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Cambodia. These countries shared histories of post-colonial strife and many such as Angola,

Nicaragua, El Salvador and Cambodia had been Cold War battlegrounds for Soviet versus Western ideologies. All sought UN help in ending their strife. In Cambodia, war had been raging for almost 20 years when the Soviet system began to disintegrate, freeing the United Nations from its Cold War inactivity. Cambodia had remained internationally isolated during the 1980s under a Vietnamese-backed regime that the West called "an occupation"; therefore the country had avoided being integrated into the increasingly globalized economy or being subjected to a structural adjustment programme. With the beginnings of a Cambodian peace process in 1989, however, Cambodia would become a focus of international experimentation.

At the United Nations, an activist Secretary-General, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, looked to the established UN doctrine of peacekeeping as a tool for promoting peace and democracy worldwide. This was a significant expansion of the concept once defined as "a practical method of containing conflict."[35] As intrastate conflicts continued to grow in occurrence - of 96 conflicts between 1989 and 1996, 91 were intrastate in

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[35] Waldheim. *Op. Cit.*, p. 115

nature[36] - it became clear that traditional theories for analyzing conflict based on inter-state models were often inapplicable to the new civil wars, which in many cases amounted to failed states.

Peace, Development and Democracy

Boutros-Ghali wrote three reports in the 1990s outlining his vision for how the United Nations might conduct its operations within the new world order: An Agenda for Peace (1992), An Agenda for Development (1995) and An Agenda for Democratization (1996). In these reports, it is clear that the Secretary-General believed these three concepts - peace, development and democracy - were closely linked.

His objective in writing the reports, as described in the conclusion to Agenda for Democratization, was "...motivated by the evident desire for democratization internationally... (and) rooted in the conviction that peace, development and democracy are inextricably linked."[37] Boutros-Ghali acknowledged that debate continued on the best methods

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[36] DFAIT. "The Canadian Peacebuilding Initiative Strategic Framework." DFAIT website. Accessed January 1999. (www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/peacebuilding)
[37] Boutros-Ghali, B. An Agenda for Democratization. New York: United Nations Publications. 1996. p. 52-53

for implementing these goals but also that experimentation
was already taking place.

> ...At the heart of this debate will be the
> difficult questions, raised by democratization, of
> prioritization and timing among peace, development
> and democracy, questions which have been a constant
> concern throughout this paper. In some cases peace,
> development and democracy have been pursued
> simultaneously. Such was the case in Cambodia, El
> Salvador, and Mozambique, where United Nations
> efforts in support of democratization served as a
> link between conflict resolution, on the one hand,
> and reconstruction and development on the other.[38]

It is important, however, to examine the theoretical
support behind linking democratization and development within
the newly established activity of "peacebuilding," as
occurred in the missions mentioned above and in the presented
case study of Cambodia.

A Changing UN Approach

UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali first
expressed his belief in a link between peace, development and
democracy in his 1992 report, An Agenda for Peace.[39] While

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[38] *Ibid.*

[39] Agenda for Peace was written by the Secretary General at the request of the UN Security Council which was attempting to deal with growing demand for peacekeeping missions. Michael Barnett points out that the document made both the Third World and P-5 (five permanent Security Council members) nervous but "the absence of any other blueprint on the security agenda guaranteed that Agenda for Peace would shape

peacekeeping had been a long-standing UN activity, Boutros-Ghali argued in this document that the concept should be expanded to a four-phase procedure for UN involvement: preventative diplomacy, peacekeeping, peacemaking and post-conflict peacebuilding.[30]

Relevant to this thesis is the key "post-conflict peacebuilding" phase. In An Agenda for Peace, peacebuilding was defined as: "...action to identify and support structures which will tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid a relapse into conflict."[31]

Through "peacebuilding" the Secretary-General hoped "...in the largest sense, to address the deepest causes of conflict; economic despair, social injustice and political oppression."[32] He expanded on this link between peace and development in 1995's An Agenda for Development.

> The accumulation of economic despair, the lack of
> democratic means of change, have sparked or
> exacerbated violent conflict and destructive
> impulses even within relatively homogeneous
> societies. Civil conflict and strife have

the debate on the post-Cold War order." (Barnett, M. "Bringing in the New World Order: Liberalism, Legitimacy and the United Nations." World Politics. V. 49: 530. July 1997.
[30] Boutros-Ghali, B. An Agenda for Peace. New York: United Nations Publications. 1992. p. 7-8
[31] Ibid., p. 11
[32] Ibid., p. 8

increasingly become threats to international peace and profound obstacles to development.[33]

Democracy was also linked with peace and development in Agenda for Peace and it was clear that the Secretary-General contended that democratization should be a central component of UN activity and, in particular, of peacebuilding.

> There is a new requirement for technical assistance which the United Nations has an obligation to develop and provide when requested: support for the transformation of deficient national structures and capabilities, and for the strengthening of new democratic institutions. The authority of the United Nations system to act in this field would rest on the consensus that social peace is as important as strategic or political peace.[34]

Additionally, Boutros-Ghali argued:

> ...There is an obvious connection between democratic practices - such as the rule of law and transparency in decision making - and the achievement of true peace and security in any new and stable political order.[35]

And:

> The social stability needed for productive growth is nurtured by conditions in which people can readily express their will. For this, strong democratic institutions of participation are essential. Promoting such institutions means promoting the empowerment of the unorganized, the poor, the marginalized. To this end, the focus of the United Nations should be on the "field", the

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[33] Boutros-Ghali, B. An Agenda for Development. New York: United Nations Publications. 1995.
[34] An Agenda for Peace, Op. Cit., p. 33
[35] Ibid., p. 34

locations where economic, social and political decisions take effect.[36]

The concepts outlined by Boutros-Ghali delineated a clear change in UN philosophy from that which had been dominant during the Cold War. For example, on the idea that democracy should be universally applicable, former Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim had written:

> Such thinking stems from the mistaken premise that Western democracy is not merely the best form of government but the only one - and, therefore, automatically valid for all peoples, regardless of their culture, history, and standard of living. We have a tendency to forget the long and bitter events that preceded the evolution of national unity and democracy in the countries of Europe. Some Third World nations have tried to adopt Western democracy, in most cases without success. It is not a system which can function in a social order based on tribal principles or among groups that have not achieved even a minimum of national cohesion. Too often we forget that in many Third World countries independent forms of self-determination have evolved over the centuries that are better suited to the traditions of their peoples.[37]

Agenda for Peace broke with previous UN doctrine and, while the primary target issues of the report were matters of security, Boutros-Ghali argued that security and development should not be artificially separated and insisted that the

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[36] *Ibid.*, p. 46
[37] Waldheim, *Op. Cit.*, p. 102-103

optimal political arrangement for the promotion of both peace and development was democratic governance. The United Nations was not alone in their envisioning a new world order with a stronger role for the UN and a linking of security issues with other issues.

In a review article of _Agenda for Peace_ and other publications from international organizations on the post Cold War order[98] Michael Barnett noted two defining qualities. First, was an attempt to capitalize on the post Cold War optimism toward an international order maintained without threats of force. Multilateralism was seen as a tool supplanting Cold War techniques and "states should build institutions rather than militaries."[99] Secondly, many organizations advocated a strengthening of the role of the UN in matters of international security.

> But the reports under review offer an additional message – that international order is produced not only by force coupled with institutional aids but also by legitimacy. ...Because these reports were looking to the international order that would succeed the Cold War, they focus on the constitutive foundations of global politics, how the new international order would be legitimated,

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[98] Also reviewed were Our Global Neighborhood from the Commission on Global Governance (Oxford University Press, 1995), Cooperating for Peace by Gareth Evans (Unwin and Hyman, 1993) and The United Nations in its Second Half Century from the Report of the Independent Working Group on the Future of the United Nations (Ford Foundation, 1995).

[99] Barnett, _Op. Cit._, p. 526

what its specific content should be and how the recalcitrant might come to accept these principles.[100]

In short, Barnett argued that the premise of Agenda for Peace was that international relations would be transformed by modernization concepts and he argued that Agenda for Peace and the other reports were unabashed in promoting the spread of democracy.[101] As the defining piece on the post-Cold War era, Barnett points out, it had a tremendous impact on the thinking of policymakers.

The link between development and peace seems apparent. That is not to say that there is a demonstrated causal link between development and peace or lack of development and war. I concede that arguments for a conceptual linking of peace and development are incomplete, however, that such a link exists seems logically sound to me. Further, recent crude statistical data suggests that it is the countries which fall into the lowest third of the UNDP Human Development Index, where conflict is most likely to occur.[102]

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[100] Barnett, *Op. Cit.*, p. 528

[101] *Ibid.*, p. 534 & 536

[102] For example, Dan Smith found that of 79 conflict countries in 1993, 65 (or 87 per cent) were in the Third World. Smith defined a war-torn country as one in which: regular government forces are involved on at least one side; there is a central organization on both sides (or all sides in multi-party conflicts); there is some continuity (of parties, actions, issues, objectives) between clashes; and, more than 25 people are killed in year, in a conflict in which cumulative deaths total at least several hundred. By this method he

On the other hand, if development is viewed solely in terms of per capita wealth, it is certainly true that there is a correlation between prosperity and peace or, viewed in darker terms, a link between poverty and war.[103]

It seems clear that war is destructive to development. Few development initiatives can be carried out in the theatre of war. Rather, both international and domestic aid efforts are essentially limited to humanitarian relief under these conditions while long-term development initiatives are suspended. Sorensen has suggested that development efforts in the Third World should in fact be looked at from the point of view of a Hobbesian dilemma.

> Security is a precondition for development; the activities connected with development in a broad sense, such as the creation of economic wealth and a decent level of welfare for the population, are impossible if there is not enough security for the population to be able to devote their energies to these tasks. ...Predatory state elites are part of the development problem; in no way are they part of the solution; at the same time, a state which provides security and order is needed for the promotion of development. The present challenge is to turn the Hobbesian state into a better vehicle for human security and development.[104]

identified 32 war-torn countries in 1993 – including Cambodia – of which 16 were in the bottom third of the Human Development Index. See Smith, D. "War, Peace and Third World Development." UNDP Occasional Paper #16. 1994.

[103] *Ibid.*, p. 6

[104] Sorensen, G. "Development as a Hobbesian dilemma." Third World Quarterly. V. 17(5): 903-917. 1996. p. 914

Conversely, it can be argued that economic strife, social injustice and environmental degradation[105] can spark violence and/or systemic violence, either of which can grow in scale toward open warfare. As Dan Smith argues:

> Systemic violence up to and including war is a chronic development problem. A development agenda that fails to address violence is dealing with only part of the needs of Third World countries and will probably not enjoy much success.[106]

While not all students of development issues agree on this nexus between security and development issues, for this author it is increasingly apparent. Alternatively, the conceptual linking of development and democracy is much more contentious. However in the development of UN sponsored model of democracy for Cambodia, the ongoing nature of debates on such a link was largely overlooked as tenets of one particular school of though on development and democracy, the New Orthodoxy, came to dominate UN policy.

Throughout all three aforementioned UN Agendas, peacebuilding was presented as a tool for helping developing nations achieve democracy and development. However, the Agendas were much less clear about the practical dimensions

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[105] See T.H. Dixon. "Environmental Change and Violent Conflict." Scientific American. V. 268(2). February 1993.

of its application or exactly what activities peacebuilding should encompass. Despite this uncertainty, peacebuilding began to be included in various missions, typically through the conduct of elections but also in de-mining and cantonment activities. In terms of developmental initiatives which complemented peacebuilding, there seemed to be much less direct interest.

Other Peacebuilding Actors

The philosophy of peacebuilding, however, was gaining converts and perhaps, no country adopted the central philosophy of peacebuilding more than Canada. The Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) established a Peacebuilding Initiative in 1997 and the current Foreign Minister, Lloyd Axworthy, has taken an activist path for Canada on global security matters. Peacebuilding would become Canada's newest tool for development, democracy and peace as an international actor.

Within Canada, this represented another departure from past practice with the Foreign Minister taking a significant interest in the manner in which Canadian foreign aid dollars

[106] Smith, *Op. Cit.*, p. 1

were being used, something which for the past 30 years had been kept distinct from DFAIT in the hands of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) to prevent Canada's ODA policy from becoming a tool of security and trade concerns.[107] Through Axworthy's tenacity and his agreement with the new UN position on the link between development, democracy and security, peacebuilding and democratization were incorporated into Canada's ODA strategy as well. Formerly, the focus had been simply on good governance, rather than democracy.

Canada is not alone; the Scandinavian states and Britain have also adopted peacebuilding-focused ODA operating techniques in the 1990s. Alternatively, the United States has always promoted its brand of democracy in its aid policy, at least on the surface. The US has not formally adopted a peacebuilding ODA strategy but it is clear that democratization remains a driving force in its current aid policy and given that the scale of US contribution can so overshadow other Western aid commitments, the agenda set by the United States in giving aid to a country can often become one that other states follow.

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[107] Knox, P. "Axworthy's priorities fuel foreign aid feud." Globe and Mail. April 8, 1998.

There are strategic arguments as to why Western nations might link democracy, development and peace/security in their aid policies as peacebuilding does. Carol Lancaster, for example, has argued:

> ...it is not just the end of the Cold War and the re-emergence of values as an influence in US aid policies that has given rise to the current emphasis in Washington on promoting democracy abroad. It also gives a practical response to a variety of domestic political imperatives. The most urgent imperative is finding a rationale for a $15 billion a year foreign aid program...[108]

Smaller or middle powers such as Canada should not rest assured that such self-interest does not drive their foreign aid actions either. Neack has argued that middle powers such as Canada and Australia get involved in global security issues to better promote their interests at an international level.[109] According to Neack, peacekeeping activity is used as a method to gain prestige and influence internationally which would otherwise be denied to middle powers lacking economic or military clout.

[108] Lancaster as quoted in Whitehead, L. "Concerning international support for democracy in the South." in Luckham, R. and White, G. (Eds.) Democratization in the South: The Jagged Wave. Manchester: Manchester University Press. 1996.
[109] Neack, L. "UN Peacekeeping: In the Interest of the Community or Self?" Journal of Peace Research. V. 32(2): 181-196. 1995.

These motivations could surely grow in power as Canada's

current Foreign Minister draws Canadian foreign aid into the

security arena through peacebuilding initiatives. For Neack,

the danger is:

> Given Western domination of UN peacekeeping and the
> absence of the restraining politics of the Cold
> War, what guarantees are there that the West will
> not redesign UN peacekeeping to better fit its
> world management needs?[110]

The increased scope of peacebuilding activity and the new

linking of democracy, development and security/stability

would seem to exacerbate that fear. It is then increasingly

vital to examine closely what motivates Western

interventions, often under UN guise, into developing nations

and what activities are specifically undertaken. Activities

may not be as neutral as they are presented.

In terms of democratization in peacebuilding, Raoul

Jennar has pointed to a logical flaw within the UNTAC-

conducted elections of 1993. He quotes Reginald Austin of

Zimbabwe who led the electoral component of UNTAC.

> In such an election conducted by the UN itself, why
> should the UN be the judge in its own case? Why
> should it be any more naturally immune from the
> rationale of the separation of powers than any

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[110] *Ibid.*, p. 195

national election commission? The idea is based on the concept that the UN is somehow inherently neutral and a natural arbitrator.[111]

Sangmpam has argued that when the UN or any donor government takes on such a central role, it in fact becomes a political actor within the country.[112] He contends that as such the donor country is a prisoner of its own foreign policy; it is so embroiled in the process that it must do everything it can to achieve the outcome that was dictated by these foreign policy goals.

When foreign powers become internal actors, however, they also lose the clout of pushing with a common external voice as each intervening state may have goals contradictory to the others. In Cambodia, for instance, the French have a desire to strengthen past colonial ties and may favour a domestic political actor which they feel best represents the opportunity to further that desire. ASEAN nations, alternatively, due to geographic proximity and increasingly intertwined economic operations, may see stability as the most important goal in Cambodia and as such push for a political outcome which favours this development. The former

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[111] As quoted in Jennar, R. *Op. Cit.*

Special Representative of the Secretary-General to Cambodia,

Benny Widyono, has pointed to this problem as one of the most

complicating factors in peacebuilding in Cambodia which was

further exacerbated by a lack of a central authority for

peacebuilding activities.[113]

Foreign powers become so involved, according to

Sangmpam, that they will perpetuate a shallow or questionable

democracy, for example, the current Cambodian coalition

government or that of 1993, because there is no better

domestic option. As they are already involved - yet robbed of

the power to really influence the political process due to

their competing interests - they must choose the 'least bad'

option.

> Locked within the overpoliticised state, however
> small and weak, which cannot steer beyond its two
> ends - authoritarian or electoralist regimes -
> foreign powers are forced to side with internal
> overpoliticised forces in these two types of
> regimes....[114]

Therefore, he argues, they cannot obtain their double

objective of imposing stability and democracy in the state.

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[112] Sangmpam, S.N. "The overpoliticised state and international politics: Nicaragua, Haiti, Cambodia and Togo." Third World Quarterly. V. 16(4): 619-641. 1995.

[113] Widyono, B. "Post Conflict Peace Building in the Cambodia Context. The Cambodian Journal of International Affairs. V. 1(1): 9-20. 1996.

Thus, Western actors, and now the UN, have become involved in peacebuilding and use their aid policies as a way to continue to hold sway in world affairs and to justify their spending in a world that now lacks an "immediate external threat." Whitehead suggests that similar thinking underlies noticeable shifts in policy at international financial institutions.[114] Further, he points out:

> In contrast with the IFIs, which are (theoretically) expected to be politically neutral, the political organs of the United Nations are not as much constrained in the same way. Since the end of the Cold War lifted the prospect of great-power vetoes in the Security Council, the UN Secretariat has become more ambitious in promoting political initiatives (backed up by the possibility of sanctions or even the use of force) to advance selected political objectives in the South. Generally, the emphasis has been on peacekeeping (or more ambitiously on peacebuilding) ... rather than on democracy promotion, per se. Nevertheless, the holding of fair elections under international supervision has become an important ingredient in various UN peacebuilding programmes; indeed the term peacebuilding implies the provision of international support for representative institutions. ...However, the UN has inevitably tended to become drawn into those conflict-ridden parts of the South, where the prospects for sustained democratization are least promising....[115]

The inclusion of democratization activities in peacebuilding, therefore, has broken with past practice of

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[114] Sangmpam, *Op Cit.*, p. 638
[115] Whitehead, *Op. Cit.*, p. 248

the United Nations and of donor nations such as Canada while bringing them closer in line with American aid policy and practice. Integral to the UN characterization of itself and of the world order as articulated in the three Agendas is a neo-liberal, or New Orthodoxy, agenda. As Barnett points out: "The UN, they suggest, can shape state practices by establishing, articulating and transmitting norms that define proper state behaviour."[117] This is exactly what the UN tried to do in Cambodia but its scope of what was "acceptable and proper behaviour" completely neglected the Cambodian reality. This limited scope was articulated by the New Orthodoxy approach to political development which stressed a procedurally-based democratization process as applicable to any country.

Additionally, by taking a leading role in the promotion of democracy within peacebuilding, the UN through Agenda for Peace had a tremendous impact on other actors. As Barnett states, the UN presented itself as "an agent of normative integration that can increase the number of actors who identify with and uphold the values of a liberal

[116] *Ibid.*, p. 261
[117] Barnett, *Op. Cit.*, p. 529

international order."[118] The UN thus became a proponent of New Orthodoxy theory and perpetuated the theory to other actors as <u>Agenda for Peace</u> enjoyed its status as the defining document of the post Cold War international order.

The 'Bias' of the UN Formula

As the UN and other actors adopted the tenets of New Orthodoxy theory, conditionality of aid was increasingly based upon progress toward democracy. Millions of dollars in international aid currently flow from Western to developing nations earmarked for democratization. For example, in 1992 alone, USAID spent $250 million in direct support of democratization processes.[119] In 1995, the UN Development Programme (UNDP) dedicated one fifth of its $1.9 billion dollar budget to democratization.[120]

The European Union, which evaluates aid recipients on a case-by-case basis, committed $11.5 million to Cambodia's July 1998 election,[121] despite the fact that a coup in July of 1997 prematurely ended Cambodia's first attempt at

[118] *Ibid.*, p. 529
[119] Golub, S. "Assessing and Enhancing the Impact of Democratic Development Projects: A Practitioner's Perspective." <u>Studies in Contemporary International Development</u>. 1994. V. 28(1): 57.
[120] <u>UNDP website</u>. Accessed March 1998. (*www.undp.org/toppages/discover/distance.htm*)

peacebuilding through democratization. The United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (1991-1993) at almost $2 billion was the largest peacekeeping mission the United Nations had ever undertaken. Yet, its activities, despite being later designated as peacebuilding, consisted almost entirely of organizing and conducting the nation's first post-conflict elections and pulling out of the country immediately after the vote.

It is clear that post-conflict states, such as Cambodia, require massive amounts of development assistance. Cambodia, Angola, Liberia, Haiti are among the poorest nations in the world (of 174 countries evaluated in the UNDP's 1998 Human Development Report Cambodia ranked 140th, Angola 156th and Haiti 159th)[122] and the quality of life of their citizens closely approaches Hobbes' description of life in the state of nature: "nasty, brutish and short." Civil wars in these nations have decimated their infrastructures, economies, human resources and social fabric.

[121] Associated Press. "European Union grants election aid." Cambodia Newswire. January 15. 1998. (*www.foxnews.com/news/wires2*)
[122] UNDP. Human Development Report 1998. New York: UN Publications. 1998.

What is not clear is why Western governments, led as I have outlined by the United Nations 1990s position as expressed in the three Agendas, have assumed that initiating or fostering electoral processes in these states is either equivalent to democracy, or, that development activities should be conditional upon it. One might assume that there is clear theoretical support or empirical evidence to suggest that achieving a democratic society is the most conducive form of government to the overall development of any society.

However, that assumption would be wrong. No clear relationship between development and democracy has been established and the debate on this issue continues. In his examination of empirically-based studies of the relationship between democracy and development, Mick Moore observed that the number of studies which concluded that democracy facilitated development was exactly equal to the number of studies which concluded that a certain level of economic development was needed in order for democracy to be successful – a dead tie.[123] Helliwell, in a study of 125 countries between 1960 and 1985 concluded "...it is still not

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[123] Moore, M. "Is democracy rooted in material prosperity?" in Luckham, R. and G. White (Eds.) Democratization in the South: A Jagged Wave. Manchester: Manchester University Press. 1996. p. 48

possible to identify any systematic net effects of democracy on subsequent economic growth."[124]

In theoretical terms, there are different schools of thought on the relationship between development and democracy. This section of the thesis will outline the debate on this relationship from the early modernization school assumptions through to the pressing contemporary theoretical debates between neo-liberal conceptions of the relationship (referred to in this thesis as the "new orthodoxy") and the critiques which have developed from the political economy school of scholars.

Not all commentators on the relationship between peacebuilding and democratization fall easily into one of the categories I will outline. However, there are clear breaks in theory and practice between those I have attributed to one school or another and the debates on which these theorists comment cover most of the contentious issues surrounding the democratization process in current academic circles.

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[124] Helliwell, J.F. "Empirical Linkages between Democracy and Economic Growth." British Journal of Political Science. 1994. V. 24(2): 225 - 249.

Modernization and Asian Values

During the 1960s, the relationship between democracy and development was thought to be quite clear - it was assumed that democracy was the outcome of development, not a concurrent or facilitating process. This opinion centred on the work of such classic theorists as Seymour Lipset and Samuel Huntington[125]. While each of these theorists (at one point) agreed that democracy was a desirable goal, they believed that in order for it to be achieved a certain level of economic development was required. Therefore, their prescriptions for the Third World agreed with the modernization theorists studying development in that era. These theorists argued that developing nations should pursue rapid industrialization in order to achieve the "correct" level of economic development, which would allow the society to move forward into democratic governance.

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[125] Lipset's arguments were two-fold. First that modernization may be the primary reason that incidence of democracy is related to economic development. And secondly, even if a democracy emerges independently it is more likely to be sustained in a wealthier, developed nation. (Lipset, S.M. "Some Social Requisites of Democracy: Economic Development and Political Legitimacy." American Political Science Review. 1959. V. 53: 69 - 105.) Huntington argued in 1991 that a medium level of economic development - between $2000 and $3000 US GDP per capita - was required for democratic transition. (Huntington, S.P. The Third Wave: Democracy in the Late Twentieth Century. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press. 1991.) This is different from earlier arguments Huntington made in Political Order in Changing Societies (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968) where he had argued that democratization could be dangerous in countries that were industrializing or developing economically.

Until countries had achieved this desirable level of development, the societies of the Third World were believed to be better off under authoritarian regimes which could more easily rally support around national goals, even if through repressive means. Further, authoritarian regimes were believed to be effective stabilizers of the national situation and, therefore, worthy of support under the rationale of strategic, geo-political security concerns, or, in the effort to prevent as many countries as possible from falling into the Soviet sphere of influence. The East-West conflict is key to understanding support of these theorists in the First World.

However, it should be noted that these earlier theorists did not propose a positive relationship between economic modernization and peace or stability. Rather both Lipset and Huntington, and also Mancur Olson,[126] argued that rapid growth could lead to instability and conflict rather than peace and democracy.

Modernization theories were supported by the Western model where:

> Liberal democratic institutions, declining social inequalities, a flourishing civil society, a widening political consensus, a secular public and bureaucratic ideology and the extension of civil and human rights have seldom preceded economic development based on industrialization and urbanization.[127]

Questions about the Western model on the basis of dependency theory and/or environmental unsustainability were only beginning to surface during the heyday of support for modernization. Higott contends that while neo-Marxist and political economy scholars were gaining influence in sociology and economics in the late 1960's, the work of writers like Baran, Andre Gunder Frank, Samir Amin and Immanuel Wallerstein[128] had little influence on the mainstream theorists of political development who continued to cling to modernization concepts arising from the mainstream of American political science.[129]

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[126] Olson, M. Jr. "Rapid Growth as a Destabilizing Force." Journal of Economic History. V. 23(4): 529-559. December 1963.

[127] Leftwich, A. "Governance, democracy and development in the Third World." Third World Quarterly. 1993. V. 14(3): 612.

[128] See for example, Paul Baran, The Political Economy of Growth (Prometheus Paper Back, 1957); Andre Gunder Frank, Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America: historical studies of Chile and Brazil (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1967); Samir Amin's L'accumulation a l'echelle mondiale; critique de la theorie de sous-developpement (Dakar: IFAN, 1970); and Immanuel Wallerstein, World Inequality: Origins and Perspectives on the World System (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1975).

[129] Higott, R.A. Political Development Theory. London: Croom Helm. 1983.

Przeworski and Limongi revisited modernization theory in a 1997 World Politics article.[130] They found some support for the earlier premises but also new limits.

> In fact, transitions are increasingly likely as per capita income of dictatorships rises but only until it reaches a level of about $6000. Above that, dictatorships become more stable as countries become more affluent.[131]

Thus, dictatorships succeeded when per capita income was below $1000, became less stable in the $1001 to $4000 range, experienced dramatic instability in the $4001 to $6000 range and after $6000 could stabilize. This finding seemed to coincide with Huntington's early work on modernization arguing that dictatorships spell out a bell-shaped pattern of instability.[132] They concluded, however, that there was no reason to believe that economic development breeds democracy, borrowing O'Donnell's phrase, "Lipset's optimistic equation."[133]

Remnants of the modernization argument survive today, primarily, among the New Orthodoxy group of theorists who will be discussed later, although they have lost many of

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[130] Przeworski, A. and F. Limongi. "Modernization: Theories and Facts." World Politics. V. 49: 155-183. January 1997.
[131] *Ibid.*, p. 159
[132] Huntington, S. Political Order in Changing Societies. New Haven: Yale University Press. 1968. p. 3.
[133] Przeworski and Limongi. *Op. Cit.*, p. 167.

their Cold War components and now rest solely on economic arguments. That is not to say, however, that these theories have not remained highly ideological. However, it may be fair to say that some traces of modernization theory are present in most theories of political development. Chiefly, conditions of some sort (but perhaps not purely economical conditions) in developing nations are often absent which hamper the democratization process. Depending on the country, and the theory, these conditions vary but may include education levels, leadership characteristics, or as in Cambodia's case, a lack of transparency and accountability in the political system and a lack of understanding of the general philosophical basis for democracy amongst the greater population, which is tied to the Khmer Rouge legacy, the dominant Cambodian political model of factionalism, the rural-urban divide and education levels in the country.

An additional ghost of modernization theory can be seen in the "Asian Values" debates on the relationship between democracy and development. Many autocratic Asian governments have claimed that this regime type is essential to maintaining the unity of the country behind their crucially important economic development goals. There are variations,

however, among those whose theories have been grouped together under Asian Values.

Some Asian politicians[134] have alleged that the highly liberalized societies of the West based on enshrined individual rights have led to high crime rates, broken families, and rampant drug use. They point to the shortcomings of Western societies and argue that many Asian societies are willing to forego some individual rights toward greater public safety and societal stability. These arguments are intended to challenge the parameters of the Western model's success. The West can claim successive democratic governments, but has difficulty arguing societal stability given crime rates, family breakdowns and general loss of tradition, goes the Asian Values argument.

Ng, however, has highlighted the differences among proponents of Asian Values on the exact interaction of culture and democracy. Asian culture, she points out, should not preclude democracy as some proponents suggest. Rather, it is fair to criticize the Western model of democracy from an Asian Values standpoint and to adopt democracy in ways which

make it more amenable to an Asian culture without necessarily making that modified democracy invalid. Further, she points out that timing and method of implementation are crucial to democracy. She points to the slow, well-considered and largely indigenously-driven democratization of Hong Kong as a success story which might have had an alternate outcome had the colonial British chosen to attempt to thrust democracy upon Hong Kong themselves.[135] However, one must note that Hong Kong had significant economic clout to have its positions heard by both Britain and China and significant economic progress and prosperity among its population to successfully make a sophisticated regime change on its own momentum.

Curtis has argued that in the case of most East Asian transitions to democracy, rather than economic development, leadership was the key ingredient.[136] Whether leaders were favourable to or against democratic transition had a huge impact on which countries transformed, he argues, pointing to South Korea's Roh Tae Woo as an example of playing a favourable role and Singapore's Lee Kuan Yew as opposing.

[134] See Mahbubani, J., "The Pacific Way," Foreign Affairs, V. 74(1): 100-112, 1995; and, Zakaria, F., "Culture is Destiny: A Conversation with Lee Kwan Yew," Foreign Affairs, V. 73. April 1994.

[135] Ng, Margaret. "Why Asia Needs Democracy." Journal of Democracy. V. 8(2):10-23. 1997.

[136] Curtis, G. "A Recipe for Democratic Development." Journal of Democracy. V. 8(3): 1997.

> The lesson offered by the East Asian experience
> about the importance of leadership is not that
> countries get democracy because leaders favor it.
> As important as leadership 'pacts' may be in the
> democratization process, they are hardly sufficient
> for the establishment of democracy. But what is
> beyond dispute, as the regions history clearly
> shows, is that countries do not get democracy
> unless leaders actively support it.[137]

He adds: "The empirical evidence from East Asia lends strong support to the view that democratization is facilitated, though not caused by economic growth."[138]

In spite of a worldwide trend toward democratization since the end of the Cold War, a few Asian governments have sustained the aforementioned arguments not only because they have convincing elements but also because of the high economic growth rates experienced in certain parts of Asia. Thompson suggests that governments such as those of Singapore, Indonesia and Malaysia "confounded their Western critics by taking advantage of the double edged nature of international legitimacy which emphasizes both democracy and development."[139] These Southeast Asian governments avoided the conditionality loop and continued to receive large amounts of foreign aid as a result of their high growth rates. Further,

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[137] *Ibid.*
[138] *Ibid.*
[139] Thompson, M.R. "The limits of democratization in ASEAN." Third World Quarterly. V. 14(3): 481.

if a Western government did put pressure on one of these

governments for change as the Dutch government did on

Indonesia in 1992, the aid relationship was simply

terminated. Rather than being condemned, this action was

actually rewarded with an increase in overall aid to

Indonesia. According to Thompson:

> The explanation for this compromising stance by the
> West appears to be that foreign investment in
> Indonesia quadrupled between 1987 and 1990. The
> reverse calculation lay behind France's sudden
> switch from protector to terminator of African
> francophone dictatorships; French investment in
> Sub-Saharan Africa dropped from an inflow of about
> $1 billion to an outflow of $248 million by 1998.[140]

However, the more recent Asian financial crisis may

increase pressure on these nations to democratize. Indonesia,

for example, experienced mass public demonstrations in

support of democratization and reform. Whether these

demonstrations were the result of the economic downturn in

Southeast Asia, or the increased expectations of the

population, or a genuine expression of a will to democracy

will undoubtedly be vigorously debated over the next decade

or so.

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[140] *Ibid.*, p. 480

Without the additional clout created by their spectacular growth rates of the past 15 years, the Asian Values style argument of old modernization principles may lose its legitimacy internationally. This is not, however, a sufficient event to suggest an inherent superiority in the conditional approach to aid, development and democratization. Surely, the success of the Asian countries in designing their own models of government, increasing growth and decreasing income disparity within their nations suggests the opposite, despite the recent downturn in the area's economic situation.

Neo-Liberal Bandwagon

Leftwich suggests that the current emphasis on democratization processes in the ODA strategies of Western countries and the political conditionality they now stress should accompany aid (even within a post-conflict situation) can be directly traced to the ascendance of the neo-liberal development agenda and the structural adjustment programmes which bound the developing countries into this dominant paradigm. The political aspect that arises from paradigm is what Leftwich has termed the "New Orthodoxy."

> The new orthodoxy assumes that there are no
> inherent tensions, conflicts or difficult trade-
> offs over time between the various goals of
> development – such as growth, democracy, stability,

equity and autonomy. It appears therefore to assume that no special pre-conditions are necessary for stable democracy and that it can (and should) be instituted at almost any stage in the developmental process of any society, where it will enhance, not hinder, further development.[141]

This new orthodoxy had its starting point in the triumphalism which followed the fall of the Berlin Wall and was characterized by such writings as Francis Fukuyama's <u>The End of History</u>. Fukuyama argued that the Hegelian concept of dialectical history had reached a completion point with the demise of the Soviet Union. Western liberal democracy had been proven correct and the Hegelian concept of political man was no longer necessary; it was the end of history as we had understood it as an evolving and competing narrative.[142]

Leftwich argues that the dramatic ascendancy of the new orthodoxy reflects its status as the natural, political derivative of neo-liberal economic policies which came to dominate the development agenda in the 1980s. The economic virtues of neo-liberalism were espoused by such theorists as Deepak Lal and Anne Kreuger and were whole-heartedly adopted by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank

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[141] Leftwich, *Op. Cit.*, p. 605

[142] Fukuyama, F. <u>The End of History and the Last Man</u>. New York: The Free Press. 1992.

and then exported "conditionally" to developing nations through SAPs.

These SAPs insisted on a variety of structural changes designed to re-orient developing countries into competitive, open market, export-oriented economies. Policies encouraged and instituted included: deregulation and privatization of industry, slashing government expenditures (usually through dismissing much of large bureaucracies but also through extremely harmful cuts to social programmes), eliminating tariffs and subsidies (even on foodstuffs) and re-orienting from import-substitution economic strategies to export-based economies. Although it was not expressly part of the paradigm, these changes had widespread effects on social relations and social organization within the affected, developing nations. Some argued that the negative social effects of SAPs (such as high unemployment, plummeting currencies, inflation) in fact indicated the necessity of a strong state with a clear definition of power, as opposed to a fragile, fledgling democracy.[143] However, in the enthusiasm of the end of the Cold War which some, like Fukuyama, took as

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[143] See J. Nelson's Fragile Coalitions or R. Skylar and C.S. Whitaker, African Politics and the Problems of Development, for example.

proof of the veracity of neo-liberal theory, the "new orthodoxy" of political development gained ground.

As individual economic and political freedom is central to neo-liberal doctrine, there was an associated philosophical rationale that what was best for markets (i.e. individual enterprise) was also appropriate to the political arena (i.e. a political model based on individualism). Thus, as Leftwich stresses, neo-liberalism:

> ...assumes that democratic politics are also a necessary condition for a thriving free market economy and vice versa, for the two are "inextricably linked with each other."[144]

Further, stressing the importance of democratic government gave promoters of neo-liberal economic policies a convenient "out" from the increasing evidence that their policies were not working, but rather, were having horrendous effects on the populations of developing countries. Leftwich writes:

> Thus neo-liberal developmentalists claim that both poor records of economic growth and failures in adjustment programmes have often been the direct consequence of political factors such as authoritarian rule or deficient democratic

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[144] Leftwich. *Op. Cit.*, p. 609. Note the phrasing is identical to that used in Agenda for Democratization, Op. Cit.

practice, arising from excessive state or political
involvement in economy and society.[145]

More importantly, however, the new orthodoxy school's
prescriptions have come to dominate policy - not solely in
Western ODA strategy but also in the United Nations as is
evidenced by the content of the three Agendas discussed
earlier. However, while all subscribers to neo-liberal
economic theory agree with the "new orthodoxy," many such as
Huntington, Fareed Zakaria and Mancur Olson[146] continue to
point to the potentially destabilizing effects of "premature
democracy" and its betrayal of the supposedly inherent
democratic promise. While these authors do not fall in the
"new orthodoxy" school precisely, I have grouped them with
the neo-liberals due to a common emphasis on the desirability
of neo-liberal economic policies and overall commitment to a
Western-based model of development, which clearly breaks from
both the Asian Values arguments and the next school of
thought I will examine, the political economy school.

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[145] *Ibid.*, p. 609
[146] See Huntington, S.P. The Third Wave: Democracy in the late Twentieth Century. Norman: University
of Oklahoma Press. 1991; Zakaria, F. "The Rise of Illiberal Democracy." Foreign Affairs. V. 76(6): 22-39.
1997; and, Olson, M. "Dictatorship, Democracy and Development." American Political Science Review.
V. 87(3): 567-576. 1993.

Having outlined the theoretical underpinnings to the UN's formula for peacebuilding and democratization in Cambodia, it is apparent that while Modernization, Asian Values and New Orthodoxy tenets are important to understanding democratization and the record of melding it into the "peacebuilding" process in post-conflict states, these theories offer little evidence for the "naturally supportive" relationship between democracy and development - either empirically of theoretically - that the new orthodoxy in practice suggests. Much as structural adjustment programmes went blindly ahead spurred on by conditionality of aid, now the West seems poised to make the same mistakes in the political arena.

For example, Brautigam has argued that aid transfers can prevent accountability:

> ...When aid transfers reach ten per cent or more of total GNP (as they did for at least 24 countries in 1989) and exceed total current revenue from other sources, those with the loudest single voice on revenue and expenditure issues are international lending agencies. Accountability thus becomes a matter not between government and its producers but between government and donors.[147]

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[147] Brautigam. L. "Governance, Economy and Foreign Aid." Studies in Comparative Development. V.27(3): 3-25. 1992. p. 11

She argues that donors must push governments to be accountable to their citizens rather than making aid conditional on democracy.

White has also identified an accountability dilemma related to aid.

> Democratic accountability requires an irreducible amount of national sovereignty, and if a government, democratic or otherwise is seen to be at the beck and call of foreign forces, or is reduced to powerlessness by constraints imposed by those forces, the foundations of democratic accountability are put in jeopardy.[148]

With aid accounting for at least half of the government's budget in Cambodia,[149] both these points merit noting.

Peacebuilding was intended to provide new hope to states emerging from civil conflict that efforts to rebuild their nations would be met with international aid and support. However, in practice aid has been conditional upon success in creating a procedural democracy, or electoralist regime. The result of peacebuilding under these conditions in Cambodia, has been continuing governmental infighting and disillusionment among the population.

The UN clearly fell under the influence of the New Orthodoxy school of political development theorists in developing a model of democratization for Cambodia. These theorists did not consider the ground realities of target countries as important to the probability of success of democratization efforts. Had policymakers been listening to other theories of political development however, the model incorporated into peacebuilding in Cambodia might have been completely different. I will now turn the discussion to the political economy paradigm. Its large-scale approach to democratization best clarifies the field observations and analysis which form the backbone of this thesis. The political economy perspective also offers mechanisms for rethinking appropriate activities to building a foundation for eventual democracy in Cambodia, while ensuring that critical development needs are not neglected and that the stability of the nation is not further jeopardized.

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[148] White, *Op. Cit.*
[149] Lizee, P. "Cambodia in 1996." Asian Survey. V. 37(1): 65-71. 1997.

Chapter 5 — The Alternative

The Political Economy Perspective

The first point that differentiates these theorists from those previously outlined, is that they favour a broader definition of "democratization." While their definition is distinct from those of modernization and neo-liberal schools it is rarely clearly distinguished. For both modernization and neo-liberal theorists democratization is seen as a purely historical process; a transition phase from autocratic government to democratic government characterized by electoral competitions and (usually) a multi-party system. This definition places heavy importance on the procedures which are necessary for democracy (i.e. elections) as opposed to democracy's developmental importance to a society (i.e. by allowing citizens a voice in their own affairs and encouraging dialogue among competing interests).

Qadir, Clapham and Gills argue that such procedural definitions of democracy amount only to political liberalization; implying political change controlled in a

top-down fashion in order to preserve the status quo[150], rather than true democratization. While some argue this can occasionally lead to more meaningful political change in the long run, in essence, it is a minimalistic, or electoralist, conception of democracy.

Alternatively, for the political economy theorists, democratization involves a large-scale process of social change. According to Qadir, Clapham and Gills:

> Genuine democratization entails a shift in the basis of state power - within national units often artificially created by colonialism - from dominant elites who almost invariably have an interest in state preservation, to popular forces for whom the national state must serve as a focus for their own identities and as a source of material needs. Democratization represents the crisis of the state.[151]

Further, they argue democratization must address the nature of relations between national-level political processes and global economic power which currently seems beyond the reach of any state government and, inherently, undemocratic.

Despite a common commitment to a large-scale approach to political change, this school is cautious about making broad

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[150] Qadir, S. Clapham, C. and B. Gills. "Sustainable Democracy: Formalism vs. Substance." Third World Quarterly. V. 14(3): 416. 1993.
[151] *Ibid.*, p. 418

generalizations about political development across regions and prefers to focus on each transitional nation's socio-historical specificity. For the political economists true democratization within developing nations most often results from "popular discontent with the repressive nature of illegitimate authoritarian or military regimes," yet, "there does not seem to be a clear or consistent pattern in the relationship between economic performance and popular rebellion against the regime."[152]

There are varying degrees of commitment to this approach to democratization among the authors I have grouped together within this school.[153] The key commonality is the manner in which democratization is defined and the rejection of the stance that there is a discernible pattern in the relationship between successful democratization and economic development levels. Alternatively, political economists argue that political liberalization, economic development, and democratization form a spectrum of performance across a wide variety of both successful and unsuccessful examples. (That

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[152] *Ibid.,* p. 419

[153] Included among the political economy school for the purposes of this thesis are David Beetham, Catherine Boone, Guillermo O'Donnell, Phillippe Schmitter, Susan Golub, Robin Luckham, S. Qadir, C. Clapham and Stephen Gill as well as others writing for Third World Quarterly such as S. Sangmpam, G. Sorensen, and M.R. Thompson. Of particular usefulness to me in defining this school has been the work

is, while economic development may lay a foundation for democracy in one case, it may just as easily not in another. There is an overall rejection of the notion that a specific, universally applicable pattern exists.)

Nor do the theorists interpret current Western practices of political conditionality on aid as benign. Qadir, Clapham and Gills write with regards to conditionality:

> This raises the question of the emerging character of interventionism in the 1990s, and whether democratization is already fast becoming a "weapon" of the West's foreign policy. It also raises the related question of the nature of the link between the economic policies of the West toward the Third World, and especially of such agencies as the IMF and the World Bank and the trend toward democratization.[154]

However, Qadir, Clapham and Gills suggest that despite the problems, even the minimalistic approaches to democratization can have some positive aspects, in some cases providing a desirable alternative to "the arbitrariness of unaccountable power and systemic repression." However, this small progress can only be achieved in transitional nations which already possess certain characteristics including

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of Adrian Leftwich. Full citations for the above listed authors can be found in the bibliography of this thesis.

[154] *Ibid.*, p. 420

established rule of law, freedom of the media, protection of new political parties and popular organizations, and succession of at least two democratic governments. Certainly many developing countries fail to meet these criteria and in post-conflict states such as Cambodia they are most noticeably absent. Without these, political economists suggest, democratization will be plagued by reversal, failure and little socio-economic reform.

Some theorists within this school such as Philippe Schmitter and Guillermo O'Donnell have attempted to meld development theories based on the dependency school in economics to concepts of democracy as a foundation for a central philosophy of the political economy school which stresses a broader understanding of social relations, global economic structures and the importance of equity as central tenets.[155] This is an innovative, yet oft-neglected strategy, despite prolific writing on behalf of its main proponents. O'Donnell suggests that it was the emergence of democracies in the more successful Latin American countries (e.g. Chile, Argentina) which "...exploded the optimistic equation

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[155] See O'Donnell, G., Schmitter, P.C. article in L. Whitehead (Eds). Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Prospects for Democracy. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press. 1986.

according to which democracy was a natural concomitant of development."[156]

O' Donnell and Schmitter argue that democratization must encompass the development of more egalitarian social relations which can best be promoted through bottom-up programmes of political participation. Here, democracy would represent the true will of the people as opposed to a facade used by electoralist regimes where the ballot is equated with democracy and then used as evidence to support the legitimization of governments who revert to rule by decree or simply disregard their democratic mandate; as a result operating as "illiberal democracies".[157]

Alternatively, Schmitter and O' Donnell argue, democratization as it is being practiced in some transitional nations and the conditionality which is attached to it, are doomed to failure and may in fact contain dangerous illusions. Schmitter suggests that not least among these dangers is that the absence of a legitimate alternative to liberal democracy (in geo-political reality) will generate

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[156] O'Donnell as quoted in Levine, D.H. "Paradigm Lost: Dependence to Democracy." World Politics. V. 40(3): 380. 1988.

strains of resentment.[158] Since no other form of government will be accepted internationally, and as the legitimacy of "government" is essentially determined by Western countries evaluating the quality of democracy in non-Western countries, non-Western countries will have much cause for resentment and basis for charges of cultural bias in the evaluations of legitimacy. Schmitter argues that democracy's status as "the only game in town" will have a causal effect on coming reverse waves of democracy.[159]

Another persistent danger is that democracy will lose popular ideological appeal due to the mistreatment of many of its central classical ideals - rule of law, accountability, and Mill's human developmental aspects of democracy. This abuse will discredit democracy as a form of government in countries, such as Cambodia, where it has been unsuccessfully imposed. We ignore the intrinsic and extrinsic dilemmas to democracy at our own peril, Schmitter and O'Donnell suggest, as doing so may eventually lead once again to a world where

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[157] For a full discussion of illiberal democracy see Fareed Zakaria, "The Rise of Illiberal Democracy." Foreign Affairs. November/December 1997.

[158] Schmitter, P.C. "Dangers and Dilemmas of Democracy." Journal of Democracy. V. 5(2): 57-74.

[159] Schmitter draws on Huntington's theory of waves of democracy where progress toward democracy is made over a historical period (i.e. the early 20th century) only to be followed by a reverse wave against democracy (i.e. the rise of fascism in the 1930s and 1940s) which will in turn be followed by another positive wave.

authoritarian regimes are the norm and democracies, the exception.

Schmitter, O'Donnell and Leftwich have outlined some conditions upon which the success of democratization is dependent. These include:

1) the state must have effective geographical, constitutional and political legitimacy;

2) there must be a secure and broadly-based consensus on the rules of the political game;

3) governments must exercise restraint in the extent and pace of policy change undertaken;

4) there should be a rich and pluralistic civil society;

5) there should be no serious threat to the authority and power of the state;

6) the state should have the power to modify capitalism and make it compatible with democracy in the country; and,

7) internal security must be achieved by the recognition that the government possesses the only legitimate use of force within its borders.

These are difficult conditions for most developing countries, but particularly difficult for post-conflict

societies to achieve. Cambodia, for example only meets conditions one and perhaps five, but this has only developed since the capture of Ta Mok effectively ended the Khmer Rouge insurgency. However, one might argue that there is a constant threat to the authority and power of the state in Cambodia posed by the financial dependence on foreign aid the constant threat that it might be withdrawn. Yet, there is little recognition of these conditions or the implications of their absence in current practice of democratization under the tenets of the "new orthodoxy."

One area of contention between the authors within political economy is that some openly dismiss market-capitalism while others see it as a necessary evil. However, for the purposes of this thesis, the debate will be confined to the relationship and manner in which democracy and development interact within a system of global capitalism. Other debates are outside the scope of this research.[160]

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[160] In the "Illusion of Exceptionalism" (Journal of Democracy. V. 8(3): 147), Francis Fukuyama points out that the exclusion of economic processes in discussions of political development and establishment of civil society only came about in this century, initially in the work of Antonio Gramsci. Fukuyama argues that continued exclusion of economic processes in discussions of political development are perpetuated only by scholars concerned with attacking capitalism itself.

Suggesting that there is one "sanctioned" mold for successful democratic development is as misleading as the similar argument for economic development for political economists. Leftwich stresses that what is actually needed is a developmentalist state which may not start out democratically but has a better chance of building toward real democracy in the long-term.

> There are good theoretical reasons why, in the prevailing conditions in many Third World countries, democracy is unlikely to be the political form which can generate such a state or system of governance: quite the opposite. Furthermore, historical evidence shows that the faith in the economic and political liberalism of the minimal state as the universally appropriate means of development is deeply flawed. Successful, modern transformative episodes of economic development, from the 19th century to the present, have almost always involved both a strong and active state to help, initiate, accelerate and shape this process.[16]

Constructing a Bottom-Up Democracy

The large-scale, society-wide approach of the political economy school best clarifies the field observations and analysis of Cambodia's political and cultural structures which were presented in chapters 2 and 3. Democratization in Cambodia never extended beyond the polls and as such it could

not root itself in the rural areas which are crucial to a successful democratization of Cambodia. There was no societal change at all; therefore the wider implications of large-scale democratization, in which people for the first time feel they have the power to influence power structures, were completely absent. The Cambodian people feel powerless both in terms of the important local level, un-democratic government and in terms of the little understood distant Phnom Penh national government structure as discussed earlier.

The political economy perspective may offer the best mechanisms for rethinking appropriate activities for building a foundation for eventual democracy, while ensuring that critical development needs are not neglected and that the stability of the nation is not further jeopardized. Levine, for example, argues that democratization should:

> ...refer to the creation, nurture and spread of more egalitarian social relations and norms of leadership and authority. These are rooted in greater social and economic equity and worked out in associational life, especially through encouragement of participation, the development of new sources and styles of leadership and generally

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[161] Leftwich, *Op. Cit.*, p. 612.

in the way group life is linked to the big structures of national politics.[162]

As has already been discussed, political and social power in Cambodia remains rooted in tradition and there is an ingrained knowledge of "one's place in life" that is respected. This is not strong ground for the development of an adversarial, multi-party interpretation of democracy. Further, for the great majority of the Cambodian population, rural power structures have far greater importance than national structures based in the distant capital, therefore, national elections seem a poor choice as a mechanism for developing democratic values.

That is not to say that Cambodia is incapable or achieving or supporting a democracy in the long run. Rather, I argue, the procedural national level elections which were introduced to the country via foreign powers — often with substantial sums of aid dependent upon their success — were inappropriate to the development of a democratic society in Cambodia at this moment, given the socio-economic realities and political and cultural history of the country. Further, as Fukuyama has said: "We often forget how crucial simple

[162] Levine. D.H. "Paradigm Lost: Dependence to Democracy." Journal of Democracy. V. 40(3): 377-395. 1988. p. 383

political stability is to both economic development and to the democratization which flows from it."[163]

If Western nations are serious about exporting democratic systems, and if the United Nations has committed itself to making democratic governance a condition of international legitimacy, then all would be better served to make a more concerted study of the ground situation in the target country, the importance of which is stressed by political economy scholars. In Cambodia's de-centralized, traditional society, democracy must be a long-term project rather than an 18-month, massive, internationally imposed undertaking. Village-level decision-making about matters concretely related to the experiences of rural Cambodian would be an important place to start. The beginning of any true democracy in Cambodia must allow people to grow more confident to express their own opinions, accept disagreement non-violently, and enjoy the freedom to disagree with (trusting their own opinion) traditional leaders.

The importance of the disjuncture between local and state entities has been noted by Catherine Boone and

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[163] Fukuyama, "The Illusion of Exceptionalism", *Op. Cit.*, p. 49

others.[164]   Boone argued that different patterns of economic

and social organization have produced regionally specific

political dynamics that have in turn shaped institution

building and state formation in Africa. Also, making similar

arguments to those noted earlier by Thion, Anne Phillips,

John Lonsdale and Bruce Berman have argued that in African

societies, colonizers' ambitions to transform were

compromised by fears of rebellion and ungovernability to the

point that colony often influenced colonizer.[165] Thion and

this thesis argue that no model has yet overprinted the

dominant Cambodian model.

National elections remain too abstract from the

Cambodian experience at this time to be effective tools for

democratization. Golub suggests:

> An alternative to the more formalistic Western view
> of representative government and its trappings may
> consider democracy operational to the extent that
> individuals influence or participate in the
> governmental decisions which most affect them.
> Under this characterization, formal institutions
> and practices such as legislatures and elections,
> that set national policies in many Third World
> societies may matter less to farmers, fishing
> communities or upland residents than the degree to
> which they control the allocation and use of local

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[164] Boone, *Op. Cit.*
[165] As noted in Boone, *Op. Cit.*, p. 6

agrarian, aquatic or forest resources on which their incomes and overall well being hinge.[166]

Experiences of some development projects in Cambodia reflect encouraging signs that this kind of local-level democracy could develop in the countryside with effective, long-term investment in Cambodia through development aid strategy. Biddulph and Chor relate one example in their independent evaluation of UNDP-Carere's Local Planning Process (LPP) in the North-Western provinces of Cambodia. The LPP establishes developmental plans for each village through village meetings and participatory methods.

> Koh Ream village provided an illustration of the way in which the LPP can create situations where the power balance within the village can be challenged to the benefit of the community. The village's communal land was being sold off by the village chief for his own profit. This had been happening secretly, with *krom samaki* and villagers slowly finding out about it. The (Village Development Committee) asked him how much land was left, and asked him to sell it and make that the community's local contribution to the project. Eventually he promised to do this in front of a village meeting. I cannot imagine another situation in Cambodia where villagers would take action to reclaim from a corrupt government official what belongs to the community, nor be successful in their attempt. In this therefore, were seen the promising first seeds of accountable government

[166] Golub, S. "Assessing and Enhancing the Impact of Democratic Development Projects: A Practitioner's Perspective." Studies in Contemporary International Development. 1994. V. 28(1): 62.

with people being prepared to call government to account.[167]

The authors also point out that these changes in the mindset of villagers were slow to develop. They write:

> It is certainly the case in some villages that the people are afraid of the power of the village chief and will do as they are told whether they understand and agree or not.[168]

Slowly however, through the use of these participatory techniques at the village level, these tendencies are changing.

In an interview with Steven Sharp the director of PACT, a American organization which funds local NGOs using participatory methods of local development, similar experiences were cited[169] but he also noted that an additional hurdle was familiarizing local NGO workers with the change toward more participatory projects which has been sweeping the developmental agencies.

> We encourage (local) NGOs to adopt participatory practices and to mobilize communities to take responsibility for the development of projects. This goes against everything Cambodians know. Therefore, it is difficult for people in the

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[167] Biddulph, R. and V. Chor. Independent Monitoring and Evaluation of the Local Planning Process. Final Report to UNDP-Carere. July 2, 1997. p. 22

[168] Ibid., p. 21

[169] Experience shows, for example, a very slow change in the village to accepting the notion that disagreeing with traditional leaders was acceptable and even expected in the development of these projects.

communities and for (local) NGOs. On top of that, some models they emulate are not participatory. A lot of local NGOs were started by (returning border refugees) whose experience with NGOs was limited to relief agencies which were much more action oriented, top-down, and less participatory.[170]

Biddulph and Chor also point out that in these early stages of developing village-level participatory methods of planning, the presence of the outside agency was crucial to ensuring that villagers felt comfortable disagreeing with a traditional authority.

> Within the LPP, many villagers regard Carere as the institution which guarantees that funds will be correctly allocated. No one should underestimate the extent to which the presence of Carere staff, even in the background, gives people the confidence to give their opinions or to make protests.[171]

To some extent, it can be said then that development projects at this local level in Cambodia have a civil society strengthening component. Here civil society is defined as the space between the state and the family, where people voluntarily join into groups and social forces are at work which may later play a political role. White points out that such a definition includes everything from community organizations to the mafia.[172] This broad definition of civil

[170] From an interview conducted at PACT's Phnom Penh headquarters on May 25, 1998.
[171] Biddulph and Chor. *Op. Cit.*, p. 12
[172] White, G. "Civil Society, democratization and development." in Luckham and White. *Op. Cit.*, p. 179

society is important because it avoids the tendency to speak of civil society in abstract and ideal terms. Civil society in this case, has different sectors, some positive some negative.

> Thus different sectors of civil society can be expected to have different sets of norms about the political relationship between state and society, and the yea or nay of democracy would depend on the interaction of these sectors.[173]

Local level projects in Cambodia practicing participatory democratic techniques, then, would not necessarily be expected to transform society or civil society overnight but they would be one sector promoting positive development and the interaction of this sector with others in the society could have a moderating effect.

White argues:

> ...civil society extends beyond organizational interest into the normative sphere, i.e. that civil society creates and sustains a new set of democratic norms which regulate the behaviour of the state and the character of political relations between the state and the public sphere of society and individual citizens.[174]

He contends that in Zambia and South Korea civil society organizations fostered eventual democratic transitions but that the process must be long-term and is always uncertain.

Nor can the effects of a burgeoning civil society be looked at in isolation. Civil society is simply one cluster of power in the "great game of democratization, the others being located in the state and the international environment."[175]

The complexity of democratization makes it both a long-term process and one that is easily reversed. Therefore strengthening civil society through local development projects based on a participatory model may not be effective in isolation. The beauty of increasing the usage of such an approach in Cambodia, however, is that it can draw the society into the development process which is noticeably underway in the work of 130 plus international organizations and over 200 local NGOs[176] while changing ideas about power, expression, accountability and government in the country. Obviously it has not been sufficient to simply conduct national elections amid a bombardment campaign of the message that 'voting is secret'. Doing so has removed the heart, the substance from democracy in the country and installed electoralist regimes.

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[173] *Ibid.*, p. 188
[174] *Ibid.*, 187
[175] Luckham and White, *Op. Cit.* p. 210
[176] CCC. *Directory of International Humanitarian Assistance in Cambodia 1998*. Phnom Penh: Committee for Cooperation in Cambodia. 1998.

Attmepts to implement this model in Cambodia relied heavily upon conditionality of aid to manipulate internal elites into conforming with the wishes of international actors. Yet, White points out that this strategy can work in the short-term, as it arguably did in Cambodia from 1993 till the 1997 coup, but it does not bode well for significant, long-term societal change.

> ...The current stress on democratic conditionality for aid can play a role in maintaining democratic rule, but it must be recognized that in many cases the latter may be formal rather than substantive since the necessary internal conditions are lacking.[177]

Writing with Luckham in a later chapter of Democratization in the South: The Jagged Wave, White concludes:

> Democratic outcomes are determined by a complex interplay of political and developmental factors. Each country embodies this interplay in distinctive ways, so we should expect not only the politics of democratization to differ from society to society but also the particular forms of democracy which result from the process. ...The South may not be eager to accept the Western definitions of 'democracy' lock, stock and barrel, particularly if they are couched in relatively minimalistic conceptions of procedural liberal democracy. ...distinctive Southern historical and cultural contexts may give rise to innovative forms of

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[177] White, *Op. Cit.*, p. 210

democratic   representation,   accountability,
participation and governance which merit respect
and attention.[178]

> ...Positive forms of political intervention are
> likely to be more micro-level and indirect.
> ...Positive intervention needs to be based on a
> good deal of sophisticated understanding about the
> political character of the recipient society. This
> more modest piecemeal approach is preferable to one
> which seeks to impose more comprehensive
> institutional models and, to be effective, needs to
> be conducted within the wider context of a
> sustained political strategy designed to generate
> consensus and acceptance of proposed innovations.[179]

Elections must mean more than dressing up in your finest

clothing and going to the polls. Thus far in Cambodia, they

do not. Voting day is tantamount to democracy as it is

currently conceived in the collective Cambodian psyche.

Therefore, it is an electoralist regime rather than a

democracy. The result is a continuing feeling of

powerlessness and even hopelessness among the Cambodian

population of changing or developing the country or improving

the overall quality of life.

I have called this thesis, Karaoke Country. I contend

that peacebuilding and democratization have created in

Cambodia a karaoke country. Karaoke is popular in Cambodia as

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[178] Luckham, R. and G. White. Op. Cit., p. 277

in much of Asia and can be found in dozens of highly improbable locations. To me, karaoke is the perfect analogy for the electoralism that has been imposed on the country.

Although those singing with karaoke machines mouth words and imitate tunes, they are not the people who have written the lyrics, nor composed the musical accompaniment. As such, while they sing the song, however enthusiastically, it can never be their own. It is solely a form of imitation and there is no reason to assume that the singer even understands the words. They are simply going through the motions.

As far as democracy is concerned in contemporary Cambodia, the nation is just going through the motions. They are singing in order to placate the international community and particularly their donors but the song does not yet reach their hearts.

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[179] *Ibid.*, p. 282

CHAPTER 6 – OVERCOMING KARAOKE COUNTRY

The promise of peacebuilding as explained by Boutros-Ghali was to address the root causes of conflict in order to prevent its reoccurrence. However, the central peacebuilding approach in practice was primarily limited to implementing a procedurally based democracy. When the geo-political climate changed at the end of the Cold War, democracy became the only legitimate form of government and the majority of states worldwide sought to present themselves as democratic nations. Parallel to this seeming international agreement on the desirability of democracy, came the increasing tendency for international aid donors to require democratic governance as a condition of assistance. The new orthodoxy reigned politically.

One of the biggest problems with the UN-sponsored democratization approach has been a general disregard of the target state's existing political structure, history and culture. The UN attempted to establish one "sanctioned" form of democracy across a widely disparate group of states. It assumed this electoralist model could be successful because the organization had come to accept the tenets of the New

Orthodoxy. UN attempts at democratization in peacebuilding contexts met with varying degrees of success. In Cambodia however, neglecting the specifics of the case doomed the exercise to failure.

At the close of the UNTAC mission, Cambodia seemed a clear victory. The previously negotiated Paris Accords had been implemented and UNTAC's broad mandates fulfilled. In 1993, a freely elected government took office, it was argued. Today, however, few would argue that the Cambodia example is a successful one, even after an eventual coalition compromise and power-sharing agreement between CPP and FUNCINPEC eventually ended the post-1998 election uncertainty.

A coup by CPP Second Prime Minister Hun Sen against FUNCINPEC First Prime Minister Norodom Ranariddh in July of 1997 was, although not the first, perhaps the most convincing sign of the deep fissures within the Cambodian government that grew out of the UNTAC sponsored election. In the summer of 1998 however, information surfaced that prior to this successful coup, First Prime Minister Norodom Ranariddh had been meeting with the Khmer Rouge in efforts to secure their alliance in his attempts to unseat Second Prime Minister Hun

Sen[180]   as   Hun   Sen   had   argued   all   along.

A second national election in July of 1998 – also internationally monitored but to a lesser degree than that of 1993 – did not gel into any form of stable government until November 30; following over four months of uncertainty and demonstrations.[181] Despite international observers sanctioning the electoral process as "free and fair", the largest opposition parties (FUNCINPEC with 31.7 per cent of the vote and Sam Rainsy Party with 14.3 per cent) refused to accept the electoral outcome and boycotted the parliament, preventing effective governing of the country by preventing legislative quorum. The opposition parties claimed that intimidation and irregularities in the 1998 poll made the result insupportable despite the international endorsement. However, international observers argued that, while not perfect, the electoral process had been clean enough to suggest that the outcome was legitimate.[182]

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[180] This information was obtained from Khmer Rouge documents that fell into the hands of reporters Bou Saroeun and Peter Sainsbury of the Phnom Penh Post when visiting an abandoned Khmer Rouge camp "Prince's KR deal laced with treachery: KR plotted to betray Prince's alliance and wage new war." Phnom Penh Post. May 22 - June 1, 1998. p. 1
[181] Please see "Appendix I: Political Parties" for the full results of both the 1993 and 1998 elections.
[182] Solarz, S., Op. Cit.

The Cambodian case highlights the dangers of overemphasizing elections in peacebuilding missions. Beyond issues of length and extent of UN commitment to the process, the concept in practice amounted to little more than installing an electoralist regime and then granting international legitimacy to the regime. Contradictions within Cambodian culture and history which suggested that the transition to democracy would be uneasy were ignored as the UN and donor governments adopted the framework and political arguments of the new orthodoxy.

Democracy is new to Cambodia. While there were five elections previous to the civil conflict (see Appendix II for details), none of these met even the most minimal standards of fairness and three of the five had effectively only one party competing. The procedural manner in which democracy was implemented in Cambodia via the UN-sponsored 1993 elections meant that democratic principles such as representation, legitimacy and accountability held little to no meaning for the bulk of the population. This population, largely rural in nature, lacked the educational background for interpreting many of these concepts and had only a structured, non-democratic society from which to draw personal lessons. Even

prior to the Khmer Rouge regime – which took hierarchy and totalitarianism to new height – the historical and cultural record of Cambodian society was of a highly stratified nature where the monarchy was respected to almost a mythical extent (as in its "God-King" 8th century incarnation) and power and respect was then gradually dispersed through the ranks of provincial leaders, district leaders, village leaders, and even to the Buddhist monks, leaving little in the way of power or decision-making experience in the life of the average Khmer citizen.

A procedural implementation, while drawing strongly on the enthusiasm and creativity of UNTAC Information and Education component (commonly referred to as Info/Ed), failed to give the majority of the population an appreciation of the tenets of democracy and of the necessary importance of accountability within a democratic system. Brautigam has argued that donors can best assist good governance by fostering conditions where developing societies can push their governments to deliver accountability rather than focusing on elections.[183] According to Brautigam, colonial structures are partially responsible for the lack of

accountability in post-colonial societies because the colonial civil service was never directly responsible to those they ruled.

A clear look at Cambodia's history and political culture might have led to the development of an effective plan for democratization in Cambodia, initiated but perhaps not seen to conclusion, by a peacebuilding mission. Recognizing the extreme factionalism, the continuing importance of the monarchy, the political tradition of the *devaraja*, the low education levels, the strengths and weaknesses of the country's rurally organized communities, the roles of traditional leaders and the scars of the 30-year civil war might have paved the way for a recipe of peace and good government built from the bottom up over a long period of time. Unfortunately such a clear analysis was never undertaken. It was assumed that having an election would be enough. It was assumed that development would follow. It was assumed that stability would be imminent. It was all assumed because the political philosophy of the new orthodoxy had been accepted by the United Nations and the Western donor governments.

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[183] Brautigam, D. "Governance, Economy and Foreign Aid." Studies in Comparative Development. V.

Thus, a new orthodoxy-based interpretation of Cambodian democracy and development through a UN conducted election was attempted. It was doomed to fail. And despite failure - via the 1997 coup (although the problems in the 1993 established coalition started much earlier) - the exact same formula was attempted again in 1998. For Cambodian elites the exercise was necessary to ensure that development aid would come back to Cambodia (as aid did with the recent announcement of another $460 million commitment from donors such as Japan, the United States, Canada, Australia and the EU)[184] which could not occur without the election the international community insisted upon. The government that donors repeatedly push for in Cambodia simply isn't working for the average Cambodian. As Aun Porn Moniroth wrote:

> We must also recognize that Western style democratic values defended by a group of politicians and intellectuals in Cambodian society are not a common phenomenon emerged from the daily lives of people nor have they evolved from the traditionalistic, under-developed economy of the country.[185]

However, following Golub's prescription somewhat, and making electoral democracy optional in the early stages of

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27(3): 3-25. 1992.
[184] AFP Newswire. "World to donate 460 million dollars to Cambodia." February 18, 1999.

peacebuilding while focusing on developing democratic values at a level which makes a noticeable difference to a person's life, might be the best seed to germinate for eventual democracy.

Fukuyama has suggested that despite modernization theory's current intellectual unpopularity, most theories of political development do profess some form of it. This thesis is no exception. While I accept the contribution of the political economy theorists and in particular use their expanded definition of democratization and their insightful critiques of the new orthodoxy, I would be derelict not to also indicate that in the contention that certain ground conditions are necessary for successful democratization I too adopt some of modernization theory's tenets. Chiefly, the idea that some traditional aspects of Cambodia must change (i.e. the unwillingness to challenge those in above one's own place in life) to a modern conception of equal right to one's own opinion and to express it freely. While making a traditionally liberal argument here, it is important to reiterate that in Cambodia, to a large extent, unwillingness to speak out against someone with more apparent "accumulated

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[185] Aun, *Op. Cit.*, p. 49

merit" rests on self-censure rather than oppressive legislative structures. While the laws are easy to change mindset is not. Yet, in so doing, a functioning democracy is a more likely outcome.

While classic modernization theorists held that economic development was essential to democratization, the argument has since found more consensus around the idea that while democratization can happen outside economic development, a certain level of economic development perpetuates its continuance.[186] Therefore, from a modernization perspective, I would argue that Cambodia is hindered first by a traditional respect for a multi-level social ranking which the average Cambodia is unwilling to challenge (after all, not challenging those with more merit may lead to additional merit for one's self in the next life) and in falling far short of the level of economic development which theorists argues contributes to sustaining democracy.

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[186] See in particular Tatu Vanhanen's Prospects for Democracy: A Study of 172 Countries, (Washington: Crane Russak Publishers, 1992) and Przeworski and Limongi's "Modernization: Theories and Facts" in World Politics (January 1997. V. 49: 155-183) for compelling arguments on the level of economic development and sustainability of democracy.

If there has been one true success to the UNTAC mission, however, it has been in preparing the ground in Cambodia for the development agencies and NGOs to enter and begin their crucial work in the development-starved Cambodian countryside. UNTAC might have accomplished this without conducting the election. It might have served as a stabilizing umbrella for the agencies entering the country and worked with these agencies to develop grassroots democratization strategies to complement their work.

There is no question now that it is universally recognized that democracy could not effectively be implemented in Cambodia by a procedural model in an 18-month time frame. Donors, too, are changing their approach to conditional aid in Cambodia to focus on good governance and accountability rather than democracy as evidenced only by polling numbers. One can only hope that this strategy will prevent another coalition government dissolution into open conflict as in 1997. If pressure can be put on the Cambodian political parties to work together rather than to work to eradicate each other, there might be time enough available for the grassroots democratization processes which are in their infancy in Cambodia right now, to gain enough momentum

and initiate a real, although undoubtedly slow, drive to

democracy, with accountability, transparency, which might

begin to bridge the rural-urban divide and offer economic,

political and social development for the whole of Cambodian

society.[187]

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[187] The bulk of analysis in this thesis has avoided concentrating on the country's political elites. However, should policy changes advocated in this thesis ever come to fruition, the actions of political elites would be crucial to the success of democratization in Cambodia. At this stage all that it is possible to say about how the political elites might react to rural democratization and empowerment efforts is conjecture as these efforts have not been the dominant model implemented. I would re-emphasize, however, as stated earlier, that rural power structures already exist they are simply not democratically organized nor are they a threat to national power structures. This is the way Cambodia has always been, with the possible exception of the Khmer Rouge era, and will undoubtedly continue to be for some time. Should grassroots, bottom-up democratization strategies begin to flourish in rural areas, they are unlikely to pose any challenge to national political elites for some time.

However, under a slow transition to democracy based on these strategies, eventually a national democratization process of real meaning could emerge. Such a development would obviously challenge the entrenched positions of the political elites. As the primary, and most violent, obstacle to democratization in the past has been the Khmer Rouge, that they are no longer a concern means the future is automatically brighter than the past. The strongest political faction remains the CPP with a young leader in Hun Sen (who has already demonstrated considerable survival skills), the most organized, and well armed, military support and the most cohesive record of membership. Further, after the second failure of the electoralist strategy in 1998, donors are increasingly recognizing the importance of stability and trying to promote good governance with accountability rather than democracy. (See for example, the testimony of Ralph Boyce, deputy assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs to the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Asia and Pacific Sub-Committee of March 9, 1999.) Donors, it seems are coming to accept that a quick and east electoral route to a responsible government in Cambodia is unlikely.

As Hun Sen and the CPP have been the least favoured faction by donors — particularly the Americans — in the past they gain a great deal from this change of aid strategy. As the most cohesive faction, the CPP could well maintain power over a slow transition to democracy and keep current levels of aid flowing into the country if they can comply with donor demands for accountability. Donors might have more power to influence Cambodia when they stopped pushing for a democratic government few in either the elite or the masses (who according my research seem most interested in stability and the ability to feed their families) seem to want at this time. Under my proposals then donors would have to be active from both a bottom-up (by supporting grassroots democratization projects) and a top-down (by continuing pressure on Cambodian elites to improve government accountability and eliminate corruption). Hopefully, they could do so without indulging petty disputes among elite factions. In fact, by this two-pronged approach, donors take on an even more important role without becoming the authors and enforcers of the shape of an emerging Cambodia democracy. The country would maintain the ability to develop its own unique democracy adapted to its own unique conditions without being the granted the scope to descend fully back into authoritarianism.

As knowledge of democracy eventually acquired meaning for the bulk of the population, they would become empowered to confront first the rural power structures and eventually the national ones. What is most needed for this strategy is stability. I believe it can be achieved under the CPP without allowing the party to conduct itself as a brutal dictatorship. CPP and Hun Sen realize that the days of absolute power are over due to the need to keep international aid and investment flowing into the country. Negotiating a gradual transition to democracy which recognizes this party's strength would keep CPP from diverting the process.

As the second strongest party, FUNCINPEC's role is also vital. I don't believe the party, especially in its weakened state since 1997, could ever defeat CPP militarily. Therefore, they are well advised to maintain the current privilege they enjoy in the coalition rather than attempt to assume full power via destabilizing or subversive activities. Then the only real political power faction left is the Sam Rainsy Party. This party claims the high ground in its desire for a democracy up to first world standards. Yet, if robbed of American support, Rainsy has few supporters in the international diplomatic community. He may still convince various human rights organizations of his sincerity and retain the loyal contingent of Khmers which follow him but he would lose credibility with these groups were the party to turn openly violent. At Rainsy's current levels of national support (under 15 per cent based on the election results, he is more of an annoyance than a threat to the CPP-FUNCINPEC coalition. Rainsy may emerge as the leading voice for democratization in the country, but he has no reason to work against a slow transition if it is working for the majority of the country.

Finally, there is the always unpredictable King Sihanouk. The King's symbolic power is considerable. He remains the greatest unifier of political support but he is increasingly less vocal and remains in Beijing rather than Cambodia for the bulk of his time now. The King role as a stabilizer is crucial and my including him as an important actor in international negotiations the international community could capitalize on his power to encourage continued stability and a gradual opening up of the country.

Therefore, based on my analysis of the current political situation, the political economy model I advocate could succeed with proper international pressure placed upon the governing coalition, without another election necessary in the near future. Alternatively, should the international community continue to try and manipulate the political elites while ignoring the importance of Cambodian political culture and the general conditions of the majority of Cambodians, democratization in Cambodia is unlikely to emerge spontaneously.

Appendix I: Cambodia's Major Political Parties

Cambodian People's Party (CPP)
Leader: Hun Sen
Background: Formerly known as State of Cambodia (SOC) and the People's Republic of Kampuchea (PRK); politically and militarily backed by Vietnam 1979-1989; informal yet strong relations with Vietnam to present. Pen Sovrin was the original leader Vietnam established in the country in 1979, then a year later Heng Samrin followed but the much younger Hun Sen rose through the ranks to his current leadership position. Hun Sen has a reputation as reform-minded pragmatist which occasionally puts him in opposition to less reformist, more communist hardliners in the party such as Chea Sim, who retain a great deal of power in the CPP.
1998 election: won 41.4% of the popular vote, 64 of 122 seats
1993 election: won 38.2 % of the popular vote, 51 of 120 seats
Post-communist pragmatist philosophy

National United Front for a Neutral, Peaceful and Cooperative Cambodia (FUNCINPEC)
Leader: Prince Norodom Ranariddh
Background: Officially became a political party in 1993 but was formed in the early 1980s, it is the royalist party of Sihanouk and Ranariddh. The party was fragmented in its reaction to the 1997 coup. A core group fled the country (including Ranariddh) while others remained and continued to work with CPP. As a result of this factionalization, in 1998 eight parties contested the elections which had previously all been in FUNCINPEC. Ranariddh is reportedly an incompetent leader but irreplaceable due to continuing loyalty toward the monarchy in the country. Antecedents were part of a coalition with the Khmer Rouge (CGDK) in peace accords negotiations.
1998 election: -- 31.7% of popular vote, 43 of 122 seats
1993 election: -- 45.4 % of popular vote, 58 of 120 seats
Monarchist-democratic philosophy

Sam Rainsy Party (SRP)
Leader: Sam Rainsy
Background: Formed in 1998; splintered from FUNCINPEC when Sam Rainsy was forced to resign as Finance Minister in 1994. Rainsy has been called an ambitious wild card, and "dangerous". He threatened to boycott the 1998 election but

backed down when FUNCINPEC agreed to participate. Following the election he led an opposition boycott which froze the parliament by preventing quorum and once called for the US to bomb Hun Sen's house.

1998 election results: 14.27 % popular vote, 15 of 122 seats
Fairly radical (within Cambodia) stands on issues on labour, environment and gender, in favour of controlled capitalism

Son Sann Party

Leader: Son Sann
Background: The party splintered from the Buddhist Liberal Democratic Party (BLDP) which had contested the 1993 elections. Son Sann is a former prime minister and banker. As the KPNLF this faction had its own armed forces prior to UNTAC.
1998 election: no seats
1993 elections: 3% of popular vote, 10 seats of 120
Right-wing, anti-communist philosophy

Moulinaka

Background: anticommunist
1993 elections: 1% of popular vote, 1 seat of 120

Khmer Rouge

Leader: Formerly Pol Pot, at the time of writing the Khmer Rouge are essentially a non-entity following the capture of the last stalwarts in February 1999.
Background: Formed from a disparate group of leftist revolutionaries contesting initially French colonialism, later Sihanouk and later still the Lon Nol regime. Controlled Cambodia from 1975-1978 and implemented a brutal, Maoist-inspired campaign to re-orient the society to an agrarian-based communist state devoid of technology. Known throughout the world as genocidal due to the death of at least 1 million Cambodians at their hands. When overthrown by the Vietnamese in 1979, they retreated to the Thai border, gained strength and retained international recognition as the "legitimate" authority in Cambodia until 1989. Were perhaps the most powerful faction throughout much of the 1980s due to a highly disciplined military force and considerable wealth amassed through illegal logging and gem trading.
1993 elections: Boycotted. Attacked one electoral station killing 12.
1998 elections: Boycotted.
Radical Mao-ist philosophy

Appendix II: Abbreviated Political History

1st- 6th centuries A.D.
- According to Khmer myth, an Indian Brahmin, Kaundinya, founded the state of Funan in present-day Southern Cambodia and some of Southern Vietnam. Subsequent Khmer dynasties traced their lineage to Funan and the Indian influence is still felt although its degree of dominance in the area dwindles through the centuries.

9th century
- Khmer state is established when Jayavarman II returns from exile. It is a unified independent Khmer state ruled by a God-King ("devaraja").

11th century
- The height of the Angkor civilization; consolidated rule over modern Cambodia, Thailand and Laos and took armies into Champa (modern Vietnam) and the Malay peninsula. Angkor Wat is completed in 1050; it was commissioned by Suryavarman II.

12th century-1444
- Angkor gains and later loses land to the Chams. The court adhered to Hinduism and Mahayana Buddhism until the 1444 conquest of Angkor by Ayatthaya (a Thai) when Theravada Buddhism is adopted and the capital is moved to Phnom Penh.

1600s
- Cambodia is trapped between the stronger nations of Thailand and Vietnam, each of which wanted Khmer land.

1700s
- Competing Khmer royals acknowledge Thai and Vietnamese leadership.

1800s
- France gets involved in Indochina, first in Vietnam and later in Cambodia.

1864
- Cambodia becomes a French protectorate as part of Indochina (with Laos and Vietnam); this arrangement is accepted by

King Norodom who later resists the French but is forced to
sign reforms making Cambodia a full colony.

1904-1927
- King Sisowath as head of state under French rule.

1927-1941
- King Monivong as head of state under French rule.

1941
- Norodom Sihanouk is appointed King of Cambodia by the
  governing French at the age of 18.

1942
- A coup is attempted against the French led by Son Ngoc
  Thanh.

1945
- Cambodia enjoys a brief (2 month) independence after the
  Japanese intern all French troops and civil servants in the
  country and offer limited independence to Cambodia. A
  government based on the pro-French elite is established
  with Son Ngoc Thanh as Foreign Minister and later as Prime
  Minister. The Allies later remove this government after the
  defeat of Japan.

1946-1954
- The Khmer Issarak (a group which started in Thailand) wage
  a resistance struggle against the French.

1947
- An election was held for a 67-seat Constituent Assembly.
  The pro-Thanh Democratic Party wins 50 seats, the
  monarchist Liberal party wins 14 seats, and Independents
  take 3 seats.
- The first Cambodian constitution is adopted with provisions
  for multi-party elections, a National Assembly and
  restrictions on the authority of the King.

1949
- Sihanouk dissolves the Constituent Assembly and forms a new
  government with conservatives and ex-Democrats.

1949-51
- Six Cabinets are formed over the next two years due to
  political instability.

1950s

- Issarak resistance leads to the cancellation of the planned 1951 election. By early 1950s Issarak guerrillas fighting Sihanouk and the French control much of the countryside. The Issarak is divided however with the strong rural division being pro-Viet Minh and following Son Ngoc Minh and the weaker urban faction led by Son Ngoc Thanh being anti-Communist and anti-Vietnamese.
- The pro-Viet Minh Issarak form the first Communist Party in Cambodia (the Khmer People's Revolutionary Party - KPRP); formerly there had been only an Indochinese Communist Party.
- Concurrently in the 1950s, another Marxist group develops in Paris among Cambodian students studying there which includes Pol Pot (then known as Saloth Sar), Ieng Sary and Khieu Samphan. The latter's doctoral dissertation at the Sorbonne is said to lay the foundation for the policies of the Khmer Rouge regime.

1951

- Elections are held and the Democrats win a large majority. The Democrats face pressure from the French and the right wing due to the Issarak sympathies.

1952

- After a right wing demonstration in the capital is violently repressed, King Sihanouk dissolves the government and asks the Assembly to allow him personal political leadership; this request is denied.

1953

- January - Sihanouk introduces martial law and allies himself with Lon Nol and the right wing.
- February - Sihanouk begins a crusade for independence and establishes a government in exile in Siem Reap.
- November 9 - France grants Cambodia independence. A conference is held in Geneva to establish the basics of the newly independent government but the Issarak is not allowed send any representatives. A royal government is established and Sihanouk is internationally recognized a sole legitimate authority. The "Sangkum" system is established and Sihanouk pledges to institute a free and open political system with internationally monitored elections in 1955.

1954

- The Issarak re-aligns; some relax after independence but about 1000 of the Son Ngoc Minh led faction leave for North Vietnam. The anti-Communist Thanhists form the Khmer Independence Party. A more radical democratic party emerges from the Paris Marxist circle of Pol Pot and Ieng Sary.
- The political right also realigns; Lon Nol and others form a rightist, monarchist, traditional coalition with Sihanouk called the Popular Socialist Community ("Sangkum Reastyr Niyum").

1955

- The King abdicates the throne to his father in order to assume political leadership of the country. A second constitution is enacted.
- An election campaign is held in which the opposition is harassed and the Sangkum win all seats in the National Assembly and 82 per cent of the popular vote. The International Control Committee certifies the result as "correct" despite fraud and intimidation.

1958,1962 & 1966

- The Sangkum repeats their dramatic electoral victories

1963

- Sihanouk renounces American foreign aid. Left wing political opposition to Sihanouk flee to the jungle and mountains.

1965

- March 8 - The first group of US Marines lands in South Vietnam.
- May 3 - Cambodia breaks relations with the US.

1966-69

- As the Vietnam War heats up it increasingly spills across the Cambodian border. When Sihanouk crushes a peasant revolt in Battambang, the left wing (which consists of various groups which are collected dubbed by Sihanouk, "les Khmeres Rouges") gain recruits. The US begins secretly bombing Cambodia on March 18, 1969 in an effort to rout Viet Cong taking refuge across the border.

1970

- March 18 - A right-wing coup lead by General Lon Nol deposes Prince Sihanouk as head of state while he is outside the country. A third constitution is enacted.
- March 19 - The US recognizes the new government saying that the Prince was "legally deposed."
- March 23 - Sihanouk announces that he has formed a National United Front for Kampuchea (NUFK) with the Khmer Rouge, his former enemies. NUFK takes up struggle against the Lon Nol government.
- May 5 - Sihanouk announces the formation of a government in exile, the Royal National Union Government of Kampuchea, this government is immediately recognized by China and North Vietnam.
- September 12 - The first US ambassador to Cambodia since 1965, Emory Swank, arrives in Phnom Penh.

1972

- October 20 - Lon Nol declares a state of emergency.
- March 10 - Lon Nol dissolves the National Assembly and declares himself President of Cambodia.
- June 4 - Lon Nol wins the Khmer Republic's first presidential elections.

1973

- June 3-4 - European news agencies report that Sihanouk has tried to make contact with President Nixon through third countries but has been rejected. The US State Department confirms these accounts.
- August 15 - The American bombing of Cambodia ends. Over 2,000,000 people have been displaced by this point as a result of the bombing and the ongoing resistance to the Lon Nol government.

1975

- April 1 - Lon Nol and his supporters flee Cambodia for Hawaii.
- April 12 - The US Embassy is evacuated; the acting president goes with the US but many Cabinet ministers remain. The army continues to fight.
- April 17 - The Khmer Rouge take Phnom Penh. Democratic Kampuchea is established. Phnom Penh is emptied as are other major towns and the Cambodia population is put to work in mass agricultural labour camps. A fourth constitution is enacted.
- April 30 - Saigon falls to North Vietnamese assault.

- May 3 - Fighting begins between the new Khmer Rouge government in Cambodia and Vietnam.
- September 9 - Sihanouk returns to Phnom Penh after a five-year absence.

1976
- April 4 - Prince Sihanouk resigns his position as head of state.

1977
- Diplomatic relations are suspended with Hanoi; the two countries are engaged in heavy border fighting.

1978-1979
- December 25-January 7 - The Vietnamese Army drives the Khmer Rouge out of Phnom Penh and establishes a new government comprised of Cambodians who had fled to Vietnam earlier in the decade.

1979-1989
- Khmer Rouge retreat to Thai border and set up in refugee camps alongside legitimate refugees. Western governments and the majority of the United Nations denounce the Vietnamese actions and call it a "Vietnamese occupation" of the country.
- All aid is denied to the government in the capital and distributed through the border camps. China continues to ship weapons to the Khmer Rouge and the United Nations will not allow the Vietnamese sponsored State of Cambodia (SOC) to take its seat but instead continues to recognize Democratic Kampuchea (Khmer Rouge) as the legitimate authority in the country.

1981
- A UN-sponsored conference is held in New York to try to come to a solution on Cambodia. Vietnam does not attend and SOC is not invited. The conference calls for the complete withdrawal of Vietnamese forced from Cambodia. These demands are ignored.

1981-1987
- - The war between the SOC and the Khmer Rouge continues to rage. While SOC always retains the capital and the majority of the country, the Khmer Rouge have several strongholds along the Thai border.

1988

- An informal meeting is held in Jakarta on Cambodia with the participation of all the relevant parties to the conflict; these meetings are called JIM I.

1989

- January 6 - Vietnam announces that the withdrawal of all Vietnamese troops by the end of September 1989.
- February 19-21 - JIM II is held in Jakarta.
- July 30-August 30 - An international conference on Cambodia is held in Paris. SOC, Khmer Rouge, Royalist representatives, Son Sann Party (the four most relevant factions to the conflict) all attend as well as China, Vietnam, the US, Canada, USSR, France and the UK.
- September 27 - Vietnamese forces complete their withdrawal from Cambodia.

1990

- JIM III is held from February 6-28.

1991

- September 30 - Secretary-General recommends that the UN deploy an advance mission to Cambodia
- October 23 - Paris Peace Accords are signed by all four factions at the resumed international conference in France.
- October 16 - Security Council authorizes the establishment of UN Advance Mission in Cambodia (UNAMIC).
- October 31 - Security Council requests that the Secretary General prepare a detailed plan for implementation of the Paris Peace Accords.
- November 9 - UNAMIC is formally established in Phnom Penh.

1992

- February 19 - Report from Secretary-General to the Security Council lays out the basis for establishing UNTAC (UN Transitional Authority in Cambodia)
- February 28 - Security Council establishes UNTAC.
- March 15 - Yasushi Akashi, UNTAC head, arrives in Phnom Penh.
- March 30 - UNHCR begins the repatriation of refugees from Thailand.
- May 9 - UNTAC announces that Phase II of the cease-fire will begin on June 13.
- July 15 - UNTAC civil administration offices are established in all 21 provinces.
- August 15 - Registration of political parties begins.

- October 5 - Voter registration begins.
- October 13 - Security Council accepts Secretary-General's recommendation to continue with the elections.
- November 9 - Radio UNTAC begins broadcasting.

1993

- January 27 - 20 political parties register for the election.
- January 28 - Supreme National Council (SNC) agrees that the elections for the Constituent Assembly will be held from 23-25 May. Prince Sihanouk tells SNC that a presidential election should be held after the adoption of a new constitution.
- February 25 - Informal meeting of international aid donors in Phnom Penh.
- April 4 - The Khmer Rouge announce that they will not take part in the elections.
- April 7 - Election campaigning starts.
- May 3 - Khmer Rouge attack Siem Reap.
- May 23-28 - Voting takes place.
- May 29 - Yasushi Akashi declares elections "free and fair" and counting proceeds.
- June 14 - Prince Sihanouk is reinstated as Head of State by inaugural session of Constituent Assembly.
- June 15 - Security Council endorses election result.
- July 1 - Provisional Government accepted by Constituent Assembly and is sworn in the next day.
- July 8-9 - First meeting of the International Committee on the Reconstruction of Cambodia held in Paris.
- September 24 - King Sihanouk enthroned and the fifth constitution is signed into law. The Constituent Assembly becomes the National Assembly. SNC formally hands authority to new national government.
- September 26 - Yasushi Akashi leaves Phnom Penh, formally ending UNTAC.
- September 30 - UN civilian police (civpols) are withdrawn.
- November 15 - UN military withdrawal completed.
- December - National Assembly passes National Programme to Rehabilitate and Develop Cambodia.
- December 31 - Withdrawal of all UNTAC personnel completed.

1994

- February-March - Government continues to battle the Khmer Rouge.
- March 10-11 - Second meeting of the International Committee on the Reconstruction of Cambodia held in Tokyo.

- May – Khmer Rouge retakes Pailin and Anlong Veng. Inconclusive talks held between the government and the Khmer Rouge.
- June – Khmer Rouge office in Phnom Penh is closed down. Sihanouk proposes he take over and form a government of national unity; proposal rejected by co-Prime Ministers Hun Sen and Prince Ranariddh.
- July – Coup attempted by CPP hardliners. Khmer Rouge outlawed by National Assembly. Khmer Rouge announce the formation of a provisional government of national unity in Preah Vihear province.
- October – Sam Rainsy resigns as Finance Minister and Prince Norodom Sirivudh resigns as Foreign Minister (both of FUNCINPEC ministers).

1995-1996
- Coalition government continues to fragment and seems increasingly untenable.
- Commune level elections are scheduled for 1997.

1997
- March – A date for national elections is set for November 1998 by the coalition government.
- January-July – A law governing the procedures for the commune elections is stalled in the Council of Ministers.
- July 7 – Second Prime Minister Hun Sen overthrows First Prime Minister Prince Ranariddh while he is outside the country. There is fighting in sections of Phnom Penh between Royalist forces and the army. Largely the fighting in confined to the capital. Several NGOs suspend their programmes in Cambodia and a few evacuate their personnel from the country. The commune elections disappear from the Cambodian agenda. Prince Ranariddh, cannot return to Cambodia and takes up exile in France. Several other opposition politicians go into exile as well. The government continues as a coalition with Ung Huot replacing Ranariddh as First Prime Minister.
- August 8 – The United States suspends $40 million in aid to Cambodia due to coup signaling a failure of democracy.
- December – The government suggests that commune elections might be held concurrently with the national election.

1998
- January-March – Negotiations are conducted to try and secure the return of the opposition politicians. Concurrently Ranariddh is tried for treason (for plotting

with the Khmer Rouge) in Cambodia and found guilty. The West says that they will not recognize any election in which the opposition cannot compete freely. Sihanouk intervenes.

- April - Prince Ranariddh returns to Cambodia, following several other opposition politicians who have already returned.
- April 15 - Pol Pot dies in a Khmer Rouge camp in Anlong Veng.
- July 26 - Elections are held. They are evaluated as "free and fair." Hun Sen wins a small majority government. The opposition refuses to recognize the results and initiates a boycott of the parliament, freezing government for the next three months.
- November - Cambodia forms its first quorum in parliament since the summer elections.

1999
- Debate over commune elections begins once again.
- $460 million in aid is pledged to Cambodia by the donor countries.

Appendix III: Methodology Notes

Both primary and secondary sources were used in the preparation of this paper to establish a theoretical framework for the examination of the relationships between peacebuilding, democratization and development within post-conflict states. Primary research was undertaken in Cambodia between 19 April and 1 June of 1998. Both mass and elite interviews were undertaken to establish how a new political regime - democracy -- might root itself in the understanding of Cambodians.

Among the elite interviews, both international NGO personnel operating on the ground and Cambodians at the head of organizations directly concerned with democratization in the country were included. Additionally, wherever possible, mass interviews were conducted in order to better establish the meaning and importance of "democratic government" to the general citizenry.

Interviews were conducted in Phnom Penh, Kompong Som, Battambang and Siem Reap with the highest concentration occurring in the capital where the bulk of the research time

was spent. All areas are relatively urban and therefore opinions gathered can not be considered conclusive given that the far majority of Cambodian live in rural, village settings along the country's major waterways[188]. A few interviews were conducted in rural villages outside Battambang. These may be considered more representative of the experience of the bulk of Cambodian citizens.

Other than the street-level interviews, it should also be noted that subjects tended to be dramatically more educated than the average Cambodian. Cambodian literacy has been estimated to be as low as 35 per cent[189]. Yet many Cambodians that were interviewed possessed post-secondary education, often undertaken in a foreign country, and thus had a more sophisticated take on democracy and politics than the average citizen.

Subjects were not paid for their opinions. Given that the bulk of interviews were done with decision-makers this was not a key concern. Street level interviews were much more casual and payment was not discussed or requested. Generally,

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[188] U.S. Government. Cambodia: A Country Study. Washington: Library of Congress. 1990. p. 87
[189] Mydans, S. "Armed and ready for a war on cheating students." The New York Times. July 26. 1997. p. A4

these were casual conversations from which I kept detailed notes at the end of the day.

International NGO personnel were generally candid and helpful. Occasionally it was obvious that a respondent differed in personal opinion from the official position of the organization which they worked for. There were over 130 international NGOs[30] operating in Cambodia in 1998. There were also scores of governmental aid agencies and well over 100 locally based NGOs. The organizations selected for interviews were chosen either because they were conducting work directly related to democratization, local development, or, if they had experienced interruption of funding after the coup of 1997.

Cambodians are extremely guarded with information but I believe Cambodian decision-makers spoke more freely with me, as a low level academic, than they undoubtedly would have with the media for example, as the degree of possible retribution from my work is obviously negligible. Average Cambodians often lacked that sophistication and although I found them extremely guarded, most have grown accustomed to

conversing with Westerners - particularly in the capital -and therefore were unlikely to suspect a Western researcher of spying or harbouring ulterior motives in their discussions. However, Cambodians who have lived within a climate where opinions can have you killed for over 25 years, are undoubtedly less expressive and forthcoming than if that had not been the case.

Further, there was a distinct feeling that respondents often struggled in order to tell you what they thought you wanted to hear. For example, there were many pauses and quizzical expressions following questions. It took a bit of gentle prodding to circumvent the "democracy is great, we love it," initial answers of many. Questions such as those addressed by this research could be construed either as Westerners trying to decide whether or not to stay in Cambodia - many Cambodians possess an extreme fear that the international community will pull out of the country completely again - or that criticism of democracy as it existed translated into a return to genocide. For example,

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[190] Cooperation Committee for Cambodia. *Directory of International Assistance in Cambodia 1998.* Phnom Penh. 1998.

one young monk in Battambang asked the researcher: "If Hun Sen loses the election, will the genocide come back?[191]"

In the urban areas, sufficient English was often spoken for the purposes of interviews. However, outside Battambang in particular, an interpreter from the local demining agency was used. This interpreter seemed efficient and extremely reliable. There was no lack of criticism or seeming revision between the interviewees answer and the interpreter's translation. He even included pauses and uncertainties. However, he was clad in a demining uniform and while de-miners by their constitution must be neutral, some may have taken him as an arm of the authorities in the country.

All notes were taken by hand. This technique has proven most time efficient in my past research and avoids the reticence that often accompanies sound recordings.

In interviews with decision-makers, wherever possible I tried to familiarize myself with their opinions and writings prior to the interview. These secondary materials are listed in the bibliography. This was done in order to best explore

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[191] From and interview in Battambang, May 7, 1998.

the depth of their opinions and seemed especially necessary given the heavy theoretical nature of the subject matter and the rhetoric rampant quality surrounding discussion of democracy in the pre-electoral climate in Cambodia during the summer of 1998.

Personal manipulation of the qualitative data was minimal in my opinion. I went to Cambodia with no foregone conclusions as I was early in the stages of my thesis preparation. Further, I had no prior experience in the research setting. I worked in a Cambodian Institution, the Cambodian Institute of Cooperation and Peace (CICP) during my time in the country. CICP's research focus of ASEAN relations was sufficiently distant from my own research area to prevent conflicts of interest. Further, CICP personnel took no more than passing interest in my personal research activities.

Qualitative material accumulated was generally reliable, telling and supported and complemented by the quantitative election outcomes later in the year and secondary research materials. Secondary research consisted of reading newspapers, academic journals and books which explore recent

international involvement in Cambodia. These materials are listed alphabetically in the bibliography.

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