

Party System Institutionalization in Asia
*Democracies, Autocracies, and the Shadows
of the Past*

Edited by

ALLEN HICKEN

University of Michigan, Ann Arbor

ERIK MARTINEZ KUHONTA

McGill University

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To Neric Acosta and Andrew MacIntyre

9

Party and Party System Institutionalization in Cambodia

Sorpong Peou

This chapter analyses party and party system institutionalization in Cambodia. The country provides an excellent case study that sheds some new light on the theoretical observations made in this volume. Since the country made a historic triple transition in the early 1990s (from war to peace, from command to market economics, and from political authoritarianism to electoral democracy) when four Cambodian armed factions and 18 other foreign states formally signed the Paris Peace Agreements on October 23, 1991, the country's multiparty system and political parties have had more than 20 years to become institutionalized.

The concept of party system and party institutionalization is subject to debate,¹ but this chapter works within the analytical framework developed in this volume. Party and party system institutionalization, as the key dependent variable, is a process not necessarily associated with democratization based on formal or impersonal rules, norms, and decision-making procedures. Institutionalization is defined more or less as a process of stabilization or regularization: party systems become more and more stable over time, and electoral competition becomes less and less volatile because of their growing political legitimacy as measured in terms of growing public support and deepening social roots. Moreover, political parties become less factionalized or more and more organizationally cohesive.

The question to be dealt with here is whether both the political parties and party system in Cambodia have become increasingly institutionalized over time and whether historical legacies explain the levels of party system and party institutionalization. Both Allen Hicken and Erik Martinez Kuhonta make some insightful observations, one of which is that institutionalization can proceed in semi-democratic or semi-authoritarian states (such as Malaysia and Singapore), as dominant parties undermine opposition parties' ability to compete in electoral processes and become institutionalized over time. Party systems that are

increasingly institutionalized are also those that become increasingly stable – because hegemonic parties not only become institutionalized over time but can also push surviving opposition parties to become institutionalized as well. Existing parties that were institutionalized at an earlier point in time, for instance, tend to develop a higher level of institutionalization relative to those that emerged after or more recently.

These insightful observations fit nicely with the theoretical tradition of historical institutionalism, but the key question is whether they enjoy strong empirical support. This chapter advances four main arguments. First, the multiparty system in Cambodia has become more institutionalized in an authoritarian way. The electoral process as a whole has also become less volatile and has gained more legitimacy when assessed in terms of acceptance of the electoral laws; regularity of elections; the National Election Committee (NEC)'s role in managing elections; and a relative decline in the numbers of complaints, protests, and violent incidents before, during, and after polling day. The Election Administration has become institutionally more efficient in technical and organizational terms than in legal and political terms. The NEC in particular tends to prefer informal reconciliation to formal dispute settlement when dealing with election-related complaints and continues to be perceived as politically biased in favor of the ruling party (Cambodian People's Party or CPP). The party system's institutionalization increasingly depends on CPP domination. The system now looks more like a hegemonic one, "in which a relatively institutionalized ruling party monopolizes the political arena, using coercion, patronage, media control, and other means to deny formally legal opposition parties any real chance of competing for power."² Sartori adds, "Other parties are permitted to exist, but as second class, licensed parties."³

Second, the political parties in the country have become thinly, autocratically, and unevenly institutionalized. The CPP has now emerged as the most institutionalized party in comparative terms, whereas the political opposition seems to remain relatively far less institutionalized or, in some cases, even deinstitutionalized. The country held its first national election in May 1993, after which a coalition government was formed and a fairly liberal constitution was adopted, but the regime led by Prime Minister Hun Sen of the CPP has become increasingly and institutionally authoritarian.

Third, the Cambodia case study validates the hypothesis that the growth of institutionalization is primarily a function of time. The current party system and political parties have had since 1991 to develop. The CPP first emerged as the communist party early in the 1980s, before the opposition parties, which emerged only in the 1990s. The CPP was institutionalized earlier than the opposition and thus developed a higher level of institutionalization relative to those that emerged later. However, time alone does not explain why some parties have become more institutionalized than others or why, for instance,

Note: I would like to thank the participants in this book's workshop, especially Dr. Manuel Litalien, Ambassador Gordon Longmuir, and the two reviewers for their useful comments. I alone am responsible for what this chapter contains.

¹ In my work, for instance, I develop the concept of democratic institutionalization. See Peou 2007.

² Diamond 2002: 25.

³ Sartori 1976: 230.

the winner of the 1993 election – the National United Front for an Independent, Neutral, Peaceful, and Cooperative Cambodia (FUNCINPEC) – has become more factionalized and disintegrated (instead of more institutionalized as the CPP became increasingly dominant); nor why the Buddhist Liberal Democracy Party (BLDP) – whose faction was a major signatory of the 1991 peace agreements – ceased to function as a party. Political cleavages did give rise to party and party system institutionalization in this country, but they alone do not explain the low and uneven levels of that institutionalization. If historical legacies matter, cultural and ideological legacies also need to be taken into account. Complex historical legacies help explain why the CPP has become more institutionalized than other parties but has remained far from institutionalized. Historical institutionalism, however, has its explanatory limits: evidence throughout this chapter shows that time functions and historical legacies alone did not necessitate the process of authoritarian institutionalization.

Fourth, party system and party institutionalization in Cambodia was also a product of recent domestic and international policy and politics. At the domestic level, the institutional process was part not only of past legacies but, more importantly, of political performance, regime legitimacy, and domestic power distribution. The CPP leadership has been far more effective than other political parties in terms of both gaining legitimacy through economic performance and consolidating power. At the international level, members of the international community, especially donors, were also partly responsible for the authoritarian and uneven institutionalization of parties and the party system in that they have helped provide the Hun Sen regime with international legitimacy, despite the fact that the CPP has succeeded in consolidating power at the expense of the opposition.

THE AUTHORITARIAN INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF CAMBODIA'S MULTIPARTY SYSTEM

This section assesses the process of institutionalization within the political party system overall and within individual political parties. It covers a period of 22 years: from October 1991, when four Cambodian armed factions signed a peace agreement establishing a multiparty system, to mid-2013. Various indicators show that the multiparty system has now given way to a nascent hegemonic party system, which has become more institutionalized but remains weakly or thinly and increasingly unevenly so.

It may be worth briefly reviewing what this volume means by party system institutionalization. In this volume, both Hicken and Kubouta make the following arguments based on the work of Samuel Huntington and Scott Mainwaring and Timothy Scully. First, Huntington focuses on the level of institutionalization (“the process by which organizations and procedures acquire value and stability”), which can be assessed in terms of adaptability, coherence, complexity, and autonomy. Mainwaring and Scully, however, focus on party system

institutionalization. Second, the concept of institutionalization advanced by Mainwaring and Scully subsumes that of Huntington: institutionalization is thus defined by four factors: (1) stability in the rules and nature of interparty competition; (2) parties having stable roots in society; (3) legitimacy in the electoral process and within parties themselves; and (4) parties becoming cohesive, disciplined, and autonomous. Third, highly institutionalized party systems need not be democratic and may have their roots in authoritarian institutionalized parties.

The Cambodian case study shows that the multiparty system has become more institutionalized over time when assessed in terms of stabilization. The electoral rules governing interparty competition have not been subject to constant substantial revision. New rules for electoral competition were first introduced in the Paris Peace Agreements. The rules, based on an electoral law and a code of conduct regulating participation in the election, included free and fair elections, fair access to the media, and respect for election outcomes. The new constitution (adopted in 1993) reaffirmed these rules. The government also adopted the Law on Political Parties and the Election of Members of the National Assembly (LEMNA) in December 1997 and the Law on the Election of Commune Councils in March 2001 and made some amendments after that (such as one to the electoral law adopted by the National Assembly and enacted on September 17, 2002 aimed at streamlining the electoral process and reducing costs).

The competitive electoral process as a whole also appeared to become more stable. The National Assembly elections of 1993, 1998, 2003, and 2008, the senate elections of 2006 and 2012 and the commune (third-level administrative division below district level) elections of 2002, 2007, and 2012 further reveal a growing degree of stability and electoral regularity within the multiparty system. The electoral process's stabilization can also be assessed in terms of a general decline in the overall numbers of parties, complaints, protests, and violent incidents before, during, and after polling day. The number of political parties registered to compete in the electoral process has declined, indicating that fewer parties mean less polarization, but remained stable overall. At the national level, 20 parties were registered to compete in the 1993 national election; however, the number increased to 39 parties in the 1998 national election and then declined to 23 in the 2003 national election, to only 11 in the 2008 national election and to only 8 in the July 2013 election, and 10 in the 2012 commune election.

The number of violent incidents, complaints, and protests related to the electoral process has also declined in recent years. Major reports by the UN special representative for human rights in Cambodia, regarding the national elections in 1998, 2008, and 2013 and the commune elections in 2002, 2007, and 2012 documented less and less political intimidation and violence, political killings, other instances of violent deaths, as well as the limits of the opposition's access to the media, especially during election time. During the 1998 election,

widespread political intimidation and abuses were documented.⁴ The 2003 election also witnessed intimidation of voters and political activists across the country but was marked by less violence and political intimidation.⁵ In the period preceding the commune polls on February 3, 2002 and after, violence and intimidation remained serious (of the 19 people who were murdered, 17 were political activists affiliated to FUNCINPEC and the Sam Rainsy Party (SRP)).⁶ During the period leading to the second commune election in 2007 and the National Assembly election in 2008, cases of political intimidation against political activists were reported to have increased.⁷ Overall, however, the level of violence during the 2007 commune election was lower than that of the 2003 election. The 2008 National Assembly election also witnessed a decline in the level of armed violence against members of the opposition. The 2012 commune election was even more peaceful than the previous ones. Only a few activists working for opposition parties were killed in the run-up to the election, but it remains unclear whether the killings were politically motivated. Based on reports by human rights groups confirming “only rare cases of politically motivated violence or physical intimidation,” the UN Special Rapporteur characterizes the pre-election situation in 2013 as “very calm.”⁸

The number of complaints and protests has also declined over time. In the 2003 election, for instance, the number of complaints relating to voting, ballot verification, and counting and consolidation of results was 396.⁹ The number of complaints in the 2008 election was lower than in the previous elections. The commune elections of 2002 and 2007 also witnessed a decline in the number of complaints: from 800 in the weeks following the 1998 election and 745 in 2003 to 326 in 2007.¹⁰ The number of protests against election outcomes also declined. After the 1993 election, the CPP protested the election results by threatening to divide the country. The subsequent elections resulted in the party's victory and protests by the opposition, but the latter staged fewer and fewer protests against the election results. After the 1998 election, opposition parties staged demonstrations, accusing Hun Sen of fraud and demanding his ouster, which led to violent clashes with the police. The 2008 election saw some initial protests by opposition parties against alleged election fraud, but the protests soon died down as they found themselves in disarray. The post-2013 election situation was more volatile, however, in that opposition members took to the streets in protest against the results.

The Election Administration (which included the NEC) has also become more institutionalized over time, especially after the 1998 election, when assessed in terms of technical and organizational development. A report by the International Republican Institute states that “the NEC’s accomplishments appear to have been largely technical in nature.”¹¹ During the election of 2003, according to the United Nations Development Program, the NEC also “operated a more transparent and participatory process” by scheduling “regular meetings with political parties, NGOs and media representatives” and becoming more “responsive to the preoccupations of Cambodian society as a whole.”¹²

Fewer political parties, less election-related violence and intimidation, fewer complaints about election irregularities, less frequent public protests against election results and more technically and organizationally efficient election administration mean more political stability based on coercion and co-optation, but not more democratic institutionalization based on higher degrees of political legitimacy. First, the Election Administration remains far from democratically institutionalized, when assessed in terms of formal legal enforcement. The NEC ineffectively enforced the electoral laws or its own directives. The investigation of criminal acts, including politically motivated killings by local police and CPP elements, stalled. The NEC issued directives – often based on appeals from its own chairman – but rarely imposed sanctions on violators. Electoral authorities showed limited accountability for their actions, particularly those related to intimidation and violence during election times. Moreover, policy decisions and subsequent policy actions taken by electoral authorities did not show adequate transparency and accountability. During election times, for instance, the rule of transparency was often challenged when electoral officials refused to implement complicated regulations and procedures or investigate complaints and were reluctant to issue sanctions, preferring instead to rely on conciliation. According to a report by the UN special representative, “While the 2003 elections saw the first application of sanctions by the National Election Committee and its provincial commissions, the electoral authorities were largely ineffective in dealing with serious breaches of the ‘Electoral Law.’”¹³ During the cooling-off period – the voting and counting days of the 2012 commune election – some 3,000 irregularities (such as intimidation, vote buying, and the destruction of opposition parties’ leaflets and logos) were reported.¹⁴ Moreover, the NEC still lacked transparency and its dispute settlement mechanisms remained unchanged: it still relied on reconciliation as an informal means to deal with election complaints.¹⁵

⁴ See, for instance, Hammarberg 1998.

⁵ Commission on Human Rights (2003: 7–9); Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Human Rights in Cambodia (2003: 8–16).

⁶ UN General Assembly 2002: 6.

⁷ ADHOC 2008: 14.

⁸ Special Rapporteur 2013: 11.

⁹ UNDP 2003: 21.

¹⁰ UNDP 2007: 26.

¹¹ International Republican Institute (n.d.): 7 (italics in original).

¹² UNDP 2003: 6, 7.

¹³ Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Human Rights in Cambodia (n.d.): 4–5.

¹⁴ COMFREL 2012a.

¹⁵ Ibid.

Second, the electoral process has been regarded as still not genuinely free or fair. The NEC has been perceived as being dominated by the CPP. The CPP-dominated Ministry of the Interior controlled the NEC's budget, and the NEC headquarters remains located within the ministry's compound. The ministry also showed more willingness to ban peaceful demonstrations, strikes, and any form of protest against the regime. Before the 2003 election, National Police Chief General Hok Lundy had even made it clear to the public in general and the electorate in particular that post-election protests and violence would not be tolerated. One report, for example, states: "*Many NEC actions – and just as frequently its inaction – reinforced concerns regarding the NEC's political neutrality and contributed significantly to the climate of impunity that allowed for widespread political violence, election law violations, and intimidation of voters.*"¹⁶ Prior to the 2008 election, observers had remained skeptical about the institutional independence of the more technically competent NEC, because its members were still appointed by a few political parties, especially the CPP: the NEC headquarters were still located within the CPP-controlled Ministry of the Interior, and the NEC had no subnational structure and still relied on commune councils, which were dominated by the CPP and took orders from the Ministry of the Interior. There still exists a political atmosphere of insecurity in the country, as people have become increasingly hesitant to raise voices critical of government policies. Before the 2012 commune election, the CPP was still accused of having used state resources, civil servants, and even armed personnel to help it conduct the election campaign. Moreover, the party continued to control state and private media to ensure its electoral victory.¹⁷ The UN Special Rapporteur questioned whether the 2013 elections were free and fair, expressing concerns over the independence of the NEC, freedom of expression, and access to media for all political parties.¹⁸

Third, popular interest in elections has also declined. According to a survey conducted in August 2007, most Cambodian voters (74 percent) were either somewhat or very dissatisfied with the way democracy worked.¹⁹ The levels of voter turnout also declined. The National Assembly elections saw steady drops in the voter turnout after 1998: 86.78 percent of the eligible voters (1993); 93.74 percent (1998), 83.22 percent (2003), 75.21 percent (2008), and 68.49 percent (2013).²⁰ The last three commune elections also witnessed steady drops in the voter turnout: from 87 percent of the eligible voters (2002) to 67 percent (2007) and 60 percent (2012).²¹

Party and Party System Institutionalization in Cambodia

THE LIMITS AND UNEVEN (HEGEMONIC) INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF POLITICAL PARTIES

The extent to which the political parties have become autocratically institutionalized is difficult to assess, but the CPP has definitely become far more institutionalized than any other opposition party. However, party institutionalization remains unevenly authoritarian.

The political opposition has not grown institutionally stronger. Founded in 1978, the royalist party (FUNCINPEC) depended on the personal charisma of its top leader, Prince Norodom Ranariddh, whose party won the 1993 election largely because of his royal status as a son of King/Prince Norodom Sihanouk. Prince Ranariddh would remain president for life. But he soon found himself in the position of being unable to maintain political stability within the party because of personal scandals involving corruption and extramarital affairs, as well as his fallout with Hun Sen. After 1997, FUNCINPEC lost almost all of its political and military muscle and badly disintegrated. Ranariddh was ousted from his party in 2006 and formed a new party, the Norodom Ranariddh Party. Badly split, FUNCINPEC won only two seats in the 2008 national election and weakened further after that. The new party leader Keo Puth Rasmey (and its secretary general, Nhek Bun Chhay) has enjoyed less political legitimacy within the party. He remains a political lightweight, and after the poor performance in the 2008 election, a faction within FUNCINPEC sought to oust him.²²

Meanwhile, senior party officials were under pressure to support or defect to the CPP. A series of defections by leading royalists to CPP continued unabated. As of 2008, about 20 high-ranking FUNCINPEC officials had reportedly decided to leave their party for the CPP. In December 2008, for instance, General Serei Kosal of FUNCINPEC (who commanded royalist troops in the fight against Hun Sen's forces after the coup in 1997) finally decided to defect to the CPP. He was reported to have said that he "now recognize[d] the achievement of the national and international policies of the CPP... a party with good discipline."²³ In early 2009, Sun Chanthol (a former minister) also defected to the CPP, followed by the defection of another former minister and former ambassador to Japan, Pou Sothirak. The number of its seats within the National Assembly declined drastically from 58 (1993) to 43 (1998) and to only 2 (2008). Social support for FUNCINPEC weakened over the years, when assessed in terms of the decreased number of voters supporting the party between 1993 and 2013: 1,824,188 (1993), 1,554,790 (1998), 958,426 (2002), 1,072,313 (2003), 277,545 (2007), 303,764 (2008), and only 242,413 (2013).²⁴

¹⁶ International Republican Institute (n.d.): 7 (italics in original).

¹⁷ COMFREL 2012b.

¹⁸ Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Cambodia (2013: 11).

¹⁹ Ray and Naurath 2008.

²⁰ International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, n.d.

²¹ Voice of America 2012.

²² *Phnom Penh Post*, December 15, 2008.

²³ *Phnom Penh Post*, December 10, 2008.

²⁴ Trustbuilding's Blog 2013.

As recently as 2012 when the last commune election was held, both FUNCINPEC and the Norodom Ranariddh Party received only 396,000 votes. FUNCINPEC won only one seat of commune chief in the election. The Norodom Ranariddh Party did not become more institutionalized either. It performed badly in the 2008 national election: it received only 337,943 votes and two seats (one seat fewer than the new Human Rights Party [HRP]).²⁵ In December 2008, having finally decided to leave politics, Prince Ranariddh was appointed chief adviser to King Norodom Sihamoni. The party did not even win a commune chief seat in 2012. In August of that year, the party was given a new name (the Nationalist Party) and was subsequently merged with FUNCINPEC. It remains to be seen whether this party reunification will result in further institutionalization.

The Sam Rainsy Party (SRP) has become more institutionalized than FUNCINPEC, but it remains far from stable. The SRP has a history of personalism and intraparty factionalism, which have prevented the party from achieving strong internal unity. When it was first formed in November 1995, it was known as the Khmer Nation Party (KNP), but Sam Rainsy renamed it the Sam Rainsy Party for various reasons, including that the Ministry of the Interior refused to register the KNP because someone else had already done so and the party under that name did not enjoy international support; however, the SRP name was also adopted because no one else within or outside the party could take it away from him. The party is still known for its heavy dependence on the personal charisma of Sam Rainsy. Maintaining loyalty with the party remains a challenge. Defections to the CPP took place. As of November 2009, for instance, more than 100 SRP members, including Sam Rainsy's personal bodyguards, had reportedly defected to the CPP.²⁶ Those who defected from the party maintained that party committees had no real power, because the president – Sam Rainsy – still controlled the decision-making process. For instance, in 2007 a member of its Steering Committee, Ken Virak, left to form his own party, the People's Power Party, because he had become disillusioned with the SRP. According to Ou Virak, president of the Cambodian Center for Human Rights, "there are some good people in the party that I know that cannot move up in the ranks. There are some very good people who were left out."²⁷ The party's Steering Committee was nominally in charge of party decision making but apparently no longer had any real power. Sam Rainsy has even proved unable to form an alliance with any other opposition parties such as the HRP, whose institutionalization will be discussed later.

The SRP, however, has gained more popular support than any other opposition party, but the number of voters supporting it declined in the last commune election. Having gained 15 seats in the 1998 election, 24 in the 2003 election,

and 26 in the 2008 election, the SRP has now emerged as the main opposition party in the National Assembly. The number of voters supporting the SRP steadily increased, as evident in the following election results: 699,665 (1998), 731,150 (2002), 1,130,423 (2003), and 1,316,714 (2008).²⁸ In 2012, however, the party received fewer votes (about 1,220,000), representing a decrease in its share of the votes from 21.9 percent to 20.8 percent or in the number of commune chief seats from 28 in 2007 to 22 in 2012. The party, however, remains popular in major urban areas but still seems unable to build strong social support far beyond that. The party was regarded as being "like a scared child – the more things happen to them, the more they start to pull back. They refrain from meeting people and they refrain from opening up because of bad experiences."²⁹

The only opposition party that appears to have become more institutionalized in recent years is the HRP. Founded on July 22, 2007 and led by the former senator Kem Sokha, the HRP adopted a system of checks and balances based on the idea that its top leaders must be elected and kept in check. Unlike the other parties that operate on the strict basis of one-person rule, top HRP leaders are elected at its convention. During the 2008 election, the party participated in elections for the first time and succeeded in taking third place, having won three seats in the National Assembly. The 2012 commune chief election resulted in the party winning 18 commune chief positions. Still, it is too early to say how institutionalized the party became because it agreed in July 2012 with the SRP leadership to form a new party called the Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP).

Inaugurated on September 12, 2012, the CNRP may become more institutionalized, but it still faced the challenge of competing for power against the CPP in the National Assembly 2013 election, in which it received far more votes than expected: 2,946,176. However, it is far from clear that the new party will be able to maintain and enhance its political unity. Only time will tell, as the party remains nascent and resource-poor. The CNRP has now launched the Cambodian Democratic Movement for National Restoration to raise funds and promote its values, but it is likely to face suppression if and when it becomes a growing threat to the CPP.

There is no doubt that the CPP has now developed the best party organization in the country. Following the UN intervention in the early 1990s, the CPP expanded its party structure at provincial, district, commune, and village levels. It has important party committees: Standing, Permanent, and Central. The Central Committee has 263 members (compared to only 64 in the early 1990s). Party members at the local and provincial levels, however, still do not have an effective communication system with their national party leaders. CPP members of parliament, provincial offices hardly function; their staff members

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ *Khmerization* 2009.

²⁷ Cited in the *Phnom Penh Post*, December 4, 2009.

²⁸ Trustbuilding's Blog 2013.

²⁹ Ibid.

remain too few in numbers, cannot provide information asked for, and had no or little contact with their MPs, 90 percent of whom lived in Phnom Penh on a permanent basis. Moreover, the local party structure remains rudimentary. There was no financial transparency; sources of funds and expenditures were said to have been disclosed only to the Finance Committee and the Central Committee. Party members received no financial information. The CPP has now developed the ability to sustain itself better than other parties and has been able to maintain its members' loyalties. Party disunity appears to have become less of a problem. Defection to other parties has been nearly nonexistent; only a few CPP officials have defected to other parties – such as CPP Economic Police Department Deputy Director Nhim Kim Nhol (CPP police colonel), who joined the SRP (Sam Rainsy Party) in October 2002.

The party has become less factionalized in recent years. Some top party leaders did not support Hun Sen's coup in 1997 after a period of escalating political tension between the CPP and FUNCINPEC, for instance. According to Gordon Longmuir, a former Canadian ambassador to Cambodia, "The most perilous period for Hun Sen came immediately after the 1997 coup de force, which had been opposed by Sar Kheng, the co-Minister of the Interior, General Ke Kim Yan, the Armed Forces Commander, and, most importantly, Chea Sim, the President of the Party."³⁰ Sar Kheng sought to protect Ho Sok (FUNCINPEC secretary of state for the Ministry of the Interior) but failed: General Hok Lundy (police chief), Hun Sen's main ally, succeeded in extra-judicially executing Ho Sok. Longmuir adds: "Hun Sen's loyal military and police forces stood behind him and this persuaded 'moderate' CPP forces to stifle their reservations."³¹ Hun Sen also came under criticism in 1998 for having failed to win majorities in areas previously considered CPP strongholds. Before the 2003 election, the question of party leadership had surfaced and the internal struggle for power continued unabated, as two dominant CPP factions sought to overcome each other. In 2005, Hun Sen publicly attacked General Ke Kim Yan, saying that the general would be fired if he disobeyed orders because the prime minister controlled the armed forces. Even after the 2008 election, the struggle for power within the party continued, finally leading to the dismissal of Ke Kim Yan early in 2009. Meanwhile, Hun Sen continued to consolidate his power by appointing his political loyalists as top military and police commanders and working against any CPP members seen as threatening to him. The anti-Hun Sen CPP faction has been subdued but not defeated. Hun Sen has cautioned against party members regarded as still capable of challenging his political position. In May 2012, for instance, he warned against any attempts to reshuffle the government administration that would diminish his grip on power, targeting two top CPP leaders: Chea Sim (CPP and senate president) who could not prevent the removal of his protégé (Ke Kim Yan) and Heng Samrin (National Assembly president). Hun

Sen made it clear that he was his own master in 1977 when he led the revolt against Pol Pot and remains so today. In his words, "Nobody could represent as the master of Hun Sen, not even ... Heng Samrin and ... Chea Sim; they could not be my masters."³²

The CPP has also become more institutionalized than any opposition parties in terms of its ability to mobilize, sustain, and expand social support. The party membership was small in the 1980s – between only 12,500 and 30,000 or about 0.36 percent of the population.³³ In more recent decades, its social support has grown, as its impressive victories during the 1998, 2003, and 2008 national elections and the 2002, 2007, and 2012 commune elections as well as its continued countrywide domination over communes and villages has shown. The number of people who voted for the party in national elections increased steadily from 1,533,471 in 1993, to 2,030,790 in 1998, to 2,447,259 in 2003, to 3,492,374 in 2008, but dropped slightly to 3,235,969 in 2013 (although the opposition maintained that the number was much lower).³⁴

In short, the party system and political parties have become somewhat more institutionalized over the past two decades, but the general level of institutionalization remains low and uneven, when assessed both quantitatively and qualitatively in terms of electoral volatility and legitimacy (parties' social roots, their organizational effectiveness, and intraparty political unity). If there is any evidence of growing stability, it seems to have less to do with a higher degree of institutionalization than with consolidation and personalization of political power. The party system's institutional development remains rooted in personal politics that are more hegemonic than democratic. The CPP has kept winning more seats at the expense of opposition parties and has emerged as the most institutionalized party; however, its institutional stability lies in the growing concentration of power in the hands of a few elite members, most notably Hun Sen. The process of party and party system institutionalization can thus be considered to go hand-in-hand with hegemonic party politics.

THE MERITS AND LIMITS OF HISTORICAL INSTITUTIONALISM

This section tests the proposition that time functions and historical legacies matter when we seek to explain the process of party system and party institutionalization. As will be shown, the proposition has both some empirical support and limited explanatory power.

The hypothesis that party system and party institutionalization is a matter of time has some empirical support. Cambodia's current party system is still young. Until the end of World War II, the country had never developed a party system. Between World War II and 1953, when Cambodia gained independence, the

³² Hui 2012: 18.

³³ United Nations 1990: 84–85

³⁴ Trustbuilding's Blog 2013.

³⁰ Gordon Longmuir (n.d.): 6.

³¹ Ibid.

French allowed parties to be established and elections to be held. But the parties and the party system were soon subject to repression by then-King Norodom Sihanouk, who sought to strengthen his own political party (Sangkum Reasmeyum, based on Buddhist socialism) as the hegemonic one. Left without any hopes for political victory, members of the opposition, led by leftist elements, either sought to cooperate with Sihanouk or carried their activities underground. In 1970, Sihanouk was overthrown and the Khmer Republic was established. The new regime under the leadership of President Lon Nol (1970–1975) had little time for the building of a party system and political party institutions. A civil war began, and a new wave of electoral politics emerged and a new multiparty system was briefly established. Cambodia was once again subject to the ravages of war, which left political parties, and the party system, weakly institutionalized. The Pol Pot regime lasted no more than four years. It came to power after five years of war and sought to build a communist party. The regime brought down all the pre-1975 political institutions. The Khmer Rouge did seek to build new institutions; however, its leaders found themselves immersed in violent struggles and self-destructed; the war with Vietnam also consumed them and led to their downfall in early 1979. The new socialist regime (known as the People's Republic of Kampuchea, PRK later renamed the State of Cambodia, SOC) had to start building new institutions from scratch. The party system was quickly established but remained rudimentary, with the ruling Communist Party the sole party allowed by law.

Since the early 1990s, the political party system has become more institutionalized. The current system has developed over a period of 20 years. As noted earlier, Cambodia clearly shows a degree of party system institutionalization with some continuity in this process. From the early 1990s to 2012, the country enjoyed a more stable period in which it institutionalized a party system. The five National Assembly elections (1993, 1998, 2003, 2008, and 2013), the two senate elections (2006 and 2012), and the three commune elections (2002, 2007, and 2012) show that time matters.

The holding of regular elections has allowed political parties to develop. The hypothesis that party institutionalization is more likely over time with an authoritarian regime thus has some empirical support. If the CPP has become more institutionalized than other parties in the country, it is because it also has the oldest party structures and has had more time to build them. Throughout the 1980s, the Communist Party remained the only political party and the most dominant political institution. The party adopted “a line and policy based on the creative application of a genuine Marxism-Leninism.”³⁵ It was organized into four levels: central, provincial, district, and commune. The Party Central Committee (which had five party commissions, some of which may have been quite elaborate) had 64 members who elected the 13 members of the Politburo

Party and Party System Institutionalization in Cambodia

(comprising the secretariat of the committee). By the time Cambodia held its first election in 1993, the CPP had enjoyed more than 10 years to prepare itself as a party. By 2012, the CPP had had more than 30 years to institutionalize itself.

Opposition parties, by comparison, have not become as institutionalized as the CPP. They emerged as armed resistance forces. Both the FUNCINPEC and the Khmer People's National Liberation Front/Buddhist Liberal Democratic Party (KPNLF/BLDP) were founded after the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia in 1978 and were preoccupied with the war against the PRK/SOC. Their armed forces and supporting populations were scattered along the Thai–Cambodian border and were subjected to military attacks from both the PRK/into political parties only when they began to prepare for the 1993 election. The two armed factions turned political parties were 10 years younger than the CPP. The passage of time alone, however, does not necessarily or automatically lead to higher levels of party system and party institutionalization. Even the monarchy – the oldest and most institutionalized system of government, which has endured for centuries – has weakened to the breaking point. Time did not help FUNCINPEC and the BLDP become more institutionalized: as noted earlier, both in fact became less and less institutionalized; as noted earlier, politics grew intense. The BLDP split and ceased to function, and FUNCINPEC splintered and barely survived. The CPP is far from becoming institutionalized, despite the fact that it has been the oldest party in Cambodia. The basic questions regarding time functions as an independent variable for explaining institutionalization are how long it takes for political systems and parties to become institutionalized and at what point can we consider them institutionalized and why.

What other variables help shed light on the limits and uneven levels of party and party system institutionalization in Cambodia? In general, historical institutionalism also places emphasis on past trajectories or path-dependent development. Policy choices being made today are constrained by choices made early in the development of a particular institution. This perspective can help explain particularities and specificities, or the diversity of party systems in different countries.³⁶ As is shown next, historical institutionalism has explanatory power: historical legacies also matter but only if they include cultural and ideological legacies, which help explain authoritarian institutionalization.

The hypothesis that historical cleavages give rise to party institutionalization also has some empirical support. Although economic class-based, religious, and ethnic cleavages have not been a key factor for party institutionalization, political cleavages have been. The Paris Peace Agreements, which led to the 1993 election, had much to do with the fact that competing political factions were waging war in Cambodia. The 1991 agreements turned the armed factions

³⁵ United Nations 1990: 86, citing a report by the Fourth National Congress of the United Front for the Construction and Defense of the Kampuchean Motherland Front.

³⁶ Hopkin 2002: 263.

into political parties, each of which competed in the election. Political cleavages thus have given rise to party system and party institutionalization.

However, these pronounced political cleavages have also prevented greater institutionalization. One could, in fact, argue that they have contributed to the crisis of legitimacy within the party system and political parties. The party system has not enjoyed as much legitimacy as it could have. The opposition, as noted earlier, tended to claim that the NEC favored the CPP and thus challenged election results, although its criticism has now become less severe. Political cleavages within political parties, especially those in the opposition, kept them factionalized, internally unstable, and prone to defection.

Earlier party policy decisions also matter. Some anti-CPP observers blamed FUNCINPEC's leadership in particular for having made several strategic errors early on, particularly by agreeing to share power with the CPP after it won the 1993 national election. According to critics, this decision was fateful: it allowed the CPP to remain part of the state structure and to gain political strength to the point where it subsequently weakened the royalists. Another error of judgment was that the royalists never attempted to transform themselves into a modern party, moving away from elitism and toward building a strong social basis. The decision to keep FUNCINPEC as a royalist party did not allow it to maintain a strong social basis (despite the popularity of Sihanouk and Ranariddh, who relied on his traditional legitimacy at the expense of enhancing legitimacy through good policy performance and technical rationality). As a result, the party became fragmented when Ranariddh was implicated in various scandals, and his downfall led to its splintering into small factions. The inability of FUNCINPEC to transform its leader-dependent structures into a democratic party helps explain why the royalist party did not develop institutionally but in fact became deinstitutionalized.

Historical institutionalism can help explain authoritarian institutionalization if traditional "values, norms, interests, identities and beliefs" are taken into account.³⁷ Many Cambodia scholars regard traditional norms in this country as authoritarian. Authoritarianism existed for centuries and remains resilient. Cambodian culture does not promote compromise – a norm generally regarded as "alien" to Cambodia.³⁸ Cambodian culture may help explain why the CPP in particular emerged as the most institutionalized party. The monarchy remained highly centralized; Cambodians viewed their kings as divine, and many Cambodians still regard their government as a father figure rather than a servant. Many of the human rights NGOs are run by leaders who remain institutionally authoritarian, resist efforts to promote decentralization, and tend to score low for institutional accountability and transparency. Their staff appear less active and feel estranged from their leaders.³⁹ Cultural norms are

thus consistent with authoritarian institutions in general and authoritarian institutionalization within the party system and parties in particular.

If election administration has not become more institutionalized as determined earlier, it is also because the previous socialist regime had established few elaborate electoral procedures and authorities – the highest of which were the Electoral Council (made up of representatives of the Central Committee of the People's Revolutionary Party of Kampuchea (PRPK) and the United Front for the Construction and Defense of the Kampuchean Motherland, whose role was to provide "solid supports of the state" and to follow the party as the United Front's "leading core" – or various mass organizations, which came under the auspices of the United Front.⁴¹ The regime also held National Assembly elections on May 1, 1981, providing some 8,000 polling stations. After that, no new limited purpose of filling vacancies, and the five-year mandate of the existing National Assembly was renewed in 1986 for an additional five-year term (due to expire in 1991). Elections at the village level were held sporadically, depending on whether a community was considered "organized." Thus, throughout the 1980s, little party system institutionalization took place: Cambodia held only one national election. The socialist regime maintained a one-party system. Building strong armed forces and providing public employees, the masses, and the armed forces with political and ideological education seemed to be the main tasks. With such institutional legacies, one could thus make the case that the process of party system institutionalization should not be expected to mature any more quickly than it has.

The fact that the CPP has become more institutionalized than other parties also has something to do with its past disciplinary socialism. Critics attribute the authoritarian institutionalization of the CPP to the fact that "the CPP is tightly disciplined along classic Stalinist lines – a structure that it has used to its advantage."⁴² Socialist policy legacies helped the CPP become institutionally more cohesive, disciplinary, and disciplined than anti-communist opposition parties in the country. When compared with other political parties, the CPP has developed the best system of disciplining its party members and has built the strongest party network in the country. Because of its tight control over its party members, the CPP has developed the capacity to prevent the defections experienced by other parties (most notably FUNCINPEC and the SRP), largely because it has succeeded in consolidating its power at their expense (thus having more power to deter potential defectors).

Overall, however, the explanatory power of historical legacies still remains indeterminate. Although post-communist states did come from similar starting points in terms of ideology – that is, single-party systems – they have moved in diverse and radically different directions, "ranging from prosperous social

³⁷ March and Olsen 1989: 17.

³⁸ For cultural explanations, see Heder 1995: 425–429.

³⁹ Peung-Meoh 2001: 335.

⁴⁰ Vighnen 2001: 21.

⁴¹ United Nations 1990: 222–230.

⁴² Jellies 2001: 350.

democracies to sultanistic or even dynastic regimes.”⁴³ Cultural legacies help explain why authoritarian politics may persist and why authoritarian parties still persist in Cambodia, but it cannot explain why they fall or disintegrate and give way to multiparty electoral politics in other countries. Cultural and ideological explanations tend to exaggerate the stability of authoritarianism. Traditional culture resists the introduction of modern cultural values, but it does not explain party and party system institutionalization in some societies where traditional values used to persist.⁴⁴ Culture always seems more dynamic than static.⁴⁵ When manipulated by elites to serve their ends, traditional values may be discredited.⁴⁶ Past choices and decisions are no doubt important, but some questions continue to nag at us, such as which choices and decisions, who makes them, and under what circumstances?

MAKING MORE SENSE OF UNEVEN AUTHORITARIAN INSTITUTIONALIZATION IN THE PARTY SYSTEM AND PARTIES

The fact that Cambodia's multiparty system and the CPP have now become more institutionalized than in the past but remain weakly institutionalized requires further explanation. Time functions and historical legacies often depend on other variables such as performance, power relations, and international legitimacy.

The CPP has succeeded in institutionalizing itself because its government has performed well economically. The overall trend in economic growth has been positive over recent decades with high GDP growth rates: 6.2 percent (2002), 8.6 percent (2003), 10.0 percent (2004), 13.4 percent (2005), 10.7 percent (2006), 10.1 percent (2007), 7.5 percent (2008), 7.8 percent (2011), 6.2 percent (2012). The economy was expected to grow by 7.2 percent in 2013 and to pick up to 7.5 percent in 2014.⁴⁷ The economy has benefited from growth in several sectors such as the construction, garment, and tourism industries; fiscal stability (although inflation has risen in recent years); and fairly balanced budgets. The CPP government's good economic performance has no doubt contributed to its recent electoral successes, as well as the fact that many Cambodian voters have seen no effective political alternatives. Other country cases such as Singapore, Malaysia, and even China also show that performance legitimacy based on economic development helps institutionalize party systems dominated by ruling

Party and Party System Institutionalization in Cambodia

parties. Time will not be on their side if ruling parties fail to perform well economically.

The CPP has also proved itself more effective than the other parties at using bribery to buy votes and co-opt opponents. Its Central and Provincial Offices own businesses, such as transportation rentals and real estate;⁴⁸ it has become the richest party in the country and can thus afford to build up its party structures and consolidate its base of social support – unlike the opposition parties, which tend to experience financial difficulties. In addition, the Hun Sen government has had more resources to reward those who jumped on its bandwagon. However, opposition parties have had far fewer resources than the CPP and thus have been less able to develop their institutions and prepare for elections. During the 2012 election, for instance, FUNCINPEC spent less than \$200 on each contested commune, the Norodom Ranariddh Party about \$200, the HRP about \$300, the Sam Rainsy Party about \$1,500, whereas the CPP was the biggest spender – about \$9,000.⁴⁹

The extent to which some political parties have performed more effectively than others also depends on the changing dynamics of power distribution and relations. The 1991 Paris Peace Agreements reflect on power relations among the political contenders who could not destroy one another by force and thus chose to compete for power through the ballot box. The fact that FUNCINPEC agreed to share power with the CPP after the 1993 election was not simply a strategic error: the decision also had to do with the reality of asymmetrical power relations – essentially, the fact that the CPP was a far more powerful contender that could not be pushed out of the political arena. As a political and military force, FUNCINPEC was no match for the CPP, which controlled state institutions, including the communes across the country, and had built a superior military force. The 1997 coup against Ranariddh and the subsequent quick decimation of the royalist forces further reveal that FUNCINPEC could never have afforded to govern the country on its own after its electoral victory in 1993. The SRP has also been effectively subject to political repression. The CPP has thus become more institutionalized than the opposition because its leadership has proved itself more effective than the opposition in consolidating power.

The CPP's successes also had much to do with the growing support it has received from members of the international community, especially donors – both bilateral and multilateral. Donors have also allowed the CPP's institutionalization to develop more effectively than that of any of the opposition parties. The acts and omissions of external agencies have also affected the domestic balance of power (after the signing of the 1991 agreements), which has shifted in favor of the CPP. The Paris Peace Agreements turned three resistance factions into separate parties competing for power in the electoral process, but left the

⁴³ King 2000: 168.

⁴⁴ For critiques of cultural determinism and relativism, see Chaiyong 2004: 93–107.

⁴⁵ Culture does not always determine political behavior; it can also be seen as constructed by elites to justify their authoritarian rule. The debate over Asian values, for instance, resulted from the strategy of Asian elites to maintain their authoritarian regimes. See, e.g., Kaulikan 1993: 24–51; Zakaria 1994: 109–126; Mahbubani 1995: 100–111; Kaulikan 1997: 24–34.

⁴⁶ Some Asian elites do not accept the primacy of Asian values seen as antidemocratic; see Kim 1994: 189–194.

⁴⁷ Asian Development Bank 2013: 219.

⁴⁸ Interview with Chantha Muth of the National Democratic Institute, Phnom Penh, Cambodia, January 24, 2006.

⁴⁹ COMFREL 2012a.

SOC/CPP intact. The agreements included the Khmer Rouge, but the United Nation Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) did not do enough to disarm the rival factions and thus left the CPP in the best military position to weaken its opponents.⁵⁰ UNTAC also played a role in allowing the CPP to force the royalists to share power after the party had lost the 1993 election.

The CPP has benefited from the support of the international community because of the latter's concern about the return of the Khmer Rouge, which had committed mass atrocities during its reign of terror. Although the 1991 agreements made no mention of the need to put Khmer Rouge leaders on trial for their crimes, there was an implicit commitment to doing so. It is important to remember that the United Nations and its member states, especially those in the West, were supportive of the idea of putting Khmer Rouge leaders on trial. The Extraordinary Chambers in the Court of Cambodia (ECCC) was finally established in 2007 with the aim of imprisoning surviving Khmer Rouge leaders, but the ECCC made no commitment to trying any of the top CPP leaders who were also former Khmer Rouge officials (including Hun Sen, Chea Sim, and Heng Samrin).

While historical legacies help explain why the international community adopted the anti-Khmer Rouge policy, it would be incorrect to conclude that donors make decisions on this basis alone. The UN decision was based more on *realpolitik* than democratic politics: the CPP's political and military power meant that it had the ability to derail the electoral process UNTAC had initiated. Even though insisting on regular elections, few donors have funded political party building because of political sensitivities and fears of the CPP's negative reactions should external efforts be made to help build the opposition. The lack of external support for political party building has contributed to the general weakness of the opposition and allowed the CPP to grow stronger.⁵¹ The international donors have been supportive of the CPP government, despite their public expressions of displeasure with its human rights record. Between 1993 and 2008, Cambodia received more than \$7 billion in foreign aid. After the 1997 coup, Japan and other donors suspended their aid to Cambodia but resumed it soon after. The donor community has even increased its aid in recent years, despite the evidence of Hun Sen's authoritarian behavior. Cambodia received about \$600 million per year. In 2006, donors pledged to give Cambodia \$601 million for development in 2007. The country received \$550 million in 2004. In 2012, however, the amount of aid increased to \$1.38 billion.⁵² All this has conferred further international political legitimacy on the Hun Sen regime.

Party and Party System Institutionalization in Cambodia

While it has enjoyed international legitimacy evidenced by large amounts of foreign assistance for Cambodia's development, the CPP regime has also benefited from post-Cold War geostrategic interests other major states have pursued. Rivalries between China and both Japan and the United States are discussed elsewhere in my work,⁵³ but it is worth stressing that both Japan and the United States worry about the rise of China and seem reluctant to push the CPP into the Chinese camp. Meanwhile, China has been making efforts to keep Cambodia away from Western influence and has now become one of its biggest donors. By 2012, China's aid to Cambodia in the form of grants and loans had reached \$2.7 billion, making China the second-largest donor after Japan. China has become the biggest source of military aid to Cambodia, with no real strings attached.⁵⁴

For its part, the United States has sought to improve bilateral relations with Cambodia. Washington has considered the Asian country to be most cooperative in the war against terrorism. Before General Hok Lundy's death in 2008, the U.S. government had invited him to Washington and even awarded him a medal. This was an about-face, as Washington had previously rejected his visa applications on the grounds that he was alleged to have been involved in criminal activities. In 2008, Washington provided 31 trucks to Cambodia's Ministry of Defense, along with \$7 million in military aid. Then, in January 2009, Washington signed an agreement with Cambodia to establish a military attaché between the two countries. A confidential source to me also indicated that Washington wanted to build a military base in Cambodia, although this is unlikely to materialize. In spite of Hun Sen's authoritarian behavior, Washington has sought closer ties with Cambodia, apparently in an attempt to counter growing Chinese influence over Southeast Asia.

Cambodia's Election Administration would not have become institutionalized to the extent that it did had members of the international donor community not funded the elections. Following the end of the Cold War, donors agreed on the need for electoral democracy in Cambodia. The UN, with the collective support of the Security Council, acted as Cambodia's transitional authority, preparing and supervising the 1993 multiparty election. The remit of UNTAC had an electoral component, perhaps the most successful one, that laid the foundation for the development of the Election Administration, particularly the NEC. International donors have provided various forms of support to the subsequent elections, including financing. Almost \$2 billion was spent on the UNTAC operation; donors then provided \$26 million for the 1998 election, \$15 million for the 2002 election, \$4.5 million for the 2003 election, and \$6.50 million for the 2007 election.⁵⁵ Without financial and technical support from external actors, the party system may not have become institutionalized to the extent that it has. The CPP regime has benefited from such international support,

⁵⁰ For more on this, see Peou 1997.

⁵¹ Peou 2007: 175.

⁵² Voice of America 2014. As *Foreign Aid Increases, Questions about Conditions* (June 2). Available at <http://www.voacambodia.com/content/as-foreign-aid-increases-questions-about-conditions/1664821.html>. Accessed June 20, 2014.

⁵³ Peou 2007, 2009.

⁵⁴ Heng 2013; Thayer 2013.

⁵⁵ For more on this, see Peou 2007.

knowing that its legitimacy would be sustained if Cambodia held elections on a regular basis, even if they were not as free and fair as demanded by members of the donor community.

CONCLUSION

Cambodia's democratic institutionalization, beginning in 1993, has now given way to authoritarian institutionalization. The country's political parties, and the party system overall, seem to have become more institutionalized than at any time in the pre-1993 period, when assessed in terms of both electoral regularity and growing stability in interparty electoral competition. The electoral process has also witnessed a relative decline in the overall level of political violence and the overall number of election-related complaints and protests against election results. The party system appears to have become increasingly institutionalized, but the levels of its institutionalization are uneven: the Election Administration has become more efficient in technical and organizational terms than in legal and political terms. The growth of stability within the party system is also still based more on coercion than consent as the system has become more hegemonic than competitive. None of the political parties has enjoyed unconditional legitimacy if assessed in terms of reliance on consent rather than coercion, and, more importantly, their institutionalization is limited by varying degrees of disunity among party members and social support (though the CPP has been more effective than the opposition in achieving party unity and gaining social support).

The Cambodian case study validates the proposition that party systems and parties can become more institutionalized over time, but it calls into question any proposition that such institutionalization is a fixed process and that hegemonic party systems are bound to push opposition parties to become more and more institutionalized. Cambodia's experiences of authoritarian rule – from the time when Prince Sihanouk remained dominant to when the Hun Sen regime began to run the country – did not help institutionalize the party system based more on consent than coercion, nor did they help institutionalize opposition parties to the point where they become stable or effectively functional. Thailand's party system institutionalization under Prime Minister Thaksin (2001–2006), to take another example, “was blocked by a de facto one-party rule.”⁵⁶ Time functions often depend on changing circumstances and time is always on the side of those who succeed in imposing their will and visions on others. The fact that the Cambodian party system and political parties have become more institutionalized also has to do with the end of the Cold War, good economic performance, and the support Cambodia has received from the international community. The CPP has been effective in gaining domestic and international legitimacy.

Party and Party System Institutionalization in Cambodia

Time functions also depend on historical legacies, which help shed additional light on the limited and uneven degrees of party system and party institutionalization in Cambodia. Past political cleavages and policy decisions and previous explain authoritarian institutionalization form complex historical legacies that help parties in the country; however, they do not determine institutional trajectories as institutional change is possible. Past legacies only facilitate or constrain institutionalization. Other variables also matter, including the specifics of recent policy decisions, party and personal strategies, and leadership effectiveness. The CPP has become more institutionalized than any other party because of support from other states, which, competing over their interests, have supported the Hun Sen regime with the hope that it would not move against them.

In short, historical institutionalism enjoys some explanatory power, as both time functions and legacies matter to the extent that they help shed light on authoritarian institutionalization or incremental change in the process of party system and party institutionalization. These variables, however, do not necessarily determine institutional trajectories. In a path-dependent fashion, otherwise, we cannot explain institutional fluctuations as well as democratic changes in countries such as Japan and Germany after World War II and in some former communist Eastern European states and Indonesia in the post-Cold War world. Degrees of institutional development thus depend on other variables such as new ideas and decisions, effective party leadership and strategy, domestic power distribution and relations, and international politics and circumstances.

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