Ten Years of Reconstruction and Reconciliation -

What it May Mean in Cambodia

Joakim Öjendal
Ten Years of Reconstruction and Reconciliation
–
What it May Mean in Cambodia

Cambodia – experiencing a massive social and political collapse permeated by hyperviolence and protracted conflict, emanating in the early 1970s and dragging onto the late 1990s – has become something of a ‘modern archetype of reconstruction’ (Matheson 2001). It turned into a ‘failed state’ (Cerny 1997; cf. Duffield 2001; cf. Falk 1993) twenty years before this phenomenon proliferated globally, and its reconstruction efforts were kick-started by the largest ever civil UN operation.1 It is also, together with Mozambique, widely viewed as the most successful of all major post-cold war UN intervention cases (UN 1995; cf. UNDP 2002). The degree of success of this approach to reconstruction has been thoroughly discussed (Doyle, Johnstone & Orr 1997; Doyle 1995; Finlay 1995; Peou 1997), criticized (Lizeé 2000; Ashley 1998; Roberts 2001), and its experiences applied elsewhere (e.g. East Timor). But processes of ‘post-conflict reconstruction’ are complex and not easily interpreted. It might be time to go beyond ‘interventions’ and consider the societal reconstruction processes that commenced (and sometimes not) after the turbulence of the end of the cold war and the subsequent resolution of regional and local conflicts. Which insights for post-conflict reconstruction could be gathered from these ten years of effort in Cambodia?

What these societal reconstruction processes consist of is not trivial. Metzl gave early voice to this confusion in the case of Cambodia:

Whatever the future holds for Cambodia, it is unlikely that historians will care much that UNTAC caused inflationary pressure in Cambodia, that prostitution, evil though it is, increased under UNTAC’s watch, or that the de-mining programme was begun. If Cambodia remains relatively stable and slowly develops economically and structurally, later generations will praise the UN’s role in Cambodia with the type of optimistic gloss that characterizes the Blue Book. If, on the other hand, the country falls apart, few will care that the refugees were returned, that there was a period when individual rights were somewhat protected, or that technically excellent elections were carried out.

Metzl 1995

Ten years later we face the similar problem again: should repeated elections and tentative democracy, a parliamentary system, prevalence of relative political stability, a dozen of passed progressive laws, a hugely improved human rights situation, repatriated refugees, initiation of demobilization, and a partly reformed administrative system, be viewed as Cambodia having been through a period of successful reconstruction and reconciliation? Or should the fact that poverty proliferates, resource exploitation goes on, land grabbing accelerates, impunity rules, urban shanty-towns expand, political violence occurs, and social fragmentation remains, cloud (or even reverse) that judgement? Is a ‘reconstruction’ into endemic underdevelopment successful? Or is a ‘reconciliation process’ which blatantly disregards ‘justice’ feasible?

1 It was named UNTAC (United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia) and lasted from March 1992 to September 1993.
The aim of this article is to draw empirically on ten years of ‘post-conflict reconstruction’ in Cambodia and provide an inventory of fields which are critical for ‘reconciliation’, while at the same time deliver a tentative opinion on the relative success of these key dimensions in the process. Below, we will consider some previous writings in the expanding debate on ‘reconstruction’ and ‘reconciliation’, before we enter, guided by this debate and our criticism of it, the empirical part of the paper. This part, in turn, is divided into one which reviews the key features of the conflict and its ‘resolution’ – arguably a key aspect for ‘reconstruction’ and ‘reconciliation’ – and one which concentrates on a limited number of key processes in the post-conflict period. In the conclusion, we briefly return to the theoretical debate.

Practices and Policies of Reconstruction Debated

The exclamation of the then UN general Secretary Boutros-Boutros Ghali in 1992 of the need for global ‘Peace Building’ following the violent aftermath of the cold war seemed timely. The process he searched for was to contain: ‘disarming’, ‘restoration of order’, ‘repatriation of refugees’, ‘re-training of security personnel’, ‘monitoring of elections’, ‘increased human rights monitoring’, ‘reformation of government institutions’, and ‘promotion of formal and informal ways of political participation’ (UN 1992). A decade later, the irony of this approach may be that while this list of ‘goods’ has in many places largely been achieved, societal stability and reconstruction have not; neither has the risk of returning to a situation marked by violent conflict, social instability, and endemic under-development. The most obvious explanation of this might be that the UN secretary was at the time thinking in terms of interventions and projects with a limited extension in time and addressing the most urgent problems, while little regard was extended to the specific societies and their particular historical, cultural, and violence based legacies. This has been the dominant approach to recovery during a ‘decade of reconciliation’ (cf. Chandler 2000; Roberts 2001; cf. Orjuela 2003). However, with quite recent origin, a both policy and research based debate on approach, content, and meaning of ‘reconstruction’ and ‘reconciliation’ has flared.

The World Bank, with soon a decade of experience in ‘Post-conflict Reconstruction’ (or six decades if we consider its origin), defines it as ‘the rebuilding of the socio-economic framework of society’ and the establishment of ‘the enabling conditions for a functioning peacetime society [including] the framework of governance and the rule of law’. UNDP, working under the Security Councils statement from February 2001, perceives ‘peace-building’ as ‘aimed at preventing the outbreak, the recurrence or continuation of armed conflict and therefore encompasses a wide range of political, developmental, humanitarian, and human rights programmes and mechanisms’ (UN 2001). These views are of course

2 For describing the period following the conflict and the processes associated with that period, we will use the term ‘post-conflict processes’. It is taken to describe the overarching process of resolution, reconstruction and reconciliation. ‘Resolution’ is a process where two or more parties do not anymore pursue incompatible agendas by violent means; ‘Reconstruction’ describes the process of establishing the necessary physical and institutional infrastructure of a ‘modern’ society; ‘Reconciliation’, finally, is the process where pathological hostility is ended and transformed into a state of mind where previous deeds committed by the Other is overcome. At this stage, the limited terminology is chosen because I strive to avoid premature conclusions hidden in ideological or deterministic concepts. Other concepts used are for instance ‘Post-conflict reconstruction’ (World Bank) or ‘Peace-building’ (UN); the former tends to focus on reconstruction (as defined above), whereas the latter describes an ambition to oppose the resort to political violence after, during, and before conflict; i.e. it is a term applicable to the full ‘conflict circle’ (see below for a criticism of these usages).

3 UNDP has a more ‘hands-on’ approach through their focus on: sustainable recovery of communities, including increasing economic activity, security of livelihoods, income generation and poverty alleviation; reduction of the vulnerability of communities and individuals to future events; reintegration of returning refugees and IDPs;
permeated by their respective internal culture and mandate, but are nevertheless (or precisely therefore) dominant in terms of financing activities for post-conflict reconstruction, and thus of great significance for any post-conflict assessment. Although these approaches are ultimately crafted on (and for) interventions, highlighting the possibility for external actors to impact on societal processes, their approaches tend to be generalized and assumed universally valid.

Turning to the explicitly policy-oriented literature, in a push for a re-orientation of the US after Sept. 11, Hamre & Sullivan, for instance, propose ‘security’, ‘justice and reconciliation’, ‘social and economic well-being’, and ‘governance and participation’ as the four pillars on which any post-conflict reconstruction must build (2002:89). Orr, in a critique of an all too common, distant, ‘minimalist’ approach to reconciliation, proposes that in order to achieve longer-term sustainability, five areas must be considered: ‘supporting constituting processes’, ‘mobilizing disenfranchised sectors of the population’, ‘building sustainable civil administration capacity’, ‘addressing corruption’, and from the side of the donor community, ‘crafting an appropriate system of conditionalities’ (Orr 2002:141-142).

These are examples of a literature that is replete with ‘lists’ on what to do in a ‘post-conflict’ situation. They often produce policy-driven recommendations aimed at the consumption of intervention strategists and aid policymakers, frequently losing sight of the society to be reconstructed, with all its social complexity and cultural preferences. There is no denying that to establish a functioning society, the above listed recommendations are ‘goods’ that are desirable in various degrees, pace, and interpretations. In particular, an agreed political order has to be found (constitutive processes as well as administrative capacity; cf. Barnes 2001:86), reconciliatory processes have to be launched (for promoting sustainability of ‘peace’), and economic sustainability needs to be created (and that external actors have a role in this) and an idea of a Cambodian nation has to be invented. And there is also little doubt that these ‘goods’ are in deficit in post-conflict situations. However, the approaches reviewed above reveal questionable assumptions and undue simplifications.

The analysis reviewed above is inadequate for at least four different reasons: Firstly, what most of this literature have in common is that it presupposes that the trajectory is heading towards the restoring of a vaguely defined (at best), previously existing state of normality. This is an approach which is questionable, either due to the fact that the ‘previous situation’ was, at least partly, the reason for why the conflict broke out in the first phase, or due to that political and economic globalization put different, and enhanced, pressure on

disarmament, demobilization and reintegrations of ex-combatants; and increased capacity of peacetime governance structures and systems that provide essential services and of civil society at local and national levels (UNDP Web-site, 2003-01-22, http://www.undp.org/erd/recovery/index.htm).

4 UNDP 2002 is perhaps the most extreme example of this, issuing a book on ‘Lessons Learned in Crises and Post-Conflict Situations’, but only discussing the nature of the UNDP-projects and their output, and never whether this has generally contributed to reconstruct and reconcile societies, and through which processes this may have happened.

5 These four dimensions of post-conflict processes will be further elaborated below.

6 The World Bank’s definition reviewed above is slightly schizophrenic in this respect: while defining reconstruction in terms of re-establishing, eg., ‘rule of law’, this is at the same time a development goal indicating that this is exactly what needs to evolve in any developing country. Thus, it is the opposite of returning to something; rather it is the construction of something new.

7 For instance, in Cambodia today, competent and non-corrupted political institutions are in deficit and could be seen as a key impediment for reconstruction. However, one reason for the ascendance of the Khmer Rouge was the utter failure of its predecessor, the Lon Nol regime 1970-75, to establish and maintain such institutions. Thus, the challenge is not to rebuild what existed at that time, but to construct something which is more solid. In parallel, it is often argued that the period of conflict has created a social fragmentation which needs to be reversed. While such a reversal is desirable, it is hardly the case that there existed any straightforward and spontaneous ‘sense of community’ in the pre-conflict period either (Ovesen et al 1996; Vickery 1986; Thion 1993). Again, ‘new’ rather than ‘previously existing’ structures need to be built.
individual states as compared to what it did during the ‘golden era’ of nation-state building, which also coincided with the de-colonization period (cf. Lizée 2000:163ff). It is important to acknowledge that the frequency with which states have ‘collapsed’ globally during the last decades is no coincidence. In order to systematically explain these collapses, Cerny has coined the term ‘governance gap’, arising as a result of a weakening state sovereignty and the prevalence of an increased number of decisions taken far away from the local scene (1997). Duffield presents perhaps the most radical argument when he argues that we are making a systemic and fatal mistake in thinking ‘reconstruction’ and ‘order’ in terms of reconstructing state authority and state system, instead of trying to understand the ‘real’ political economy taking place outside, or beneath, state institutions, and work with that (1998). While this position may be extreme, its bottom line argument is well-taken – we can neither take the forms nor the processes of the road to reconstruction and reconciliation for granted, and the re-establishment of political authority may take new turns (cf. Weiss 2000; Öjendal 2003).8 ‘Reconstruction’ is searching for a brave, though not always predictable, new world.

Secondly, the concept of ‘Post-Conflict Reconstruction’ also suffers from its resemblance to rehabilitation after natural disasters (which has a longer history) and tends therefore to assume that we know what to rebuild and that we only have to think about how to do it (Green & Ahmed 1999:190; cf. UNDP & UNFPA 2000). We know how to reconstruct a bridge, but to (re)construct a political institution in the era of neo-liberal globalisation and under an urgent need to re-establish state authority and regime legitimacy is not a simple, technical task. Obviously, when collapsed states are given a second chance, they should not head down the same alley again (Hettne 2002.21). Rather, the remarkable quality of current reconstruction efforts is that we do not know what to ‘rebuild’, but it certainly has to be informed by the underlying complex reality and intriguing politics at the local scene. Current reconstruction processes are thus marked by a necessity to ‘invent’ society, while at the same time rehabilitating it (Migdal 2001; Schurman 2001; Öjendal 2002; Newell 2002; Weiss 2000). Thus, the ‘re-’ component of reconciliation and reconstruction may be misleading; in combination with the previous point, this dimension becomes critical to contemporary ‘post-conflict reconstruction’ efforts.

Thirdly, in some literature, there is a common and quite reasonable argument that in order to overcome past violence, the nature of the conflict must be analysed and understood before it can be dealt with. For instance, a conflict with ethnic lines of division needs a process emphasizing communication and integration, while a class-based one may need distribution and transparency. Galtung, for one, argues that ‘Resolution’, often taken for granted in the Reconstruction and Reconciliation debate, is the missing ‘R’ in this equation (Galtung 2001). This is added to by Long and Breek, who argue that a conflict is not really resolved until it has also produced reconciliation of sorts among the key actors in the former conflict (2003). From another angle, such an argument is unavoidable; in spite of common political rhetoric, no ‘Ground Zero’ exists – all change emerges from a previous situation and is therefore in one way or another dependent on that situation (cf. Skocpol 1984); reconciliation follows from conflict resolution, which in turn is constructed on the basis of the conflict content.

Fourthly, and obvious from the above reasoning, most lists and recommendations are culturally imbued, ideologically determined, and inherently sensitive to ‘fashions’. Moreover, they are prescriptive policy recommendations seldom stemming from empirical analyses (even less on ‘research’) of how societies have gone about to put themselves back together.

8 While often less radically expressed, there is a wide acceptance of this view. For instance, the World Bank did, in its own peculiar way, acknowledge this emerging multileveled and multidimensional decision-making structure already in 1992, when it argued the term governance instead of government (cf. Rosenau and Czempiel 1992). The above is a fragment of a larger debate where the ‘Westphalian’ state system is altogether questioned (Hettne et al 1999).
again, and they are often delivered with no special reference to specific political cultures, power bases establishment, or social organization: neither institutional set-ups nor the legal situation are considered (World Bank 1998; Colletta & Cullen 2000; UNDP 2002, are cases in point). ‘Normality’ is then defined by a hegemonic discourse and may represent anything but ‘normal’ in the particular case.9 Thus, reconstruction and process are assumed to be not only identical but also of a pre-determined character. Rather, social interests should be identified, political actors analysed, and basic cultural parameters discussed.

A key problem for initiating a solid assessment of post-conflict processes is then where to start. In principle, everything that has happened in Cambodia since May 1993 (or 1979) could be considered being a part of reconstruction and reconciliation. Obviously, the answers we get depend not only on where we stand (as is always the case), but also where we look. In lack of an established ‘theory for reconstruction’, from which a hypothesis could be derived and structure the research, we have to work exploratory and on basic theoretical postulates.10

This is not the place to develop any major theoretical constructs. However, from a reading of the growing research on this issue,11 it seems that at the very least three factors need to be present. Firstly, there is a need for a stable political platform on which to base the new society (this rings trivial in most ears, but is, as we shall see, an intricate issue – cf. Orr 2002; Barnes 2002; Ball 2002; Freitag-Wirminghaus 2002; Pausewang 2002; Doyle 1998). Secondly, we need a sustainable economy on which to base rebuilding. While this is true (while at the same time often failing) for most ‘third world’ societies, certain economic features and measures have particular relevance for reconstruction, in particular livelihood issues and the ability to bear the costs for maintaining and upkeeping the newly established political system (cf. UNDP 2002; Colletta & Cullen 2000). Finally, a desirable process which is being less tangible, but often seen as key for a sustainable post-conflict process, could be labelled ‘reconciliation’ (Long and Brecke 2003; Rothstein 1999; Arthur 1999; Shriver 1999; Whittaker 1999; Rigby 1999); i.e. the ability to, in a broad societal sense, overcome the deeds and violations ‘the other’ committed and manage the process that this entails.12

Before returning empirically to these three fields of investigation of post-conflict processes, let us review the core characteristics of the conflict and its proposed solution.

---

9 This is neither an argument against the normatively desirable values of, eg., human rights and democracy, nor one that democracy is impossible to implement in certain cultures. It does, however, note that there are more and less efficient ways of promoting sustainable reconstruction and that it is often done without much reflection and knowledge, resulting in a sub-optimal process.

10 This is in fact both an interesting and critical issue for studies of post-conflict recovery. Most social science theories and postulates are developed on the premises of a settled social order with predictable and repeated behavioural patterns, grounded in certain societal rationality. The immediate aftermath of violent conflict could be understood as the opposite of this situation. Thus, definition-wise, most established theories of social science carry, a priori, limited value for understanding post-conflict processes. This makes the context and the holistic understanding of the cases vital, making studies of post-conflict reconstruction suitable for a qualitative and exploratory approach (Smyth 2001:7), preferably through a case study approach (ibid; Yin 1984).


12 Long and Brecke has found that public display of reconciliation by the societal elite drastically improves the odds for the sustainability of the process. This was in their study understood as particularly important in the case of internal wars (2003).
Contextualizing Post-Conflict Processes in Cambodia – Assessing the Conflict and Its Consequences for Reconstruction and Reconciliation

Cambodia was always a power-oriented society, and its history is marked by external and internal violence (Bit 1991; Martin 1994; cf. Chandler 1983). However, even so, the events of the last three decades stand out as extreme, threatening the very existence of the Khmer nation as well as its social fabric. The conflict(s) were protracted, multi-dimensional, and shifting in nature during the course of the conflict. Thus, there are no simple conclusions emerging from a conflict analysis or an analysis of the conflict resolution process. Nevertheless, this process contains certain keys for understanding the winding post-conflict process.

The Emerging Conflict(s) – A Chronological Review

During the 1960s, Cambodia went into a development stalemate affecting both the rural and urban population. For the (small) educated middle class, previously ‘secure’ career routes through higher education, followed by comfortable positions in the civil administration, were increasingly untenable, as the civil administration could not swallow the increasingly higher number of university educated youths. This both over-burdened the administration and created frustrated groups of educated but marginalized youths, who in their self-perception had a self-evident place in the societal elite (Chandler 1991). The political system, embryonically democratic in the mid-1950s, where authoritatively formed into a more ‘controllable’ mono-structure by Sihanouk in the late 1950s and early 1960s (Osborne 1996; Chandler 1991). In parallel, it experienced increasing difficulties of co-opting rivalling political projects, which formed the very base for internal division and the civil war to come. Also, in rural areas, poverty was not decisively reduced, landlessness increased, and a rural trasproletariat was emerging (Nim 1982). The latter constituted a group with little to lose and much to gain, and with little capability of independently assessing political trends, thus being relatively easy to mobilise for political purposes. Adding fuel to the fire, the social and economic rift between the rural and urban areas widened, adding frustration to marginalized (rural) groups.

Partly related is that in the late 1960s, the rule of Sihanouk was increasingly questioned inside the ruling elite, while, at the same time, his interest for developing Cambodia seemed to be waning. The coup d’etat against him in 1970 inserted the former prime minister and general Lon Nol in power. Thion has argued that this irregular disruption of order and political authority, in combination with Sihanouk’s subsequent oral support of the Khmer Rouge, were the key events opening up for the Khmer Rouge takeover in April 1975 (Thion 1993).

The Cambodian ‘habit’ of not controlling outlying and remote areas was a key condition in the build-up of the resistance to the established order. While initially not very well organized, this resistance was soon canalised (or co-opted) into the communist movement, later known as Khmer Krahom (Khmer Rouge). Pol Pot initially sought refuge and support in peripheral, upland Ratanakiri; the rebellion in Samlot, Battambang province, in

---

13 When the period of reconstruction commences is not obvious. In a sense, it commenced directly after the Khmer Rouge era in 1979 (cf. Gottesman 2003), and certainly this was the most spectacular phase in terms of re-establishing a functioning society. However, since the civil war continued and the then government of Cambodia was not universally recognized, it does not fit well with the situation assumed necessary for reconstruction. On the other hand, violence continued until 1998, so theoretically, 1999 could be seen as the point of departure for reconstruction efforts. However, post-1993, and in particular post-1996, it was obvious that the remaining resistance was a residue of the core conflict, and that the order defined in 1993 was the beginning of the end of this phase of the conflict (cf. Öjendal 1996). Therefore, we have here chosen the period from 1993 and onwards as the key phase for reconstruction.
1967 (cf. Kiernan 1982) was the starting point for a string of increasingly connected instances of visible violent rural resistance; in 1972, Kratieh in central Cambodia was ‘liberated’, in 1974 most rural areas were controlled by the Khmer Rouge, and in early 1975 Phnom Penh was surrounded and the Lon Nol regime overturned (Kiernan 1985).

Finally, Cambodia was undoubtedly a victim of the cold war, sandwiched between US, Soviet, and Chinese interests (Chanda 1987; Kevin & Rowan 1990; Shawcross 1979). The Vietnam war spilled over into Cambodia, both in terms of actual warfare and in terms of political ideas. The Khmer Rouge’s ascendance to power would hardly have been possible without, eg., the radicalisation of certain rural areas that followed the US bombings in 1969–73 and the influx of ideas and resources from the Vietnamese communist movement. Moreover, the Khmer Rouge held on power during 1975-1978, as well as the fierce resistance it put up as a guerrilla force during 1982-1996, could hardly have been achieved without the assistance it received from external actors, in various forms, and always with an agenda different from that of achieving peace in Cambodia. Thus, we have three probable root causes for the eruption of the conflict: poverty/underdevelopment/marginalization/frustration; confused political authority; and external intervention/pressure.

In due time, whatever the root causes, violence and power struggles took on its own dynamic. During 1975–79, between one and two million people – out of approximately seven million altogether – were killed or died from mismanagement. The entire country has been likened to a prison camp where families were separated, cultural preferences brutally reversed, people forcibly and repeatedly moved around, and violence was excessive and constantly present. All justified by the aim to return to the ‘real Khmerhood’ and pure life of a simple peasant population. The legacy of this period is likely to cause traumas beyond those inflicted in an ‘ordinary’ war. The combination of being brutal to the brink of genocide and the fact that it was largely carried out within the Khmer nation, adds another scaring psychological dimension. In this respect, it could be described as ‘incestuous’, including the psychosocial damage that is associated with such a violation.14

In the 1980s, the situation turned into a combination of urgent under-development and low-intensity warfare. Ideological divisions were increasingly obscured and personal/party ties became increasingly important, while the political pressure on the civil society remained high. Finally, the termination of the cold war at the end of the 1980s confused the relations to international patrons and even the ideological position of the feuding parties themselves.15 From mid-1992 and onwards, in some areas, the situation resembled the ‘resource wars’ that we have seen in central Africa during the last decade, where warlords exploited natural resources and based their legitimacy on the ability to cater for their closest clients, under unclear central political authority (Duffield 2001:161ff). Cambodia, however, had only forest and gems that could be quickly and profitably exploited, and once the access to these areas was closed for Thai companies doing the dirty work, the Khmer Rouge resources dried up, and so did their ability to defend ‘their’ territories and command loyalty.

The Khmer Rouge eventually broke down in phases, with the first large-scale defection in 1996, led by previous high ranking Khmer Rouge leader Ieng Sary, and the final collapse following the death of Pol Pot in the spring of 1998. As an aftermath to the core conflict, violent fighting broke out in Phnom Penh between CPP (the reformed previous communist party) and the other political parties (mainly the royalist Funcinpec) in the summer of 1997.

---

14 Another line of understanding would be that of Zygmund Bauman, where he describes the force of modernity and the will to catch up, which ‘requires’ having the sick branches cut from the strong trunk, as the ultimate driving force behind the Jewish holocaust. While there are plenty of eye-witness accounts and historical reviews of the period in question, there are peculiarly few attempts at psychosocial analyses (eg. Bit 1991). For general accounts, see eg. Jackson 1989; Vickery 1984; and Kiernan 1985; 1993.

15 For instance, both the Vietnam installed socialist party (PRK) and the Khmer Rouge officially turned pro-democrats and pro market oriented, whereas FUNCINPEC turned ‘more liberal’ and ‘less royal’.
This was basically the visible outlet of a ‘race’, gone sour, to attract the remaining parts of the collapsing Khmer Rouge combat forces (cf. Öjendal 1998). This remained a contested issue until the negotiations after the national election of 1998 came to an end. In early 1999, the last areas (ironically, Samlot, Battambang, where it all started) were pacified and the country at peace for the first time since 1967.16

The conflicts – often misleadingly presented in singular – thus consist of at least four distinctly different periods, containing their own core dynamics. The first is the initially low-intensive communist rebellion, which reached major scale the first years of the 1970s, culminating with the takeover in 1975. The second phase, the most intense and disrupting period, was the time in power by the Khmer Rouge, spanning from 1975-1978.17 The third period was the drawn-out civil war (1979-1993), where the Vietnamese installed regime fought the Khmer Rouge and other externally supported non-communist resistance fractions (KPNLF and Funcinpee). Finally, the post-UNTAC period, from 1993 to 1998/9 was one where democracy, multiparty system and parliamentarism were formally introduced, and where human rights, the rule of law, and poverty alleviation were tentatively pursued. However, neither of these latter processes were particularly successful: small-scale violence resistance was frequent, social fragmentation obvious, and reconstruction piecemeal and sector-wise as well as geographically unevenly achieved. Publicly displayed reconciliation was hardly visible at all. Most importantly, the violence of 1997 erased most of the little, hard-earned political and institutional stability, and at the time, most observers were prepared to dismiss the entire peace process as a failure (Ashley 1998; cf. Brown & Timberman 1998). However crude and violent, it took the process of elite conflict resolution one step further through the post-election agreement in the autumn of 1998, which swap the assignment of Ranariddh to chairman of the assembly, and the assignment of FUNCINPEC cadres as District governors for the acceptance of the election result and general cooperation.

As is obvious from the above, it is difficult to generalize any distinct conflict characteristics across three decades of violent upheaval. However, a few basic postulates can be established:

- It was extremely violent, leaving few, if any, individuals and contexts unaffected;
- It was internal and intra-ethnic, sometimes ‘intra-village’ and ‘intra-family’, instilling distrust on all levels, with few ‘sheltered spaces’;
- It was utterly destructive, ravaging physical constructions, economic development, political institutions, social trust, especially in terms of human well-being;
- It was complex, being entangled in global and regional conflicts, changing nature and actors/allies over time;
- It was protracted, with the protracted conflict’s features of internalising images of the enemy (whomever it may be understood as), as well as institutionalising defensive/aggressive behaviour (cf. Azar 1986).

Thus, the conflict was complex, with no simple dividing lines between easily identifiable adversaries, bearing consequences for any reconciliation process (see further below). It is affecting peace-time society on a broad base, making political and economic reconstruction into an urgent imperative. Let us look at to what extent the conflict resolution process responded to these features and how they relate to the ensuing recovery.

16 Equally ironic is the fact that the last Pol Pot loyalists were repatriated to Ratanakiri in early 1999, the province where Pol Pot first sought (and got) support when he left Phnom Penh for the maquis in the early 1960s. The metaphor of the ‘closing circle’ comes to mind.

17 While it is justified to talk about the conflict in four different phases, it should be acknowledged that this period sticks out for its brutality and human toll that it took.
The Conflict(s): The Nature and Consequences of Resolution

The origin of the conflict resolution could be traced back to mid/late 1980s when Hun Sen and Sihanouk entered into negotiations over the future of Cambodia. While tentative, it provided a base for the more intense period of negotiations that were to follow. Under the chairmanship of France and Indonesia, the Khmer Rouge too was soon drawn into these negotiations (Amer 1994). Moreover, in the emerging post-cold war environment in the early 1990s, like in many other places, the external actors were not interested in maintaining the conflict, and it was soon negotiated to a resolution (under intense international pressure). In the Paris Agreement (UN 1991), the key document regulating the transition process, it was agreed that the UN would take the ultimate responsibility – since no party could accept that the other(s) held power during the crucial transition period including the first elections – for the holding of democratic elections, the transition to a multiparty democratic system, and for Cambodia not resorting to ‘the practices of the past’ (UN 1991). This was carried out during the most ambitious ever non-combating UN-operation, involving 25,000 peace-keepers and expenses in excess of two billion dollar.

The UN operation from March 1992 to September 1993 was structured along the following rather technocratic logic: first assure cease, fire control and demobilization (UN soldiers), then law and order would be established and maintained (UN police). Having fixed peace and law and order, the UN would control the civil administration and oversee day-to-day politics, on which human rights monitoring followed. The ‘technical issues’ of repatriation (UNHCR) and, of course, the election itself, were key processes that were to follow suit, and in that order. Finally, conflict resolution taken care of, a rehabilitation and reconstruction unit was set up to carry out the development planning for future anticipated aid-flows. This would be followed by gradual, but rapid, dismantling and subsequent withdrawal once the new constitution and government was in place in the autumn of 1993.

The intervention diffused the key conflict and it succeeded in that it left behind a new democratic constitution, a decently performed election, and a new globally recognized government who pledged to cooperate and to respect the constitution (UN 1995; Doyle 1995; Finlay 1995). The plan and the process were not a disaster, but they were thoroughly grounded in an instrumental, functionalistic, approach to social development (Roberts 2001; cf. Öjendal 1996), and did hardly, and were not supposed to, solve the real conflicts as understood in the sense reviewed above. The ‘real’ conflict(s) were supposed to solve themselves in due course once there was a legitimate and decent political system in place (i.e. ‘democracy’), with the help of the growing infusion of international aid; an attitude displaying an instrumentality bordering on naivety (or possibly an irresponsibility bordering on cynicism). Doyle, for one, has criticized this particular aspect and argued that subsequent ‘peace-building’ was the key missing link in the process (Doyle 1998).

18 The latter was a phrase inserted in the Peace Agreement (UN 1991) as a shorthand for ensuring that the Khmer Rouge would not come back to power. However, the Khmer Rouge was a party to the negotiations, as well as to the subsequently agreed solution, and could thus not be named at the time in this document.
19 Major difficulties plagued the operation though: halfway through, the Khmer Rouge left the agreement and the process. This made demobilization impossible and turned the UN into a part in the conflict; the idea of civil administration taking over politics failed; the Human Rights monitors were toothless in the extreme; and political violence continued to mark the process. In a strict sense, the operation failed to achieve what was envisaged. It did, however, open up for certain progressive processes which allowed the key issues of post-conflict reconstruction to be further worked with. However, in a more sophisticated analysis, going beyond pro/con perspectives only, both Roberts and Lizée argue that for reasons of an overconfidence in democracy as a system automatically solving conflicts and building peace, and a negligence of attention on conflict resolution, in combination with the misfit between Khmer political culture and the essence of liberal democracy, made the peace process bound to fail (Roberts 2001). In another analyses, it is argued that the requirement of the emerging global political economy forced the Cambodian society to assume policies which were equally bound to fail the process (Lizée 2000).
Liberal democracy – a novelty in Cambodia – could neither be assumed to solve all the local level problems in the rural areas, especially since no change in the political set-up were visible there, nor could it – thin as it was – be assumed to imbed all the remaining tension among the political elite (cf. Lizée 1993:39). While it may eventually, it was not realistic to assume this to take place in the short run. Even if there was such a scenario available, the last decade proves otherwise, having experienced breakaway attempts (1993), coup d’etat attempts (eg. 1994; 1996), large-scale military clashes (1997), violent riots (1998), an alleged prime minister assassination attempt (eg. 2000), and politically steered ethnic riots (2003). Political violence has been overly present all the time, with oodles of political murders and political persecution, particularly in local political arenas. Needless to say, the new political and judicial systems were too weak to prevent these kinds of outbreaks, and the incentives from the key actors to counter them too low.

A more obvious shortcoming of the UN intervention was that of remaining, indeed escalating, maldevelopment. UNTAC was not mandated to deal with development issues, and to the extent it did, it was criticized for helping either of the parties. While possibly inevitable, this nevertheless constituted a major contradiction because of the spending of two billion dollars in one of the poorest countries in the world, ravaged by two decades of warfare, and not being allowed to deal with ‘development’. It should be noted though, that the process as such legitimised a Cambodian government and opened up for massive aid flows in the years to come, which in turn came to provide a huge amount of infrastructure and institutional reconstruction – some more, others less successful (Narankiri 1998; cf. Rudengren & Öjendal 2002). Moreover, with the emerging ‘peace’ and through the massive UN operation, a liberal capitalist economy was forcefully introduced, which, without effective regulation, caused economic and social turmoil for many actors not capable of dealing with this new order, conforming with a pattern we have seen elsewhere (cf. Jørgensen 2003).

Finally, and somewhat surprising, the UNTAC operation did not work with issues of political reconciliation; neither with reconciliation understood as public display of elite politician unity under a new order, nor as a wide-spread movement of forgiving and forgetting, including in-depth processes at local level. While this might have proved too much to chew in one bite for the UN, the reluctance to work with these issues risks to result in the returning of both political conflicts and social fragmentation.20 ‘The peace process in Cambodia’, Doyle argues, ‘left behind contradiction, not reconciliation.’ (Doyle 1998:89). Either way, the result is – seen from the perspective of the post-conflict era – that the ‘resolution’ to the conflict addresses only minor parts of the full spectrum of the legacy. In other words, key processes in the post-conflict reconstruction remained unaddressed and were largely left to evolve within the newly established order: i.e. while the political conflict between the adversaries was explicitly addressed (although not solved), the more structural issue of how ‘the state’ should relate to its citizens was left to an extremely shallow and weak democratic system. The kick-start of the war-marked economy was largely left to the possible virtue of the liberal economics and assumed aid infusion (cf. Narankhiri 1998: 115); and the reconciliatory processes were left to thrive (or not) in the lap of the former enemies, and thus made ‘optional’ and, as it were, unattractive.

Without foregoing conclusions, we can note that when the state is distrusted to the extent that its very existence is questioned (cf. Eastmond & Öjendal 1999), a central level democratic system of a procedural nature is, in isolation, a weak response to deep-seated legacies of war and violence (cf. Roberts 2001). To insert a non-regulated capitalist economy in a grinding poor, socially and politically fragmented rural economy, just emerging out of

20 Subsequently, UNDP worked with issues of reconciliation, but initially only in limited areas, and not in large scale until the late 1990s (UNDP 2002). Doyle has identified the lack of ‘peace-building’ following the UNTAC operation as the key factor for the stumbling peace process (1998).
three decades of civil war, may not be optimal. And to believe that adversaries coming out of a genocide would voluntarily, enthusiastically, and on their own initiative embrace conciliatory processes, may be overly naive. However, despite a difficult situation, important process of recovery commenced in bits and pieces. Let us look a little briefer at some of these key processes, which also coincide with the three theoretical fields identified above.

**Building Regime Legitimacy in a Post-conflict Situation**

After the 1993 election and the acceptance of the new constitution, the Cambodian government was recognized globally. However, although elected, the state as such did not enjoy a high degree of legitimacy, and shadows from the past were constantly hovering over the fragile peace (Mehmet 1997; Ashley 1998).

Firstly, in a civil war, the political authority is by definition contested and needs thus in a post-conflict situation to be established anew (Barnes 2001). However, broad-based political authority by the ruling regime has not been enjoyed in Cambodia since the early days of the Sangkum Ryastr regime (Sihanouk regime, 1953-1970), and that one was based on conditions such as the king’s popularity, an uneducated peasantry, a tiny political elite, and an underdeveloped post-colonial civil society. It was not sustainable at the time (cf. Chandler 1991 and above) and would be so even less now. New forms of political authority need to be invented, and it is not trivial which these are (although it may be trivial to identify which they are not).

This needs, at the very least, to be carried out in a process that generates political legitimacy both for the order (constitution and type of state) and for the actors carrying out this process (political leaders and parties, as well as certain key state agencies). Let us assess the rebuilding of political legitimacy through the possible virtues of the new political system (constitutions, elections, and administrative institutions) and the key political reforms (decentralization, judicial reform, and demobilization).

**The New Political System**

Already the Peace Agreement stipulated the kind and structure that the emerging Cambodian constitution and government would embrace, namely one of ‘liberal democracy’ (UN 1991). While noteworthy, it is not surprising, since there were no other credible alternatives available (cf. Lizée 1993).

The constitution in Cambodia, agreed upon in September 1993, is widely seen as the most liberal in Asia. It outlines rights and responsibilities and is at large in line with both democratic and human rights ideals (Marks 1994; Duffy 1994), and Cambodia has also signed a wide range of international rights resolutions (Antlöv et al 1998). The constitution soon turned into a political centrepiece, although more in rhetoric than in substance. It represented the lowest common denominator for the previously warring political factions, and with it came fundamental societal change. It is also worth noticing that both the crucial peace agreement and the actual constitution were originally drafted by foreigners (like many other new laws to come).

21 When screening the academic literature, it is striking that almost everybody comments that the Khmer political culture is, firstly, not compatible with liberal, representative democracy, secondly, that the Khmer political culture is not easily changed, and thirdly, that this bodes ill for the future of both democracy and peace in Cambodia (Thion 1993; Martin 1994; Chandler 1983; 1998; Ashley 1998; Mehmet 1997; Peang-Meth 1991; Ledgerwood 1998). Surprisingly few are prepared to hold up the prospects for change and acknowledge the achieved progress; likewise, few are acknowledging the counter-image existing in the Cambodian political culture, ‘...that democratic values have Cambodian origins, in Buddhism, Cambodian literature, and even folk stories, and that democracy and development go hand in hand.’ (Lao Mong Hay 1998:175).
The key political issue in the constitution was the establishment of political democracy, and the cornerstone of that was elections. While elections were not new to Cambodia, it challenged the prevailing political culture; a culture based on power and hierarchy rather than participation and popular support. The first elections did not produce a majority government, but an awkward coalition between CPP and FUNCINPEC (38 and 45% of the votes respectively). In fact, what emerged was a dual system with two representatives on each major political post, including a First and a Second Prime Minister. While an innovative way of handling the immediate conflict, it served to cement the rift between the former enemies, and, beside being politically awkward, to send a signal of ‘non-reconciliation’ to the people. In essence, the former conflict was internalised within ‘the state’ and fought with different methods. The second election (1998) was marred by the major political clash in mid-1997, where armed forces loyal to the CPP attacked forces loyal to other factions, and chased the major part of the FUNCINPEC party into exile. In the process, excessive violence was exercised, bringing war and violence not only back to life, but also into Phnom Penh to an extent not seen since 1975/79. While the opposition returned in due time for the 1998 election, the violence neither sent any signal of political stability nor built any major popular trust in the political system. The violence that marred the aftermath, which included rowdy street riots and political uncertainty up to three months after the election, reinforced the same sense of national disunity. Great hopes are pinned to the third national election in 2003, but it seems as if this one also will be marked by political violence if the riots and the political killings of February 2003 will be guiding.

In between the national elections, commune elections took place in 2002. These were an integrated part of a political decentralization process to which we will return below. It should be noted though that the commune elections were interesting – for the first time people voted for something that they could actually see the direct result of – and it is likely that these elections, far more than the national ones, served to insert some confidence in election matters, and that it is actually the people who put the politicians on their positions. It may even be the case that local people get some real influence over how resources are spent; if so, it would truly represent an indication of a shift in Cambodian political culture.

None of the national elections have unequivocally signalled stability and reconciliation or that politics are transparent and available for ordinary people. However, all three national elections have had decent technical standards, they have been held on time, been at large approved by the international community, and most importantly, they have produced governments. While democracy remains to some extent procedural, currently it is not really probable that any party could reverse the democratic system without using excessive violence – as such, a liberal democratic system can be seen as established as an idea, although it may lack a fully credible content.

Finally, the constitution stipulated that a number of institutions would develop in order to establish a functional division of power. In addition to the parliamentary system, part and parcel of any democracy, a Supreme Council of the Magistracy was established in order to put a check on the executive. Although postulated in the constitution, the establishment of this institution was an extremely drawn-out process, plagued by political manoeuvring, resulting in semi-credible constructs only (eg. Heder 2002:220). Subsequently, a Senate – also a result of the 1998 agreement – was established as an ‘Upper House’, aiming to put restraint on the parliament and the law-makers. Critics, however, saw it basically as an expanding of arenas for harbouring prestigious posts and making place for a greater chunk of the political elite inside the system. Importantly, since Cambodia is a non-hereditary monarchy, there is also a committee for choosing the next king; the establishment of this institution was also marred by politicking, where the parties vied for influence and where the

---

22 Reversing the requirements for sustainable peace identified above by Long & Brecke including the elites’ public display of reconciliation.
CPP, as in most other important political processes, came out on top and currently controls who will be appointed next king.

Political Reforms

Turning to the political reforms that followed in the path of Cambodia’s new political economy, the process has been a constant ‘stop-and-go’ process. Until 1998, the ambitions were high (RGC 1994; cf. Bruce St:John 1995:267), but the actual pace of reforms was slow, largely due to the dual structure of the government and the remaining political conflict.\(^{23}\) The violence of 1997, moreover, was by many observers taken to indicate the death of the peace process (cf. Brown and Timberman 1998). However, after the post-election agreement in 1998, the pace of reforms escalated. This implied \textit{inter alia} the drafting of laws, enhanced policy dialogue with donors, and the start of the discussion of the next round of pro-democracy reforms.

Also this time, although for different reasons, reform sluggishness emerged: for instance, the judicial reform, announced by the government and supported by the World Bank, never got going, leaving the judicial system in shambles, impeding both enhanced popular support and political transparency (Jeldres 1996:353; Heder 2002). Other laws and reforms being blocked for a long time were the Water, Forest, Fishery, and Land laws. Interestingly though, some of these, like the Land and Fishery Laws, were slow to pass due to the fact that new and progressive elements were introduced – protecting certain areas from commercial fishing and allocating them for ‘Community fisheries’, and the Land Law recognizing certain shifting cultivation (collective) land rights. Another slow and shaky process is the one of demobilization: having built up a major, costly, and politicized military apparatus during the civil war, there is an urgent need for demobilization, both for reasons of budget restraints and as a move to belatedly demilitarize society.\(^{24}\) In spite of massive financial support, the process has been spoiled by corruption and fraud, and has as of yet only to a very minor extent, if any, reduced the size of the armed forces (Phnom Penh Post, passim).

The major exception to the pattern is the ‘Commune Administration Reform’, which includes local elections and a string of progressive development measures. This is a key reform in many senses. The ultimate aim of the reform is to combat poverty in rural areas and to reconnect the civil society to the local branch of the state. The predecessor, a major development project named Seila (see below), has worked since 1996 with promoting local development through the local state, village and commune authorities, with great success. The technical skills of the local administration as well as the attitude vis-à-vis the local population has during the course of the project improved drastically. Local development projects were delivered and local people credited the local state – which had previously been crudely authoritarian, dealing with issues of security and political control. In many localities, certain appreciation of the attitude and activities of the local state were heard (cf. Eastmond & Öjendal 1999). The experiences of this experiment subsequently inspired a nation-wide decentralization reform (RGC 2001).

While the legal framework for this reform, too, was delayed several times, both the law on ‘Commune Administration’ and on ‘Commune Elections’ were passed in the spring of 2001, and the first local elections in modern times were held in February 2002, which also came to represent the starting date for the reform. The reform brings not only locally elected

\(^{23}\) Others are extending this point even further, arguing that the Cambodian political culture is incompatible with a liberal democratic system (Bruce St:John 1995:297; Mehmet 1997, passim). While a point could be made here, it may be to overemphasize the determinism of the process.

\(^{24}\) Until 1997, military expenditure stood for more than 50% of the national budget.
councils to the communes, but also a range of powers: the commune has *inter alia* the right to tax, construct minor laws, administer some local resources, receive a share of the national budget, and receive development resources from external actors. Although controversial, it has had an unequivocal support from the Minister of Interior and some other central state organs. In all, it is a democratic and development-oriented reform with a great potential to trigger other reforms. Although the ‘big-bang democracy’ of UNTAC never could be ‘real’ and ‘complete’, this reform could be viewed as the beginning of a substantive democratization process, and the beginning of the ‘real’ political reconstruction process, opening a positive dialogue between the people and the state, as well as introducing a seed of democratic culture. This may be a more solid sign of a break with ‘politics as usual’ than even the national elections (cf. Roberts 2001:78f).

In conclusion, the attempt to replace power-based authoritarianism with democracy-based legitimacy is so far at best a half-way house, and the very fact that the previously dominating party resides unthreatened in power is suspicious to many. In fact, there is a widely shared tendency to view the emerging political system as a neo-patrimonial one, existing within a procedural democracy, and fear that this is turning into a permanent feature of ‘Cambodian democracy’.

**Building a Sustainable Economy in a Post-conflict Situation?**

Violent conflict is one of the most poverty-generating processes in the third world (Duffield 1998), which is evident in the Cambodian case. In the early 1960s, Cambodia had a GDP per capita on par with Thailand, while it now constitutes considerably less than a tenth of that in Thailand. Even so, wealth is unevenly distributed and poverty plagues around 50% of the rural population, with a tendency of increasing – or at least not decreasing to the extent that was generally anticipated (cf. Beresford et al 2003). Moreover, with the start in 1986, there was a change in economic strategy from a ‘quasi planned economy’ to a ‘wild west’ liberal economy (Ljunggren 1994). The massive UN presence further fuelled this integration into the global political economy, subsequently leading to an impressive flow of development resources, sharply increasing FDIs, and a substantial flow of tourism. This has tended to spur growth but not necessarily the distribution of the riches; it has put severe stress on natural resource management, with severe implications on livelihood systems; and it has created a massive presence of ‘development’ activities, for good and bad.

*Macro Economic Overview – the Emergence of a Distorted Economy*

With the peace process, the state abdicated from any ambition to control the economy; an ambition that never was credible and would have been even less so without Soviet/Vietnamese patronage. As in many other former socialist countries, the early 1990s saw Cambodia turn into a ‘cleptocracy’, where government employees (and their clients) in various ways tried to capitalize on their position. A rather ‘heroic’ self-made political class (cf. Gottesman 2003) turned into merchants of transition.

---

25 For instance, given the degree of independence now extended to the communes and the previous degree of dependence on higher administrative levels, the laws regulating the upper levels (District and Province) now have to be revised accordingly. This, in turn, is a major process, which may include huge changes in the organization of the Cambodian state and further democratization measures.

26 An anecdote is telling. One couple working for the state occupied, as many others did from the re-population of Phnom Penh in 1979 and onwards, a small plot of land in central Phnom Penh. With a little help from an older brother working in the administration, they got this land titled (which was in line with overall policy) and the right to build a house on it. Then they split the plot into two, contacted a construction entrepreneur and made a deal that he built a house on one plot if he got the other as compensation. Once the house was finished, they rented it to the newly arrived UN personnel for 3,000 USD/month, turning the poor couple into *nouveau riches.*
The UNTAC operation – with a budget almost as big as the Cambodian GDP, and daily per diem for its peace keepers in the size of Cambodian GDP/capita – came to boost (inflate, others would say) the Cambodian economy and artificially kick-start the economy particularly through a boost in construction and services: national growth averaged 5.9% during 1990-95 (Mehmet 1997:675). This was further strengthened in the years to come, as aid was increasing: in the mid 1990s, aid constituted two thirds of the national budget. In parallel, there was a number of structural changes in the economic system that caused spectacular ‘one-time effects’: state properties were sold; the currency made convertible; accumulated UN aid resources made available; returning ex-patriot savings inserted into the economy; and, financial support for returnees paid out. Other changes were of a more dynamic, although not necessarily development-prone, kind, such as the entrance of international private capital; the growing tourism industry; and, the enhanced incentives for private entrepreneurship. Inflation, previously a ghost in Cambodian economy, was kept tight with the assistance of IMF (Narankhiri 1998). This resulted in sustained growth figures until political violence erupted in 1997.

However, good as this period may seem, the economy was severely distorted with a rather extreme tilt towards the service sector and the urban areas. Neither industrial nor agricultural production (employing 85% of the population) saw any remarkable development in this period. Instead, economic growth was concentrated to the urban areas (largely Phnom Penh), to some tourist hot spots (Siem Reap and Sihanoukville), some border areas (smuggling, petty trade, and cross-border fed gambling) and to some pockets of intensive resource extraction (cf. Talbott 1998). In many ways, this resembles the path towards political conflicts and social collapse, rather than the path away from it. This is critical, especially since the mismanagement of the economy may have contributed to triggering the conflict in the first place.

In mid-1997, armed fighting broke out in Phnom Penh and elsewhere, causing an almost total stop in the flow of tourists and foreign investments, and, given the distortion of the economy, very quickly affecting the overall economy. In addition, the ‘Asia crisis’ was ravaging East Asia at the same time, and although the structure of the Cambodian economy saved the country from direct consequences of that crisis, indirectly it was critical, since the regionally based FDIs previously fuelling the economy largely dried up. As a result, 1997 saw a negative growth, and in 1998 the economy picked up only slowly, causing a real per capita decline during 1996-1998 of 4%. The real average growth during 1999-2001 was 6.9% (and 5.5% when compensated for inflation) (Beresford et al 2003:28-29).

One exception to the pattern of the extorted economy was that of the textile export industry. Starting slowly in 1994, the textile manufacturing industry has been through a period of sensational expansion, now employing hundreds of thousands of people and by far being the largest manufacturing sector, largely driven by East- and Southeast Asia based FDIs. In addition to the ‘regular’ advantages of low paid wage labour, low level of labour protection standards, and a negotiable state, Cambodia had the unbeatable advantage of having unfilled quotas for export to Europe and the US. This is due to historical circumstances and Cambodia’s once ‘halfway’ entry into the GATT. Further negotiations with WTO are now taking place.

In average for the period in question, in real terms, the growth has amounted to 5.7%. However, when compensated for deflation, growth amounts to less impressive 1.1% (Beresford et al 2003:28-29). With the exception of the textile industry, the distortedness of the economy remains though. Although the proportion in the national budget consisting of aid lessened, the tax collecting capacity heightened, and the agricultural production rose, economic inequalities are, nevertheless, widening; poverty is prevailing and the occurrence of

---

Similar deals were made all over the country, both in terms of selling government estates and cannibalising former state corporations (Author’s interview, August 1992, Phnom Penh).
local economic livelihood collapses increasing. As a result of rural poverty – and increasingly as a result of urban poverty – prostitution, criminality, and slum dwelling are increasing. For a majority of the people, in the short to medium term, it seems as if the distortion of the macro-economy ‘rules’ over the relative high growth rates, when it comes to assessing ‘development’.

Livelihood Issues – from One Crisis to Another
A lengthy period of surviving in civil war-like circumstances creates certain coping strategies. These are often based on security rather than profit maximizing, often in a barter kind of economy, and with a high degree of subsistence and natural resource dependence. Security takes precedence over other priorities, and peace-time laws and regulations are sidelined; so are ordinary social norms to a certain extent. Investments, if any in the ordinary sense of the word, are typically short-sighted and as ‘safe’ as possible. A situation of crude poverty, where people have small margins and cannot afford to fail, tends, moreover, to reinforce the specificity of this economic structure, and creates asymmetrical dependence of various sorts. The absence of a professional police corps, courts and a legal culture tilts the situation increasingly in favour of the powerful. Both war circumstances and poverty are conducive to the reinforcement of patronage politics, which tend to be both exploitative and reduce the dynamism of the economy (cf. Sidel 1999). However, it does deliver a minimum amount of security, even for the poor.

In terms of livelihood, the unregulated neo-liberal economic system, introduced on top of the war-ravaged economy, has implied many hardships for local economies (cf. Sophal & Acharya 2002; Sedara, Sophal & Acharya 2002). In many instances, the relative security of a resource allocating state in a static (quasi-)socialist economy has been replaced by a rural economy that turns fragmented and where, in the void of either social structure or a caring state, the ‘fittest survive’. Kinship structures, which may be the most reliable social glue in the rural society, have turned patchy through war, violence, political conflicts and general poverty. Although never a really collective society, social cooperative forms are often increasingly replaced by monetary relations. The lack of a functioning health sector and with a school system that is partly self-financed, the poor and vulnerable groups are the ones bearing the brunt of the hardships.

Furthermore, in many rural areas, low-intensity conflict has been replaced by resource exploitation, land grabbing and environmental degradation, with equally devastating consequences. There are frequent stories on how local communities lose access to land, water, fisheries, and forest due to large-scale commercial exploitation (Global Witness 1996; Talbott 1998; cf. Öjendal et al 2001). The introduction of a liberal capitalist economy has, moreover, made labour migration virtually explode in numbers, putting further strain on any collective, cooperative arrangements on village level.

There are of course winners in this process too: just as vulnerable people are losing land, some are acquiring large land holdings. There are also, in the embryonic structural transformation of the agricultural sector, several ‘business opportunities’ (drilling for water; distributing pesticides; selling marketable goods), increasing demand for skilled labour (agronomists and engineers), and profitable agreements for some state sectors (like Forest and Fishery, Water, Energy). However, in the absence of a strong egalitarian state with tax collecting capacity, there is little redistribution between ‘winners’ and ‘losers’ – thus social gaps widen rapidly.

Development and Developmentalism
As mentioned above, the state has withdrawn from the development scene and invited the international donor community to take care of this. To a certain extent, the Cambodian state has been dominated by the development community, and the argument has been delivered
that in rural areas the state has abandoned the people and made way for ‘NGO-ism’, and that this may, in the long run, be counter-productive:

The royalty, politicians and officials have no more concern for the poor than before, content to leave them in the care of Western NGOs, now willing to deliver. The danger in all of this is that the present fragile peace can easily turn into anarchy, plunging Cambodia back into the dark days of the past.

Mehmet 1997:566

This is, moreover, not only taking place through economic muscles, but it is obvious how also in policy discussions various development actors have been dominating. The first and second development plan (1996-00, and 2001-05) were pushed by donors (Mehmet 1997), and the annual meeting with the international consultative group is the key event of the year in terms of development planning/assessment. Moreover, UNDP has initiated decentralization, the World Bank is taking the lead on poverty alleviation, and the EU has been fronting discussion on elections. Sida and DfiD are concerned with issues of local democracy and rural development.

What may be more problematic is that ‘development’ tends to think in projects, has a technocratic approach to societal change, and is intrinsically sensitive to ‘trends’ (cf. Rudengren & Öjendal 2002). An infamous example of this is the first phase of the EU aid to Cambodia; its technocratic and arrogant approach went so far that the local NGOs made an extremely unusual but common appeal of protest, resulting in an evaluation which predictably was hypercritical. As is well-known from other places, aid dependency, eschewed salary structures, and disregard for (and the squeezing out of) domestic institutions are other common and problematic features.

Having said that, we must not underestimate the value for reconstruction that the development efforts nevertheless deliver. In terms of roads, bridges, technical advice, and various rural development projects, as well as in service delivery such as education and health, the approximately 4-500 million USD/year in aid is an absolutely essential, though not sufficient, factor in the reconstruction process. As we have defined our terms above, ‘developmentalism’ has been more important for reconstruction than for reconciliation, validating the claim of Doyle (1998) that peace building is a missing factor in the Cambodian recovery process and in the standard development discourse.

**Reconciliatory Processes in Post-conflict Reconstruction?**

The legacy of violence itself is a distinct factor to take into account when considering reconstruction and reconciliation. It is inevitable that the scope, nature and consequences under which violence was performed need to be considered. The crude involvement of outside actors and forces does not cloud the sense of self-inflation and guilt. In fact, this issue brings us all the way to the core of nation-building and the creation of identities. ‘Who are we?’, given that ‘we’ – the Khmers – were responsible for the death of one fourth of ‘us’. This uncertainty can be applied on all levels: what keeps the nation together? What keeps a village together? Who belongs to the nation? (The perpetrators? The returning refugees? The Vietnamese minority?) In this sense, reconciliation amounts to nation-building and the grounds on which such constructions will be founded.

In terms of reconciliation between former enemies, the situation is equally confused: given that a large chunk of the population was on the side of the violators, and many were actually both violators and victims, who will reconcile with whom (cf. Meng-Try & Sorya 2001)? Even if a line can be drawn between the adversaries, the sense of collective guilt
makes the issue of defining crime and punishment blurred. This is evident in the fact that it is common that well-known executioners from the Khmer Rouge era live wholly unprotected as ordinary villagers in rural areas. Actually, the same is true for some of the very top leaders, now peacefully residing in Phnom Penh (such as Ieng Sary, ‘brother number two’). In order to get some insight into processes of proposed reconciliation, let us look at three different contexts, ranging from macro to micro issues: The Khmer Rouge trials, the refugee reintegration, and a case of community building on village level.

**National Reconciliation - The Case for Khmer Rouge Trials**

In 1979, a tribunal was held by the new government, where the ‘Pol Pot/Ieng Sary clique’ was held responsible for the violence and given death sentences in absentia. It was also a political trial, and had no dimension of reconciliation in it (and hardly one of legality either; Heder 2002). With the start in 1997, the then ‘first prime-minister’ Ranariddh, together with the ‘second prime-minister’ Hun Sen, asked the UN system to look into the possibilities for supporting ‘Khmer Rouge trials’. Although a turbulent process, it now (spring 2003) seems reality.

The key arguments behind holding such trials are multifaceted. Firstly, only when the people’s suffering is acknowledged, and by sentencing the guilty, the innocent would be acquitted. The current situation, it is argued, makes ‘everybody’ potentially guilty and innocent. Would the authorities abstain from taking the lead in these trials, it could be interpreted as if the authorities indirectly sanction the crimes committed. Secondly, the failure to hold such trials has instilled a ‘culture of impunity’ in Cambodia, some are arguing, adding that if a genocide can be done without retribution, then anything can pass (Marks 1994a:20; Ashley 1998). Thirdly, if the ‘books are not closed’, it could at any time be taken as a pretext for exercising violence (Ashley 1998). As of yet (May 2003), no individual has been sentenced for crimes related to the Khmer Rouge regime in the post-UNTAC era.

However, the issue is complex. First of all, for a long time, the argument were that to reopen the Khmer Rouge trials would be paramount to reopen the civil war, or, at the very least, political stability would be in jeopardy.27 Second, as part of finding ways and means to end the civil war, leading Khmer Rouge figures were made to break ranks through the promise of pardon: some were given official, written and royally sanctioned pardon, other awarded less high profiled amnesties, and some were just welcomed and accepted on a ‘handshake’. Many turned directly from senior posts in the Khmer Rouge administration/army to parallel posts in the new government. To reopen the case against these people would constitute a moral breach of another kind, and to include former Khmer Rouges in the process could hardly be seen as an immoral act, since the UN, sanctioned by the world community at large, did the same in the Paris Peace Agreement in 1991. Third, who should be considered eligible for standing trial? People with blood on their hands could be traced all the way down to the village and common soldier level. To punish these people would, however, parallel to punish soldiers for killing in a war: ‘I just did what I was told. If I had not, they would have killed me’, is a common argument often met with a great deal of acceptance (cf. Hinton 1998). Four, who wants the trials? The pressure to reopen the issue of Khmer Rouge trials emanates to a large extent from a small intellectual elite in the urban areas, and the international development community. The debate, so far, has largely centred on a few top leaders and some well-known perpetrators, whereas the lower ranking officers from the Khmer Rouge era are excluded from any official retributive process. It is also unclear how, and if, this would constitute a reconciliation process, or if it will just serve as insufficient revenge? Or as Marks put it:

---

27 The fact that the Khmer Rouge era is still today, 25 years after, not mentioned in the schoolbooks, due to the political sensitivity of it, is illuminating (Christian Science Monitor, Feb 12, 2003).
Is [the failure of holding responsible from the Khmer Rouge era accountable] a failure of the most elementary principles of retributive justice? Is it, on the contrary, an example of a peace process that is succeeding because it is set in a society that values reconciliation over a socially divisive pursuit of accountability?

Reconciliation in Cambodia may not, after all, have the same hallmarks as the ones in the Christian countries, with their particular form of confessing and forgiving, such as South Africa and El Salvador (cf. Marks 1994:254; Whittaker 1999:35).

Finally, there are complex webs of stakes involved here: China has no interest in highlighting its role during the Khmer Rouge era (and firmly opposes the idea of holding trials); the US has similar reasons for not allowing a borderless process, where its own role, tracing as far back as the illegal bombings of Cambodia in the late 1960s and early 1970s, could be ‘discovered’. Hun Sen himself is a former lower level Khmer Rouge commander, and could be implicated in the process (although no credible arguments regarding his personal role has surfaced so far); Ranariddh cooperated with Pol Pot during the years of the civil war (1982-1991) and signed a document of cooperation as late as 1997, when it was clearly illegal to do so, just to mention the most obvious.

The Cambodian government and the UN system went into negotiations on the terms of these trials as early as 1998. While complex, the key controversy regarded whether it should be a UN process on Cambodian ground, or a Cambodian process with UN support. The Cambodian government defended Cambodian sovereignty, while the UN system did not want to emerge as a hostage in a politically manipulated process (cf. what has been said above on the Cambodian legal system). Progress was made, and a law constructed and designed for executing Khmer Rouge trials. However, while the Cambodian government claims it was designed on the basis of their common agreement, the UN claims that the law constituted a breach with previous agreements. The government, on their side, argued that the law could not be changed now, given that it was an arduous process to push it through the assembly. The UN responded by concluding the cooperation and rejecting being part of the trials. The twist is that the UN negotiators were reprimanded by the UN General Council and were ordered to reopen the negotiations – a process seemingly resulting in belated trials.

Refugee Repatriation without Refugee Reconciliation

As in most violent conflicts, a massive refugee flow followed in its trail; as in many other cases, refugees were pawns in the conflict, and in various phases exploited for political causes related to the overall conflict (Reynell 1989). More precisely, the refugees were poised to be in opposition to the CPP government in sole power during the 1980s, and the huge refugee camps on Thai soil came to serve as a major supply for recruitment to the Khmer Rouge dominated guerrilla-armies. Thus the refugees, as a group, became politicised and the reconciliation process a potentially tense one. Moreover, given that the repatriation process was an integrated part of the UN-led conflict resolution process, it had a rigid timetable and was imbedded in a process that was as sheltered as possible from any potential set-backs.

---

28 Remember that Hun Sen at an early stage argued that, of course there should be trials. All guilty should be brought to justice. Let’s start with the US bombings and call Dr Kissinger to our court.

29 The fact that their return more often is called a process of ‘integration’ (as opposed to ‘reconciliation’) illuminates the asymmetry of the process in that it is represented as a one-sided effort carried out by the repatriees.

30 This was in itself a point of concern. It is perhaps most clearly viewed by recalling that some 80% of the available budget for repatriation was allocated for the actual transportation from the camp to their place of choice, and the remaining resources for the much more complex and drawn-out reintegration process. It has
The details of the narrow part of this process – getting the 362,000 refugees back to their place of choice in time for the election in May 1993 – has been described elsewhere (Robinson 1994), whereas the societal processes it triggered, and how it relates to the re-integration of a war-torn and divided nation is so far largely unknown (Eastmond & Öjendal 1999). What may be clear, however, is that the glib optimistic (or blatantly nonchalant) assumptions that the repatriees would painlessly melt into the rural economy in the shattered Cambodian society, where some 40% live below the poverty line and where family ties are uncertain, were unrealistic. Although, major empirical studies are absent, this seems not to be a credible representation of subsequent development (Eastmond 2003). Instead, for the major chunk of refugees that returned to predominantly rural areas in three north-western provinces, from having had a brief period of control (as long as the cash support given in the repatriation process lasted), most returnees were sinking into low-status, poorer-than-average farmers, often distrusted or purposively marginalized in their local contexts, being prone to secondary migration. Mutual grudges between ‘stayees’ and ‘repatriees’ are commonly heard, where the latter is both stereotyped and stigmatized in the process. When integration was successful, it seems like family ties within the villages were the key asset.

Prior to the repatriation, it was also feared that the returning refugees would be politically punished for their alleged stance against the CPP-led government, with massive human rights abuses in its wake. This did not happen in a large scale though; rather, the ‘punishment’ for ‘running away’ took the form of being looked upon as unreliable and ‘soft’ in their local context and therefore being structurally distrusted and disadvantaged in a socio-political sense in everyday life. Scattered evidence indicates that the returnees are generally found on the bottom half of the socio-economic strata.

Having said this, two processes are more positively relating to the post-conflict reconstruction effort: firstly, an important minority of the refugees got a decent education in the camps and exposure to international development aid, returning to Cambodia with visions and skills within a ‘sector’ where they could get well-paid jobs. Many of these have put their effort in forming development NGOs, seeking international support, and promoting human rights and pro-democracy issues. As such, this group has been a positive contribution to the reconstruction of the Cambodian society. However, in their own perception, the state’s reluctance to recognize the value of their work and to engage to facilitate their ambition, and even less welcoming them in the state administration, have served to marginalize and ‘punish’ them. While tragic, because it represents a missed opportunity to speed up the development process and support the reconciliation work, it was predictable, since having critical NGOs on the doorstep is not compatible to the prevailing Cambodian elite’s political culture (Peang-Meth 1991; Mehmet 1997).

Secondly, and more interestingly, the ambition to assist not only individual returnees, but also the communities they returned to, led to a major development project (CARERE/Seila) that initially developed ‘QIPs’ (Quick Impact Projects) on a major scale. Subsequently, it developed mechanisms for enhancing both state legitimacy, local development projects, and ideas around reconciliation (cf. Öjendal & Rudengren 2002). The project explicitly identified the presence of a disruptive state-civil society rift and positioned itself so as to start a process that would lessen that rift. Physical infrastructure investments were badly needed, and the local state was to take responsibility for reconstructing these and achieving a certain degree of reconciliation in the process. Moreover, when the Khmer Rouge started to defect in 1996/97, CARERE/Seila designed a sub-project that would make it possible for previous Khmer Rouge areas to quickly integrate into the mainstream society in a positive way (cf. Wallgren 2000; CCCR/CDRI 1999). The overall project is generally seen as a major success and did in fact inspire (not to say trigger) the overall decentralization reform taken to indicate that ‘face-saving’ of UNTAC was made more important than the long-term well-being of the repatriees (cf. Bernander 1995).
In combination with the overall democratisation of the Cambodian society, this project and the subsequent decentralization process may represent the most distinct evidence of both reconstruction and reconciliation since 1993.

**The Need for and Absence of Village Level Reconciliation**

At bottom, Cambodia is still regarded by many as a ‘shattered’ society (cf. Martin 1994), socially fragmented at its core social arena, the villages (cf. Ovesen et al 1996; van de Put 1997). While this is bound to differ from village to village, depending on to which degree one was affected by the war and on which level of economic surviving the local society manages to sustain itself. An example is illustrative.

Kampong Sneh in Southeast Cambodia was a marginal but peaceful village until the end of the 1960s. Then it came to experience the US bombings (1969-73), and was subsequently ‘liberated’ by the Khmer Rouge. The former rather well-respected village chief and his followers were removed and replaced by a leadership of a harsher nature. The village suffered as many other villages in Cambodia with plenty of people dying, although most of them by mismanagement. Perhaps the village was at some advantage, since it was marginal and its land of relatively small economic significance – to some extent, it was left to its own. However, under the next regime, the previous leadership, loyal to Khmer Rouge, fled and an elderly, very respected man was appointed village chief, just to be replaced by a man being a member of the socialist party, emanating from a nearby village. While politically repressive to only a minor extent, his capacity was described as low by the villagers, and most people loathed him. At the time of my field study (Öjendal 2000), the deputy village chief, a younger man which was well liked, was in essence running the village, although in some contradiction to the local administration, since he represented a break with the CPP monopoly on power in the villages. Meanwhile, the fleeing village chief from the Khmer Rouge period returned, being thrown out from his relatives in the village where he had sought refuge, and parts of the leadership from pre-Khmer Rouge times have remained, voicing disappointment and bitterness.

Throughout this period, political violence persisted (with a peak during the Khmer Rouge), and social and economic mismanagement remained. Each village chief had to gather support from various groups, handing out benefits in the process and thereby violating other people’s rights. In a social system of approximately 300 people, rivalling and partly overlapping sub-village ‘groups’ were directly and indirectly responsible for the premature death of many people in the village and series of petty corruption, nepotism and general mismanagement. On a direct question on how they managed to live with all these grievances, the deputy village chief answered: ‘What alternative do we have? There is nowhere to go. We have to live’. This may be an as tragic as common illustration of the situation for many Cambodians still today.

To view the consequences of this, we could review what happened when, by coincidence, a participatory development project emerged in the village. Nitty-gritty conflicts emerged in every aspect of the work with the project: how much water should be allocated...
where? Who should do the digging of irrigation canals? How much should each household contribute? In essence, many of the significant villagers preferred to block the project as long as they could give adversaries a disadvantage in the process. Politicking and petty mobilization followed every change. The irrigation project failed, agricultural output remains around one ton/hectare, food security was absent, children attended school irregularly, and visions of a better future were rare. The development NGO was about to give up its engagement, and the local authorities described the village as a hopeless case. The village remains locked into poverty and its own violence related grudges.

Conclusion

Trying to understand drawn-out reconstruction periods is dangerously close to embrace the entire spectrum of social science, and the key may be to grasp what is at its core. The explicit ambition of this paper has been to see what we can learn from studying the Cambodian ‘post-conflict process’.

Returning to our criticism of the way the post-conflict processes have been conceptualized in the literature reviewed in the opening of this paper, we can conclude that, predictably, the way forward is not to return to any previous political, institutional or economic structures: constitution, election, parliamentary system, decentralization, bottom-up experiments, local democracy, UN-supported reconciliatory trials, liberal and internationalized economy, and so on, are all new phenomena deeply entrenched in the evolving order, rarely or never seen before in Cambodia. These require particular forms of governance; a governance which both has to emanate from the reconstruction work and prove sustainable in this new political economy.

While both UNTAC and certain sectors/actors of the aid community view Cambodia’s rebuilding as largely a technical process, emphasizing political procedures over substance and infrastructure reconstruction over social recovery, it is obvious that the process is marred by political, moral, philosophical, cultural and judicial issues, while at the same time moving ahead into the great wide unknown of the Cambodian future. It is illustrating that decentralization, a far-flung idea in the case of Cambodia, may appear as the most efficient way of both deepening democracy and starting substantive reconciliation.

In terms of correspondence between conflict, conflict-resolution and post-conflict reconstruction, it seems obvious that the Cambodian transition into a functioning ‘modern’ society was impaired by two structural factors: the instrumental approach from the side of the international community, and the Cambodian political culture’s unease with liberal democracy. In this sense, we agree with Doyle and Roberts that there is a ‘missing link’ between the mammothical peace-keeping operation (‘peace-only’) and the overwhelming aid industry (‘development-only’), the separation of which has been zealously kept up by its respective proponents. In other words, UNTAC left behind a ‘soft’ democratic system, ill-fitted to imbed the remaining elite conflicts and their view on how to acquire power, and the development community at large arrived with a back-pack of ready-made practices. Interestingly, UNTAC reached out embryonically towards the ensuing development process in its section on development planning, and UNDP has driven the development agenda with a window open towards reconciliation. Both these efforts have, however, been too isolated and too thin to have structural importance. The consequence of this is what we have seen being played out in the unstable decade since 1993.

Finally, the clash between Khmer (political) culture and the views of the development community is monumental, and although some values that have been promoted can be perceived as universally good (human rights, democracy, participation, justice, etc.) and some practices plainly necessary (end to impunity, financial accountability, corruption reduction,
etc.), the pace, insensitivity, and ignorance with which these have been pushed has not made societal reconstruction easy. Especially not when different donors put up different demands and when donors come and go over time, and when Cambodian authorities cannot afford to ignore any offer or claim. As always, although more sensitive in reconstruction periods, this risks to fragment weak and vulnerable states.

Turning to our key fields of investigation, to establish a new polity was necessary but not sufficient. This is obvious when observing the discrepancy between the solid looking formal framework of the new political system, and the tarnished record of the content of the systems and the launched political reforms. Moreover, although part of the same process, the contrast between the imposed ‘big-bang UNTAC democracy’ and the internal, grounded and process-oriented decentralization reform is striking. While the former predictably produces a thin, and possibly unsustainable, structure, the latter could be an indication of actual changes in the so stigmatized ‘Cambodian political culture’, and of changes in the elite’s obsession with central power and control.

The transition from a planned economy during a low intensity civil war to a freewheeling, ultraliberal peace-time economy has inserted a lot of dynamics into the system. However, in spite of the heavy inflow of aid resources for reconstruction and an impressive economic growth, many people have more difficulties to make a living now as compared to a decade ago. The slow reform work has gathered the worst of the two worlds; i.e. the poverty from the conflict era combined with the inequality and individual responsibility from a liberal economy.

As for reconciliation, the process seems to have crystallised between the devil of indifference and the deep blue sea of enforced processes based on an alien value base. Two insights are of paramount importance here. Firstly, in cases of post-conflict reconstruction, there is always a trade-off between justice and reconciliation: if the full punishment for the committed crimes are meted out, then there is hardly any room/need for reconciliation. Secondly, in order to strike that balance, cultural factors have to be taken into account; it is unlikely that reconciliation in a Buddhist context is as focused on bringing culprits to formal justice and perform forgiving exercises as other cases in a Christian context have been (Kassie Neou in Marks 1994). This argument does not rule out the idea of trials (or justice), but it adds other, and possibly equally important, processes. That reconciliation, somehow, is needed is quite obvious when viewing which paralyzing/excluding effects the lack of reconciliation has in current Cambodia. The risk is obvious, given the external dominance of Cambodian societal development, that reconciliatory processes will be launched, but it will not be the ‘right’ ones. One way of getting it wrong seems to be to prioritize retribution over ‘truth’.

Finally, given the weight of contemporary globalization and the endemic lack of resources in post-conflict societies, differing from basic Weberian postulates (Weber 1968; Alagappa 1995), regime legitimacy has to be won in two directions: ‘downwards’ vis-à-vis the own population, and ‘upwards’ vis-à-vis the international community. Both types of cases are obviously of relevance in Cambodia, and it marks all our three fields of investigation above: the political system, the economic system and the proposed key to reconciliation (Khmer Rouge Trials) are all processes that are received from, or negotiated with, a dominant global discourse, as well as fed by its material/financial resources. To master this ‘negotiation’ may be the ultimate challenge for post-conflict recovery.

33 Deficit of the latter may result in a ‘Republika Srpska’ or ‘Taliban Afghanistan’ (encountering fatal resistance from the international community), while neglecting the former may trigger a post-Taliban Afghanistan or current Burma situation (with extreme internal legitimacy deficit).
References


Doyle, Michael W., 1995, *UN Peacekeeping in Cambodia: UNTAC's Civil Mandate*, Lynne Rienner Publ., Boulder Colorado


Kiernan, Ben, 1985, How Pol Pot Came to Power, Verso, London.


Martin, Marie Alexandrine, 1994, Cambodia - A Shattered Society, Univ. of California Press, Berkeley.
Meng-Try, Ea & Sim Sorya, 2001, Victims and Perpetrators? Testimony of Young Khmer Rouge Comrades, Documentation Series No. 1, Documentation Center of Cambodia, Phnom Penh.
Ovesen, Jan, Ing-Britt Trankell and Joakim Öjendal, 1996, When every Household is an Island, Dept. of Cultural Anthropology, Uppsala.
Peou, Sorpong, 1997, Conflict Neutralization in the Cambodia War - From Battlefield to Ballot-Box, Oxford University Press, Oxford.
Phnom Penh Post, Phnom Penh.
RGC, 1994, National Program to Rehabilitate and Develop Cambodia, Phnom Penh.
Reconstruction and Reconciliation in Cambodia

Table of Content

1. Introduction
2. Resolution, Reconstruction and Reconciliation – Perspectives on Post-conflict Processes

NATIONAL PROCESSES OF RECONSTRUCTION AND RECONCILIATION
3. The Building of a New Politics?
4. From Dysfunctional to Distorted – the Cambodian Post-war Economy
5. Optional or Imperative – Reconciliation Reconsidered

MICRO CASES OF RECONSTRUCTION AND RECONCILIATION
7. The Decentralization Reform – Building a New polity!
8. Access to Natural Resources as a Key Aspect of the Post-war Economy
10. Refugee Repatriation – the Ultimate Test of Nationhood

11. Conclusion