

Clientelism and Party Institutionalization in Post-Authoritarian/Post-Conflict Regimes:
The Case of Cambodia

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This thesis titled
Clientelism and Party Institutionalization in Post-Authorian/Post-Conflict Regimes:
The Case of Cambodia

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ABSTRACT

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After more than two decades of regime transition in 1993, Cambodia's party system remains fluid and subordinated to the hegemonic control of the long-ruling Cambodian People's Party (CPP). The degree of institutionalization of individual parties within the system has thus far been noticeably uneven, with the CPP being the only political party without any history of party merger or party schism. Despite its relatively institutionalized party organization, the CPP has been characterized by personalistic control of Prime Minister Hun Sen; an open-secret factional conflict between Prime Minister Hun Sen and the CPP's President Chea Sim; an absence of distinct political programs; and an unstable voter base, as evidently shown by its unprecedented electoral decline in the July 2013 election.

Puzzled by this very characteristic of Cambodia's party system, this thesis seeks to understand the nature and development of the CPP, and subsequently analyze why the CPP has institutionalized the way it has. The thesis argues that the ability of the CPP to institutionalize its party organization was stifled by its organizational inheritance from the former hegemonic party during the authoritarian regime, the People's Republic of Kampuchea (PRK). Emerged as the most structured, organized and well-financed party after the UN-supervised election in 1993, the CPP has been embracing clientelism as its

strategy of party institutionalization. Clientelistic politics, while effective for the CPP to mobilize voters and to secure loyalty from the political and business elites, has remarkably weakened both the internal and external dimensions of the CPP- party autonomy and value infusion, respectively.

DEDICATION

*I would like to dedicate this thesis to my family, especially my parents and my sister,
whose support is well beyond my verbal description.*

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INTRODUCTION

Ever since the final breakthrough of democracy in the First Wave of democratization, the importance of political parties has growingly been recognized as extremely crucial for mass democracy. They are commonly viewed as the vehicle of citizens' interest representation and articulation and as intermediating organizations between the state and the society. Beyond these facts, an implicit assumption vis-à-vis the designated roles and significance of the parties, however, is that parties are institutionalized. Institutionalized parties allow for effective representation, incorporation, and stabilization of social demands into public policies. In contrast, uninstitutionalized parties are not capable of representing and articulating social demands and effectively responding to conflicts among various social groups (Hicken and Kuhonta, 2014; Mainwaring and Scully, 1995; Randall and Svasand, 2002). Despite the importance of party institutionalization for political parties, establishing institutionalized party and party system has been largely viewed as the most "difficult and elusive" efforts, particularly in new democracies, where democratization process does not follow that of developed democracies (Hicken, 2009: 1). Therefore, it is important to look into how party and party system institutionalization develop in new democracies, and especially why they develop in the way they do.

Existing literature on party and party system institutionalization has thus far dealt mainly with the origins, types, and development of such institutionalization in the framework of established democracies (see, for example, Duverger, 1954; Epstein, 1967; Lipset and Rokkan, 1976; Michels, 1959; Sartori, 1976). A limited amount of scholarship

has focused on the case of “Third Wave” democratizers. Despite some existing literature on Third Wave democratizers in Eastern European and Latin American polities (Biezen, 2003; Kitschelt et al, 1999; Mainwaring and Scully, 1995; Reilly and Norlund, 2008; Spirova, 2007; Webb and White, 2007), the literature has been built upon the framework of Western democracies: that is in the context of democratic polities. Through the lense of democratic politics, such an understanding of party and party system institutionalization, while to some degree accurate, fails to capture the democratization experiences in other Third Wave democratizers, including in Asia, where party and party systems institutionalization have been commonly dominated by long-ruling hegemonic parties within competitive authoritarian contexts (Hicken and Kuhonta, 2011, 2014; Ufen, 2008). Some of the commonly-known hegemonic ruling parties in Asia include, among others, Malaysia’s United Malay National Organization (UMNO), Singapore’s People’ Action Party (PAP), Indonesia’s Golkar Party (at least prior to the 2004 election), Taiwan’s Kuomintang Party, Japan’s Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), Thailand’s Thaksin-affiliated parties, and Cambodia’s Cambodian People’s Party (CPP). Although these parties are mainly the hegemonic parties, their rise to prominence within the party system is shaped by different factors. Therefore, an examination into the mechanism through which each of these parties became dominant is particularly important.

In contributing to a better understanding of this topic, this thesis, with the case of study of Cambodia, seeks to examine how the ruling Cambodian People’s Party (CPP) became a hegemon within the party system. From a theoretical perspective, this thesis aims to examine how party institutionalization in post-authoritarian/post-conflict regimes

can take shape and why they evolve in the way they do. Cambodia is a case study worthy of academic attention not only because it is a post-authoritarian regime, it is also a post-conflict society whose democratic election was “imported” into the country following political deals by warring factions and external powers. Because party development in post-conflict societies, as part of the Third Wave democratizers, remains an understudied subject despite the fact that more than half of the Third Wave democratizers are post-conflict nations (Bermeo, 2003), a case study of Cambodia would make a significant contribution to the existing body of literature.

This thesis argues that origins of political parties can have significant influence on the ability of parties to institutionalize their party organizations. Before the UN-organized first election in 1993, the long-ruling Cambodian People’s Party (CPP), that completely inherited its organizational structure, human, and financial resources from the former regime party, the Kampuchean People’s Revolutionary Party (KPRP), brings institutional advantages to the CPP to institutionalize its party organization after the democratic transition. Other political parties— including the early rebel-turned-parties, which immediately transformed themselves from armed forces into full-fledged political parties to compete in the election, and also the subsequent parties emerging after the ensuing elections— all lack the institutional advantages thereof, and thus are subjected to weak party institutionalization and subordination to the CPP’s control. This thesis also contends that the institutional advantages of the CPP after the first election have since enabled the party to embrace clientelism as a mechanism for its power consolidation.

Although clientelism has been an effective means for the CPP to strengthen its power at the expense of other parties, the extensive reliance of the party on clientelism renders the party vulnerable to weak institutionalization when assessed based on the dimensions of value infusion and party autonomy.

Importance of the Study for Cambodia

Thus far, there has been important scholarship on clientelism, also commonly referred to as patronage, in Cambodia after the Khmer Rouge (Gottesman, 2003; Hughes, 2003; Roberts, 2001; Un, 2005). However, very few have studied the causal relationship between clientelism and party institutionalization. The only two scholarly works that examine the relationship between clientelism and party institutionalization in Cambodia are, first, a PhD dissertation entitled, *Political Party Development in Post-War Societies: The Institutionalization of Parties and Party Systems in El Salvador and Cambodia*, written by Dr. Jeroen de Zeeuw, and, second, a book chapter entitled, *Party and party system institutionalization in Cambodia*, written by Dr. Sorpong Peou. However, both of these pieces, while undeniably contributing significantly to Cambodia's scholarship on party politics, touch only slightly upon clientelism and party institutionalization in Cambodia. Discovering this literature gap and realizing the overreaching influence clientelism has had on Cambodia's party politics and its democratization process at large, this thesis seeks to fill this gap by examining the origin and consequences of clientelism on party institutionalization of Cambodia's long ruling party, the Cambodian People's Party (CPP).

Thesis Structure

The structure of the thesis will be designed as follows. Chapter 1 examines how party origins or historical legacies of the former regime parties affect party institutionalization in post-authoritarian/post-conflict regimes. It begins with a general background of the birth and development of political parties in old, established democracies. Such background information is essential because it allows readers to have a better understanding of how party politics evolves in established democracies, a prerequisite necessary for later understanding, from a comparative perspective, of party politics in new democracies. Subsequently, this chapter looks into how party institutionalization can take shape in post-authoritarian/post-conflict regimes, and argues that, following political transition, the origins of political parties can yield long-lasting effects on party institutionalization. In other words, the party which inherits organizational, human, and financial resources from the former regime party is well-equipped to institutionalize its own party organization. By contrast, due to lack of organizational, human and financial resource, parties established shortly before and after the transition period, face significant challenges to institutionalize, and, hence, are generally suppressed by the dominant and oldest party.

Chapter 2 explores specifically at the impacts of clientelism on party institutionalization in post-authoritarian/post-conflict regimes through the platforms of party financing and clientelistic buying. This thesis argues that the institutional origin of democratization places the former regime party in a position to manipulate state resources for party benefits, thereby inducing the party to use clientelism as a strategy to generate

resources to finance the party and also to generate votes using clientelistic appeals. It contends that the ruling parties' extensive reliance on clientelism, while effective for the party to institutionalize their parties and to consolidate their power from the beginning, is not sustainable because its durability is prone to social resistance and actors beyond the party's control. To measure party institutionalization in this context, *value infusion and party autonomy*, two out of the four major indicators (but not *systemness* and *public reification*), will be used to assess against clientelism. It is worth noting here, however, that these two other indicators, *systemness and public reification*, are not the focus points in this thesis because the two are likely to score high for the ruling parties.

Chapter 3 provides empirical evidence of the consequences of clientelism on party institutionalization in post-authoritarian/post-conflict Cambodia. It explains how party origin of the ruling CPP and Cambodia's socioeconomic and political development prior to and after the election dictated the CPP to use clientelism to institutionalize its party, at the expense of other parties, and also how subsequently the CPP's extensive reliance on clientelism undermines its party institutionalization in the long run. The conclusion wraps up the findings of this thesis, and proposes topics for further research.

CHAPTER I: PARTY DEVELOPMENT AND PARTY INSTITUTIONALIZATION IN NEW DEMOCRACIES: THE INFLUENCE OF HISTORICAL LEGACIES

Although the primary focus of this thesis is on political parties and party development in new democracies, it is important that the history of parties and party development in established democracies be briefly presented in this chapter. Such background information is essential because it allows readers to have a better understanding of how party politics emerged in established democracies, a prerequisite necessary for later understanding, from a comparative perspective, of party politics in new democracies. The primary aim of this chapter, however, is to present how the origin of political parties in post-authoritarian regimes can affect subsequent abilities of political parties, particularly of the ruling parties, to institutionalize their party organization after the democratization process.

Party Development in Established Democracies

The Birth of Political Parties

Prior to the widespread positive recognition of their existence and the acknowledgement of the roles they play in democratic polities, political parties had gone through a remarkable phase. In the 19th century in Western European countries, political parties at their birth carried negative connotations from the public's point of view, and especially within the existing elites. The parties were commonly perceived to be equivalent to "factions", which could potentially be harmful to social order and stability (Biezen, 2003; Epstein, 1967; Scarrow, 2006). Political parties were slowly born in the 18th century and progressively developed and persisted mainly in the 19th and early 20th

centuries in Europe. During the very early stages, political parties, although they existed, were “loose groupings, linked by support for a particular leader or political idea” (Scarrow, 2006: 16). Initially, their existence was neither expected nor considered fundamental. Rather, they were viewed largely as unwanted “factions” in the society during that time, not only because their organizational motive was contrary to the very political ideologies of John Locke and Jean-Jacques Rousseau (Biezen, 2003: 3), but also because their their respective political division among parties was also perceived as a danger to the status quo of the existing power dynamics (Scarrow, 2006: 16). However, the existence of political parties started to be seen as necessary and inevitable in the 19th and early 20th centuries due to evolving political and social development during that period.

The driving forces leading to the acceptance of political parties in the 19th and early 20th centuries in Western Europe and North America are believed to be caused by parliamentarization, the expansion of suffrage, and the Industrial Revolution (See for example Crotty, 2005; Daalder, 2001; Duverger, 1954; Epstein, 1967; Gunther and Diamond, 2001; Sartori, 1976; Scarrow, 2006). Nevertheless, it is worth noting that party development in Western European and North American polities did not follow a uniformed order, depending on their country specific circumstances. Scarrow (2006: 18) categorizes Western European and North American countries into three distinct groups – “those where the shift of decision-making to legislatures (parliamentarization) preceded the creation of a large electorate; those where legislative sovereignty increased only after the creation of a large electorate; and those where the two changes occurred more or less

simultaneously.” Some countries, including Britain, Denmark, Italy, Belgium and Norway, introduced franchise after parliamentarization, while some others, including France and Germany, had franchise expanded prior to parliamentarization (Beyme, 1985: 16-7; Scarrow, 2006: 18).

Parliamentarization

Parliamentarization refers to the “shift of decision making to the legislature” (Scarrow, 2006). In other words, it is “the process whereby national assemblies gained increasing influence and control over the executive branch of government” (Ibid). In the early days of the Western European gradual process of democratization, the intensification of parliamentarization led to the sequential establishment of “parliamentary group, then the appearance of electoral committees, and finally the establishment of a permanent connection between the two elements” (Duverger, 1959: xxiv). A similar phenomenon was observed by Sartori (1976), who expounded that the rising significance of legislatures facilitated the need for a formal organization of political parties: “legislatures became more responsible, then parties became more important, then party competition led parties to try to gain an electoral edge by enfranchising new, and presumably grateful, voters. Finally, the need to mobilize larger electorate stimulated the parties to develop more formal organization (Sartori, 1976: 23). The emergence of electoral competition, although still with limited suffrage, necessitated the establishment of electoral committee, whose core designated responsibilities were to facilitate electoral competition. Duverger (1959) argued that the electoral committee was the by-product of the expansion of franchise, which will be discussed in greater length below. The

franchise expansion required the electoral committee to “bring new electors into the party”. For instance, following franchise expansion, Socialist Parties became increasingly important in many European democracies in the early 20th century (Duverger, 1959: xxvii).

Expansion of Suffrage

It is undeniable that the expansion of suffrage to formerly disenfranchised voters was largely responsible for the subsequent pervasiveness of political parties in the 19th and early 20th centuries in Europe and North America. As described above, countries in these polities expanded their franchise at different times. In spite of these differences, party development in each country was all invariably stimulated by suffrage expansion, as confirmed by Epstein’s straightforward assertion that “the enlargement of the suffrage accounts for the development of modern parties.’ (Scarrow, 2006: 18). It is worth noting, however, that political parties already started to function, albeit at a much lower degree and receiving relatively little recognition in the 18th century, when franchise was given only to property owners (Epstein, 1967). Nonetheless, following the mass enfranchisement of workers, and women to promote political participation in the 19th century, political parties became a necessary political institution to reconcile social conflicts among voters (Biezen, 2003: 21).

The expansion of suffrage, and subsequently the rising necessity and importance of political parties, was noticeably the corresponding result of industrialization in the 18th century in Europe, particularly of the class conflicts between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat (Beyme, 1985; Biezen, 2003). Industrialization produced a large number of

rural and urban working class, who was vulnerable to political and economic subordination to the middle class and the aristocracy. As the situation continued unabated and the working class started to develop political consciousness, worker groups started to mobilize in demand for official and legitimate representatives of their class interests, a move which eventually paved the way for the establishment of trade unions and eventually working-class parties (Biezen, 2003: 21). Political mobilization among workers did not immediately result in the establishment of working class parties, however. At its initial stage, it took the form of “extra-parliamentary” or “externally created” movements (Biezen, 2003: 22). They subsequently mobilized as movements without official capacity to participate in competitive elections and parliamentary status - which will be discussed in greater length later.

Party Development

During the early days of democratization in the 19th and 20th centuries in Europe and North America, elite party and mass party were terms in common parlance. Prior to the universal expansion of suffrage, the elite parties took a dominant role in party politics in Western Europe and North America. While the elite parties were loosely organized and consisted mainly of a few local elites representing the party through public office, the mass parties were relatively well-organized and participated by large membership from various segments of the society (Duverger, 1959). Following the mass enfranchisement of voters, mass parties, whose membership primarily comprised of the newly-enfranchised voters in the working class, became dominant political forces which

challenged the status quo of the elite parties and eventually dominated much of the political activities during the time.

The transition from elite parties to mass parties was materialized through social context at the time. In other words, it was due to the aforementioned factors- parliamentarization, suffrage expansion and industrialization, among others, that made possible the emergence and subsequent significance of mass parties (Biezen, 2003; Duverger, 1959; Gunther and Diamond, 2001; Sartori, 1976). These factors allowed for greater political participation from previously disenfranchised segments of the society, including the working class, and women. Reinforcing the relevance of mass parties in democratization in Europe, Sartori (1968) underlined that mass parties were largely, though not completely, responsible for the “structural consolidation” in Western European party system. Prior to their transformation into formally-organized political parties, and their subsequent participation in their first democratic elections, mass parties initially originated from the working class and took the form of “extra-parliamentary” or “externally created” movements (Biezen, 2003; Duverger, 1959; Gunther and Diamond, 2001). The working-class mobilized and established themselves as movements outside the legislature, not being able to participate in elections. They organized and developed their movement organizations into a mass-based and coherent structure. By the time they finally obtained parliamentary status and representation, their party organization had already been strong and well-institutionalized. (Biezen, 2003: 22).

This type of organizational development of parties is known as the “sequential threshold” of party development (Rokkan, 1970). Rokkan (1970: 79) argued that prior to

becoming full-fledged parties, mass parties had to go through what he referred to as the four critical thresholds of party development; namely, legitimation, incorporation, representation, and executive power. While legitimation refers to “the right of criticism, petition and demonstration against the existing regime, incorporation is the inclusion of parties into the political system through the enfranchisement of their electorates. Representation is the right to represent party supporters’ interests in the parliament, while executive power refers to the opportunity to pose direct leverage on the ruling government. He argued that the externally-created, before eventually transforming themselves into well-institutionalized political parties, had to go through each of these sequential orders. These orders, however, did not take place on the same patterns in new democracies due to the institutional origin of political parties. It is through this difference of party development which the following section now turns to.

Party Development in New Democracies

Unlike their Western counterparts, political parties in new democracies do not follow the same patterns of party development and organization. This is so because political parties in new democracies emerged in completely different institutional, contextual and period variables, thereby, invariably affecting their party organization and development (Biezen, 2003; Hagopian, 2007; Jurgen Puhle, 2002; Spirova, 2007). Periodically, parties in new democracies emerge after suffrage had already been universally accepted. Socially, they did not receive similar impacts from industrialization like Western European polities did, thus affecting their ability to mobilize their voters based on cleavage structure. Politically, they emerged in a polity shaped by the legacy of

weak or undemocratic political settings and weak civil societies, which subsequently affects party development in the post-communist/post-conflict periods (Enyedi, 2005; Kitschelt et al, 1999).

The “new democracies” here specifically refers to countries democratizing in the “Third Wave of democratization” in 1974, and the ensuing periods (Huntington, 1991). Originating in Eastern Europe, the Wave subsequently swept through other countries in Latin America, Africa and Asia (Huntington, 1991). Recent studies of democratization in the Third Wave suggest that political parties in different regions have large dissimilarities in their origins and development (Randall, 1988: 1; Zeeuw, 2009: 31). Therefore, it would be impossible to produce distinct reasons to explain the development of political parties in new democracies that is representative of all polities in the Third Wave democratizers. However, one of the factors that commonly identify the patterns of party development in the Third Wave is its origin.

Institutional Origin and Party Development

As presented earlier, party development in established democracies emerged out of “social origin”, in which parties represented the interests of their constituents in accordance with the society’s cleavage structures. This social stratification stimulated the emergence of political parties in the 19th and early 20th centuries in Europe. Democratization process in new democracies, however, was intensified by institutional origin. They were not formed based on social cleavages. Rather, they emerged out of “politicized attitudinal differences” vis-à-vis institutional issues, including desirability, degree and direction of regime change (Biezen, 2003: 33). The advent of democratization

in new democracies evolves differently than in that of the established democracies. Samuel Huntington suggests that while the first wave of democratization was a “long” journey, in which a period of almost a century was able to democratize only 29 countries by 1926, the Third Wave was a short, yet aggressive, wave, which swept through 30 countries only between 1974 to 1990 (Huntington, 1991: 13). This number does not even include countries which democratized later in the early 1990s. The Third Wave democratizers, be it in Southern or Eastern Europe, Africa, or Asia, became democratic in a political context in which competitive parties were either non-existent or tightly constrained by single-party authoritarian regimes prior to democratization. Therefore, parties in these countries had to develop their organization and structure “from scratch” (Biezen, 2008: 26).

Parties in new democracies immediately obtain their parliamentary status, and some parties even led the government— often shortly after their establishment and participation in the first elections— in the post-authoritarian regimes. (Biezen, 2003: 31). They did not get a chance to mobilize their supporters and develop their party structure and organization like their Western counterparts did prior to joining the elections. Even after the first elections, when parties should be able to focus their attention on mobilizing partisans and developing party organization, priorities are given less, if at all, to those tasks. Priorities in countries in transition are generally given to building legal, institutional, and constitutional arrangements. Bozoki (1993) noted that in a transitional regime, “the cores of the round table negotiations between incumbent and opposition parties were constitutional and institutional issues” (Biezen, 2003: 33). The sequence of

party development in new democracies is also contrary to Robert Dahl's (1971) classification of process of transition from a non-democratic to democratic regime. He argues that political parties in established democracies started with political competition and gradually led to political inclusion. Parties in new democracies, nonetheless, obtained political competition and inclusiveness rather abruptly, "they moved from little or no competition or inclusion to full competition and inclusiveness owing to the processes of decolonization or democratization (Norlund, 2008: 289).

One of the primary stimuli leading to democratization in the Third Wave is the role of the external actors and the international community, who import democratization into a new democracy in the ways they see fit, from their perspectives. This is particularly true in the case of new democracies in post-conflict societies. In these polities, democratization was introduced and engineered by the external actors (Reilly, 2006). The form of assistance and intervention generally includes provision of financial and technical assistance from the international community or donor agencies to building party system and development. The political and institutional contexts in post-conflict societies are normally uncondusive to the development of a party system because the foundation of political parties in post-conflict political settings is generally built upon organizational cleavages identical to those that existed during the conflict and, thereby, subjecting post-conflict party development and democratization to be subordinated to the influence of the former regime party. At the same time, new parties emerging after the transition are generally the rebel-turned parties (Kumar and Zeeuw, 2008). These bodies immediately transformed themselves from rebel groups or guerrilla forces, which had

fought against the incumbent and had to agree to a ceasefire due to external influences, into full-fledged parties to participate in democratic elections. The fact that they, as military organizations outside of government, lacked organizational, human, and financial resources renders post-conflict party development particularly prone to uneven party institutionalization (Kumar and Zeeuw, 2008: 265).

The aforementioned patterns of party development in new democracies, which is stifled by institutional origin imposed from external factors, speaks to the importance of party origin. In other words, how much a party can institutionalize its party organization depends, to a large extent, on its party origin. Party origin has long lasting effects not only on party institutionalization in new democracies but also greatly determines how the electoral competition can take shape.

Party Origin and Party Institutionalization: The Roles of Historical Legacies

The importance of party origin on organizational development is explained by Panebianco (1988), who asserts that a party's "genetic" structure is extremely influential for the subsequent organizational development of political parties. In post-authoritarian regimes, there is generally a gap in party institutionalization between former hegemonic parties during the authoritarian regimes and parties that emerged shortly before and after the democratization. It is commonly the case that the party which inherited organizational, human, and financial resources from the former hegemonic party is relatively well-resourced to institutionalize its party organization, especially during the early period of the transition (Wallis, 2003). However, parties which emerged after the transition period not only lack the resources thereof; they also are vulnerable to uneven

party institutionalization due to the embedded structure of the dominant party in the state apparatus since well before the transition (Tomsa, 2008: 31). While new parties formed in the post-transition periods generally lack strong organizational structure, and experienced party members to manage parliamentary affairs, old regime parties enjoy ready access to their strong party apparatus, financial resources, and experienced party cadres. It is worth noting that the political dominance of former regime parties, including the Taiwanese Kuomintang and the Mexican PRI, in the post-transition period are commonly cited to have been attributed to their relatively organized party structure and institutional advantages in the transition period (Rigger, 2000).

Notwithstanding the assertion that party origin has important implications on party institutionalization, particularly on the former regime parties, the extent to which a former regime party can institutionalize significantly hinges upon the characteristics of the former authoritarian regime (Rigger, 2000: 143). For instance, in authoritarian military regimes, ruling parties generally had no distinct political values. Therefore, following the transition, the former regime parties may re-establish themselves not only by adopting democracy, but also by de-aligning themselves from the former military government. On the contrary, in authoritarian regimes in which a single-party state had established their party machine throughout the state, the former regime parties, upon the transition, are likely to continue to dominate the electoral field not only due to their existing party apparatus from the authoritarian period but also due to their association with their political values during the communist period. For example, the Russian Communist Party (CPRF) was able to capitalize on their existing party apparatus and

their embedded political values after the transition to mobilize voters. Its firm commitment to communist ideology after the collapse of the Cold War enabled the Party to continue to enjoy popular support from voters whose political alignment with the CPRF was based on their enduring loyalty to the party's communist label (Tomsa, 2008: 32). However, in the case of Cambodia's transition, as will be presented in Chapter 3, the former regime party, the Kampuchean People's Revolutionary Party (KPRP), which was later renamed the Cambodian People's Party (CPP), despite its ideological roots in Marxism-Leninism, could not mobilize voters along ideological lines.

CHAPTER II: EFFECTS OF CLIENTELISM ON PARTY INSTITUTIONALIZATION IN POST-AUTHORITARIAN/POST-CONFLICT REGIMES

The importance of political parties for democracy has been widely acknowledged throughout the realm of party politics and democratization. It has been featured by some prominent scholars, including Schattschneider (1942), who stresses that “political parties created democracy and modern democracy is unthinkable save in terms of the political parties”; and Bryce (1922), who comments that “no one has shown how representative government could work without parties”. Likewise, Biezen (2003: 12) observes that the importance of political parties in new democracies has been presented through empirical evidence in the established democracies and suggests that parties have also “acquired relevance in the Third Wave democracies, in which it is hard to conceive of a democratic polity without political parties.” In new democracies, especially in post-conflict societies, parties are essentially designed to tackle with the highly-anticipated conflict and upheaval which can be vulnerable to recurrence following a ceasefire (Hicken and Kuhonta, 2014). Beyond these statements, an implicit assumption vis-à-vis the designated roles and significance of parties, however, is that parties are institutionalized.

Why Party Institutionalization Matters

Political parties are inseparable entities in democracy. One cannot speak of a representative democracy without recognizing the importance of political parties. Schattschneider (1964) emphasizes that “democracy is unthinkable save in terms of parties.” However, political parties are able to perform their functions effectively only if they are well institutionalized. The institutionalization of political parties is extremely

important for parties to continuously sustain their party organization, effectively compete in elections, and efficiently perform their designated roles (Mainwaring, 1999).

Institutionalized parties can secure constant and regular support from their voters due to their clearly defined political ideologies, from one election to another. Therefore, politicians are incentivized to stay within their respective party structures rather than to constantly switch parties between elections. In addition, in a strongly institutionalized party system, the emergence of new political parties is remarkably low due to the high barrier of entry. Existing parties are generally cohesive enough to maintain their organizational performance under a shared party identity. Thus, new political parties face high risk and possibly low return from their political entry in the existing party structure (Scarrow, 2010: 52).

Because parties in strongly institutionalized party systems are stable, and chances of party defection and new party creation are slim, voters are therefore able to hold their elected representative accountable for their actions (Booth and Robbins, 2010: 631).

Because each party clearly has its own party label, voters can determine who to blame or appreciate for their performance. When parties are ephemeral, party defection is high, and personalism exceeds party identity, as usually is the case in weakly institutionalized party systems, voters are unable to identify to whom to be held accountable for their performance (Hicken, 2006: 19).

The ability of voters to identify party stance enables political parties to have strong and stable roots in the society. Without strong party-society linkages, parties do not attempt to continuously develop political preferences and voters' participation in

election process might sway over time, as usually evident in varying election turnout rates (Mainwaring, 1999). Because institutionalized parties tend to have strong party rootedness in the society, they, too, are likely to stick firmly with their party's ideological commitment. An abrupt shift of party stance to gain temporary electoral benefits can cost too much for the party to risk doing. Therefore, they seek to strictly comply with their ideological position (Kitschelt, 1989).

Strong party institutionalization can also strengthen internal party cohesion. Strong internal party cohesion is crucial for party organization because it allows political parties to “acquire an independent status and value of their own” (Mainwaring, 1999: 27). Institutionalized party systems facilitate the functioning of internal party democracy, including mechanisms for nominating party candidates and peaceful transfer of party leadership. A political party in which a powerful and dominant leader continuously controls the party and the government for a long period of time signifies weak institutionalization. Therefore, without internal cohesion, parties could be subjected to personalistic control of party leaders (Panebianco, 1988). The subordination of a political party in the hands of a powerful individual not only affects the party's linkages with the society and the state, it can also put the party at high risk of internal factionalism (Mainwaring, 1999).

Traditionally, the concept of institutionalization had frequently been used to measure party systems, a notion commonly known as party systems institutionalization. While measuring party systems based on their level of institutionalization is important, the degree of institutionalization should also be measured among individual parties too

because the institutionalization of individual parties contributes to an institutionalization of the entire party system in a country (Randall and Svasand, 2002: 6). Due to limited scope and depth of this thesis, this chapter looks only at party institutionalization in new democracies.

Defining Party Institutionalization

The designated roles and functions of political parties are essentially crucial for democratic practice and consolidation. However, in order for political parties to effectively execute their roles and functions, they need to have an organized and institutionalized structure (Mainwaring and Scully, 1995). This is particularly true in transitional regimes because political parties play a key role in such a pivotal moment. However, the discussion on what constitutes an effective political party as well as a strong party system necessary for democratic governance remains controversial and divided among scholars. While some argue that the “number of parties” and “ideological polarization” (Sartori, 1976; Siaroff, 2000) are crucial, some others introduce the idea of the “institutionalization” of parties and party systems (Huntington, 1968; Mainwaring, 1999; Mainwaring and Scully, 1995; Mainwaring and Torcal, 2006; Panebianco, 1988). In spite of the diverging opinions, the latter approach has dominated the literature on party politics and received remarkable scholarly acknowledgement, as evident in the appearance of the concept in subsequent academic work on party and party system institutionalization (See, for example, Hicken, 2006; Hicken and Kohunta, 2011, 2014; Randall and Svasand, 2002; Tan, 2006; Tomsa and Ufen, 2013; Ufen, 2008).

Prior to the advent of the notion of institutionalization, Sartori (1976)'s work on *Parties and Party System* had dominated much of the literature on party politics and had largely been used to measure the effectiveness of party systems. Sartori argued that two indicators can be used to measure party systems - the number of parties and degree of ideological distances among parties. In the former dimension, Sartori looked particularly at the number of parties which possessed "coalition potential" and whose participation in elections influenced the dynamics of electoral competition (Sartori, 1976: 122). In the latter criteria, Sartori directed at the ideological differences or conflicts between existing parties (Sartori, 1976: 126). The two dimensions, while largely relevant, are mainly reflective of parties in established democracies. They fail to account for the characteristics of parties and party system in new democracies - a weakness which subsequently led to the advent of the concept of party systems institutionalization, crafted by Mainwaring and Scully's work on *Building democratic institutions : party systems in Latin America* in 1995 and later on by Mainwaring's piece on *Rethinking Party Systems Institutionalization in the Third Wave of Democratization: The Case of Brazil* in 1999. In proving that Sartori's conception of party system is "misleading", Mainwaring (1999) argues that measuring party systems based on the number of parties conspicuously neglects the considerable variation of the level of institutionalization among parties, and that such measurement only applies in party systems in established democracies, where political parties are relatively competitive and supposedly have comparable degree of institutionalization (Mainwaring, 1999: 23). While emphasizing that party systems are different in old and new democracies, Mainwaring also acknowledges, however, that the

number of parties and the ideological distance are “relevant criteria in comparing, analyzing, and classifying party system” (Ibid).

Although Mainwaring and Scully (1995)’s work is frequently cited in the ensuing literature on institutionalization, the concept remains divided, yet to some degree synonymous. Some of the commonly-known definitions of institutionalization include “the process by which organizations and procedures acquire value and stability” (Huntington, 1968); “the consolidation of the organization, the passage from an initial, structurally fluid, phase when a new-born organization is still forming, to a phase in which the organization stabilizes” (Panebianco, 1988); and “the process by which a practice or organization becomes well established and widely known, if not universally accepted” (Mainwaring, 1999). While the scholarly debate on the definition and conception of party institutionalization continued to exist for a remarkable period of time, it was not until the publication of Randall and Svasand (2002)’s piece on *Party Institutionalization in New Democracies* that the conception of party institutionalization found a compromise among the existing literature. Randall and Svasand offer an extensive analysis of the existing literature on the term “institutionalization” from four scholars, and eventually offer their own conception of party institutionalization, built upon the existing dimensions in the literature.

The first scholar who originated the idea of institutionalization was Samuel Huntington in 1968. In his book, *Political Order in Changing Societies*, the author, while referring generally to political institutionalization, defines the institutionalization as “the process by which organizations and procedures acquire value and stability” (Huntington,

1978: 12). He claims that an institutionalized political structure comprised of four major variables - adaptability, complexity, autonomy and coherence. The more adaptable, complex, autonomous and coherent they are, the more institutionalized they become. Subsequently, Panebianco (1988), following Huntington's work, looks specifically at party institutionalization in established democracies. He refers to institutionalization as "the way the organization solidifies (...) slowly loses its character as a tool and becomes valuable in and of itself" (Panebianco, 1988: 49). He suggests that for parties to materialize its established goals, they need to offer selective incentives for those keen on taking leadership roles and collective incentives for circulating party loyalty across the board. He proposes two measurements to scale degree of institutionalization – degree of autonomy and internal systemness, which refers the organizational coherence of the party. Huntington and Penabianco's understanding of institutionalization share two characteristics – autonomy and systemness/coherence, and have one conflicting argument – adaptability. While Huntington emphasizes the importance of adaptability, Panebianco perceives it as unnecessary because high level of institutionalization could potentially weaken flexibility or adaptability (Randall and Svasand, 2002: 10). Levitsky (1988), in calling for the distinction between the two converged dimensions of party institutionalization, argues that "value infusion", referred to as "when an organization becomes infused with value beyond the technical requirement of the task in hand", should be included to measure institutionalization of political parties, citing the case of Argentina's Partido Justicialista, who "scores high on value infusion measures but in which rules and procedures are circumvented and contested" (Levitsky, 1988, cited in

Randall and Svasand, 2002: 11). The last, and certainly not least, scholar who studies party institutionalization, is Janda (1980), who proposes that party institutionalization should also be looked upon not just from the internal dimensions, which the previous scholars had focused on, but also on the external dimensions. He argues that a party is institutionalized when it is “reified in the public mind”.

Acknowledging that existing dimensions of party institutionalization proposed by various scholars fail to reach a consensus, Randall and Svasand proposed a new conception by combining some of the existing dimensions. They suggest that “institutionalization should be understood as the process by which the party becomes established in terms both of integrated patterns of behavior and of attitudes, or culture” (Randall and Svasand, 2002: 12). They also propose that a distinction between internal and external elements of party be made explicit. While the internal aspects focus on the internal developments of the party, the external aspect deals with the party’s relationship with the society as well as with other institutions. In each of the two elements, they suggest that structural and attitudinal are also to be entrenched. To sum up, Randall and Svasand have introduced new dimensions, established and built upon the four aforementioned scholars, to understand party institutionalization by looking at internal versus external and structural versus attitudinal aspects of a party.

Dimensions of Party Institutionalization

In the internal dimension, while the structural aspect centers on the idea of *systemness*, which means the “increasing scope, density and regularity of the interactions that constitute the party as a structure”, the attitudinal aspect looks at the *value infusion*,

which is perceived as “the extent to which party actors and supporters acquire an identification with and commitment to the party which transcend more instrumental or self-interested incentives for involvement.”(Randall and Svasand, 2002: 13). As for the external dimension, its structural aspect deals with the party’s “autonomy”. In their conception, Randall and Svasand emphasize that party needs a “significant degree of decisional autonomy, or freedom from interference in determining its own policies and strategies” (Ibid: 14). The attitudinal aspect of external dimension, on the other hand, focuses on “reification”, meaning “the extent to which the party’s existence is established in the public imagination.”

In converging and combining concepts of party institutionalization developed by four different scholars, and subsequently by establishing a converged concept using internal/external versus structural/attitudinal dimensions, Randall and Svasand’s theorization of party institutionalization, as pointed out by Zeeuw (2009), stands out in a few important ways. First, not only does their method of classifying the criteria of party institutionalization into internal versus external and structural versus attitudinal aspects expands the classical understanding of political parties from within, it also significantly shifted our attention from focusing on political parties from the viewpoint of “organizational-structural” aspect (Zeeuw, 2009: 55). Second, the fact that Randall and Svasand develop their conception of party institutionalization based off existing literature on the subject enables researchers to be malleable when applying their model in different polities with different empirical realities. Third, Randall and Svasand’s explicit dedication of their analysis to the context of new democracies makes their contribution

especially outstanding, because existing literature on the subject matter deals almost exclusively on political parties in established democracies, which, indeed, have different origins and organizational development. Given the limited depth and scope of this thesis, only two of the four dimensions described above will be studied. The two dimensions include *value infusion* and *party autonomy*, against which the impacts of clientelism will be assessed.

Clientelism and Party Institutionalization in New Democracies

It is presented in Chapter I that political parties in established and new democracies have different origins and hence pattern of organizational development. Based on this fact, an assumption can be derived that political parties in old and new democracies, too, have different experiences as well as face different challenges of party institutionalization. The following sections seeks to show that the institutional origin of democratization in new democracies places the former regime parties in a position to manipulate state resources for clientelistic practice, thereby weakening the value infusion and party autonomy, at least in the long run, of the party using clientelism.

Institutional Origin and Clientelism

Michael Duverger (1954: xxiii) once famously said “just as men bear all their lives the mark of their childhood, so parties are profoundly influenced by their origins.” Similarly, Panebianco (1988) underlines the importance of party’s “genetic model” on the party building process. Such emphasis on party origin indicates that the environment within which parties emerge can yield important bearing on their subsequent institutionalization process. In new democracies, parties, as shown in Chapter 1, emerge

out of institutional origin, in which their democratic roles were either imported, as in the case of post-conflict societies, or adopted by “politicized attitudinal differences”, as in the case of post-communist countries. The institutional context of parties in new democracies places parties, particularly the incumbents, in a position where they can have dominant control over and access to government and state resources without having to effectively fulfill their supposed representative functions, as stated at the outset of the democratization.

In post-authoritarian democracies, political parties are especially shaped by the past legacies from the previous regime (Biezen, 2003; Hicken and Kohunta, 2014; Kitschelt, 1999; Reilly, 2008). The incumbent parties in the post-democratization period in these polities are generally closely associated with their single, ruling communist predecessors from which their organizational, human, and financial resources are derived (Spirova, 2007: 1). This structural affiliation with the previous regime allows them to be at an advantageous position relative to the other parties, thereby biasing, and at times skewing, the electoral playing field. Therefore, multi-party elections in post-authoritarian regimes are often dominated by the current party associated with the former hegemonic party during the authoritarian regime.

Political parties in new democracies emerged within the state and are entrusted to institutionalize the state; therefore, they are capable of utilizing state resources in the disguise of state formation and development (Kopecky, 2006: 254). This is particularly the case in post-communist/post-conflict societies because state structures in these polities are vulnerable to party invasion. Such states are strongly influenced by the former

regime parties, whose more superior organizational, human, and financial resources relative to new parties allow them to engineer the state in favor of their party interests, ranging from extracting state resources, manipulating elections to silencing the opposition (Hicken and Kohunta, 2011, 2014; Katz and Mair, 1995; Tomsa, 2008).

Parties that emerged in this institutional context generally emphasize “easy and less time consuming strategy of electoral mobilization rather than the laborious strategy of partisan mobilization” because they started competing in democratic elections before their party organization had been well-established (Biezen, 2000: 397). The former regime parties’ access to and control over state institutions and economic resources in post-authoritarian regimes, coupled with the need and necessity to win elections and build the nation under tight grip of power from the elite few, together empower the ruling elite to take for granted the essentiality to institutionalize their party structure and organization. Their control of public office and state resources enables them to channel benefits to their party elites, while simultaneously winning elections, through the practice of clientelism.

Theorizing Clientelism

Clientelism is the study of power relationships between patrons and clients (Hutchcroft, 1997: 645). Generally, it is referred to as a reciprocal, repeated, and hierarchical exchange relations between patrons, who control resources needed by the clients, who would offer various kinds of support to the patrons in exchange for their resources (Hopkin, 2006; Kitschelt et al, 1999; Mainwaring, 1999; Piattoni, 2001; Scott, 1972; Stokes, 2007). Traditionally, clientelism had been used to refer to social exchange

relationship, in which the patron provides clients with “access to the basic means of subsistence and the clients reciprocating with a combination of economic goods and services (such as rent, labor, portion of their crops) and social acts of deference and loyalty” (Muller, 2006: 406). However, in modern politics, the social characteristics of clientelism has transformed to more political and economic exchange relationship, in which political parties, with well-structured organization and bureaucracy, have substituted the traditional roles of landlords and local notables as patrons (Muller, 2006: 407). Often times, it is used interchangeably with the term “patronage” to refer to the “use or distribution of state resources on a non-meritocratic basis for private political gain” (Mainwaring, 1999: 177) or as “the study of how political party leaders seek to turn public institutions and public resources to their own ends, and how favors of various kinds are exchange for votes” (Weingrod, 1968: 379). Sorauf (1960: 29) summarizes patronage as “an incentive system and a political currency with which to purchase political activity and political responses.” He adds further that patronage, although undemocratic, is deemed crucial for political parties because it is capable of “maintaining an active party organization...Promoting intra- party cohesion... Attracting voters and supporters...Financing the party and its candidates...Procuring favorable government action... Creating party discipline in policymaking” (Ibid.) Politicians in clientelistic parties use patronage to wield their influence and subordinate the party under their control, and then use party as an electoral vehicle to bridge them to public office (Mainwaring, 1999: 208).

In clientelism, decisions on the provision of public positions, state contracts, licenses and concessions are not necessarily rewarded to the most efficient agents or individuals; rather, they are granted based on personal contacts and political connection. This clientelistic decision making runs counter to the very principle of meritocracy, whereby the most efficient and competent contractors and individuals succeed in public biddings. Mainwaring (1999) argues that clientelism is an unproductive mechanism to allocate state resources, thereby weakening public sector performance. He gives an example stating that:

Rather than award a contract to firm X in a competitive bid for \$10 million , government officials give the contract to firm Y for \$15 million by imposing regulations that only firm Y can meet. Rather than allow a private company to go bankrupt when it hemorrhages money, the government grants it a \$250 million interest-free loan, thereby benefiting the owners. Rather than hire a qualified career administrator to head a public enterprise, the president appoints someone to mollify a governor to whom he owes a political debt. Each specific case of using patronage to build political support may not have an exorbitant cost, but the overall effect is an incentive system that favors political considerations and personal contacts. Efficiency, quality and merit are often secondary considerations. Such an incentive system is not conducive to economic prosperity or to Weberian bureaucratic rationality (Mainwaring, 1999: 210).

Clientelistic relationship in patronage politics is comprised of two types of clients (Kitschelt, 2000). The first type is the “vote-rich but resource-poor” constituencies who would be provided with selective incentives and side-payments before elections in exchange for their votes and political support (Kitschelt, 2000: 849). The second type is the “vote-poor but resource-rich” constituencies who, despite their small size, hence marginal vote share of the entire electorates, is extremely important because they bankroll the party as well as the regime in exchange for lucrative political and economic

deals from the party in public office (Ibid.) The following sections look at both types of clients and subsequently assess their potential impacts on party institutionalization.

Clientelism and Political Program

In competitive elections, political parties seek to establish the most effective incentives to appeal to their voters to win votes and control public office. The ways through which parties use to attract voters is known, in Kitschelt (2000)'s word, as "linkage mechanism." Which type of linkage mechanism is used by political parties as their partisan symbol has important bearings not only on how voters cast their votes but also on how party politicians associate themselves with the party (Epstein, 2009: 347).

In many Western established democracies, political parties use their distinct political platforms as linkage mechanism, and therefore are primarily distinguished along their programmatic or ideological positions. Programmatic parties generate their party platforms and mobilize voters based off social cleavages and salient issues which reflect the long-term welfare of their constituents (Croissant, 2002; Warner, 1997;). Generally, their political programs are motivated and inspired by various ideologies including, among others, conservatism, liberalism, socialism, communism, or religious line (Croissant, 2002: 346). The notion of programmatic parties, according to Schlesinger (1984), is comparable to market-based principles, in that parties offer a product that intrigues sufficient customers to ensure their organizational existence (cited in Epstein, 2009). They, once elected into public office, would engineer political programs purposely intended as collective goods and provide includable benefits to the electorates, regardless of which party the electorates had actually voted for. With distinct party programs,

programmatic parties are clearly distinguishable from one another, thereby offering voters with ideological or normative incentives for their partisanship with a party over another (Kitschelt and Wang, 2014: 44). Programmatic parties, therefore, are “the most conducive to the consolidation and stability of democratic regimes” (Croissant, 2002: 346).

However, programmatic parties only mainly exist in established democracies. Political parties in many new democracies generally do not use distinct political programs or ideologies as a linkage mechanism. Rather, clientelistic appeals are largely offered to voters as a linkage mechanism used to mobilize voters (Kitschelt, 2000; Wantchekon, 2003). Clientelism offers immediate benefits, rather than somewhat uncertain and time-consuming programs, to selective voters, and it costs the party relatively little to mobilize voters with private, excludable benefits than with the quality of its political platform, whose implementation can be constrained by external factors beyond the party’s reach (Warner, 1997: 534). Therefore, clientelism has become a common electoral strategy in new democracies because it is much cheaper to buy votes or offer some patronage benefits to selected segment of the voters than to provide programs to all voters. (Kitschelt and Wang, 2014). Moreover, politicians’ primary objective in its career is seeking reelection; therefore, applying the most effective strategy, clientelism, is what gives them easy access to government (Katz and Mair, 1995). Clientelism has become a common theme in party politics in new democracies, ranging from Latin America, to Africa, and from Eastern Europe to Asia (Mainwaring, 1999; Scott, 1972).

The clientelistic linkage mechanism resembles the patron-client relationship, in which the patron is a political party and clients are voters. It is frequently used in electoral politics where state resources are distributed on a private and excludable basis to potential supporters of a political party (Weingrod, 1968). Patron offers material- including but not limited to money, clothes, and medicines- and non-material benefits, such as government job; better security protection, and better health care, to selected voters in exchange for their votes (Scott, 1972; Muller, 2006). The simplest request, either implicit or explicit, made by the patron from this clientelistic exchange is “did you (will you) support me?” (Stokes, 2007: 605). Clientelistic appeals are especially persistent in rural areas where voters need patron’s resources for their subsistence. In these areas, where poverty is rampant and economic inequality is high, clientelistic exchanges are very attractive for voters, and hence are the most effective means for political parties, especially the incumbent (Wantchekon, 2003: 400). Stokes (2007: 618), summarizing arguments made by various scholars on clientelism, concludes that “poor people are risk averse and hence value more highly a bag of goodies in hand today than the promise of a redistributive public policy tomorrow”. Similarly, Kitschelt (2000: 857) posits that “poor and uneducated citizens discount the future, rely on short casual chains, and prize instant advantages” and that “clientelistic exchanges always trumps that of indirect, programmatic linkages promising uncertain and distant rewards to voters.” This causal relationship argument is also shared by Huntington (1968), who, with evidences from many developing countries, suggests that ruling incumbents in new democracies need to secure electoral support from rural voters in order to win elections and obtain governing

legitimacy because “the city becomes the continuing center of opposition to the political system.” (Huntington, 1968: 433). In addition, he adds that the common electoral strategy the ruling party employs to win votes from rural bases of support include both “fair means and foul”, particularly referred to clientelistic appeals (Huntington, 1968: 435).

In a clientelist polity, programmatic appeals are not deemed necessary for political parties to produce to attract voters because political loyalty can be conveniently generated by “periodic material exchange and personal bonds rather than ideological commitment” (Roberts, 2002). Because voters are willing to accept private, excludable benefits, parties, hence, are not bound to adopt consistent policies on salient issues, thereby allowing them to save costs of developing party program and reducing chances of internal factional conflict arising from ideological conflict (Warner, 1997: 534). In clientelistic politics, politicians have less to gain from providing public good, from which they do not necessarily get personal recognition, than from selectively offering private benefits to particular groups of clientele (Mainwaring, 1999: 209). Therefore the idea, proposed by Downs (1957), that party programs are information shortcuts or labels for a particular political party is largely absent in clientelistic parties because voters and parties are linked through personalistic appeals.

Clientelism and Value Infusion

In spite of the effectiveness of clientelism for voter mobilization, the use of clientelism is not without its costs. Political parties’ permanent adherence with clientelistic appeals hinders the ability of the parties to diffuse their political value to their constituents, thereby causing weak and unstable party-society linkages, and ultimately

base of political support (Mainwaring, 1999; Kitschelt, 2000). Randall and Svasand (2002: 22) posit that in clientelistic parties, value infusion is characterized by “instrumentalist orientation towards parties, rather than more long lasting party loyalty or identification. Party support would be conditional on the expectation of tangible benefits to the individual or community.” This is sharply contrary to political alignment in programmatic parties, whereby partisanship is motivated by a party’s political platform. Voters’ interests in programmatic parties are deeply vested in the party’s position on salient issues, and hence supposedly are not attracted by selective benefits clientelistic parties would offer (Epstein, 2009: 348). In programmatic parties, voters, too, are less likely to switch political allegiance because they had spent a significant amount of time gathering information about their party’s political stance and matching their party’s position with that of their own preferences before they finally decided to choose their partisanship with a particular party (Epstein, 2009: 349). Changing partisanship would therefore require voters to restart their information searching process. Programmatic parties, hence, enjoy relatively stable voters due to the continuous alignment from their supporters from one election to another. Because programmatic voters vote for the same party over time, there are very few swing voters, thereby allowing parties to enjoy somewhat stable electoral share in every elections (Mainwaring, 1999: 28).

However, in clientelistic parties, the ability of parties to attract stable supports from voters based on their political value is strictly limited. When the only motivation for voters to vote for a clientelistic party is due to the direct economic exchange the party can periodically offer, political loyalty from voters is likely to stop when private benefits are

either absent or no longer appealing to voters (Hopkin, 2006: 407). Clientelism can also potentially destabilize party-voters linkages (Mainwaring, 1999). Clientelist parties usually are unable to provide programmatic policies to respond to actual societal needs; therefore, public goods generally are underprovided (Kitschelt and Wang, 2014). The absence of programmatic policies could in the long run lead to the decay of voters' attention and participation in politics (Hagopian, 2005). Without voters' partisanship and linkages, political parties will be faced with unstable supporters (Mainwaring, 1999), legitimacy crisis (Kitschelt et al, 1999:1), and democratic deficiency. Clientelism, therefore, is not sustainable and can possibly disrupt party-voter linkages. In the worst case scenario, clientelistic parties will face 'popular backlash', the moment where the costs of clientelism on public goods become so high that citizens start to resist against the party, strikes (Muller, 2006: 193).

Clientelism and Party Financing

Generally, large body of literature on clientelism broadly examines the relationship between politicians, as patrons, and voters, as clients. In other words, it looks particularly at the dynamics of operation of the patron-client relationship. Very rarely do researchers look at the institutional causes of clientelism, let alone at the institutional consequences of it (Stokes, 2007). Realizing the institutional structure in many new democracies, in which parties are required to generate their own funding for their party operation, this section shifts attention to looking at the aspect of party financing as an institutional cause of clientelism.

Party financing refers to the “manner in which individual candidates who seek to get elected to political office gather funds for electoral campaigns and for political parties to maintain themselves as organization” (Walecki, 2007, 75). Another frequently cited definition of political financing is simply known as “money for electioneering”. This definition, however, is arguably inconclusive because political parties do not merely need money to operate their activities during election periods – parties require money to finance their organizations during off-election periods, too (Pinto-Duschinsky, 2002: 70). The definition of political financing expressly indicates its inseparable association with political parties. Political parties need money to operate, to develop linkages with society, and to maintain their organizational cohesion (Booth and Robbins, 2010: 632). Political financing is considered as the “fuel” of political parties - it helps political parties run and sustain them. Therefore, party leaders will have to ensure that their parties would never run out of fuel (Haughton, 2012: 16, cited in Casal, et al, 2014: 356).

In the context of established democracies, parties generally receive state funding, both direct and indirect funding (Biezen, 2004). State funding has in the last four decades become a dominant source of funding for many parliamentary democracies. It is mainly provided to parties not only to assist financial burden of parties who have to bear the increasing cost of election campaigns and related party activities, it is also intended to level the political playing field among competing parties (Scarrow, 2013: 162). The widespread provision of state funding to parties has been echoed by the International IDEA’s Political Funding Database, which reveals that 56% of the 144 democracies

studied offered public funding to political parties in 2010 (International IDEA, 2010, cited in Scarrow, 2013: 162).

However, in many new democracies, state fundings are not provided to parties; hence, parties have to be responsible for financing their own party operation and organization. While the provision of state funding to political parties is not without its problem, with the most prominent consequences being that parties would then take for granted their supposed necessity to mobilize voters and support base, the consequences of party financing from private individuals, also known as plutocratic funding, pose greater repercussions on parties, thereby worth substantial attention (Katz and Mair, 1995).

Because parties in new democracies, as previously presented, lack (due-paying) members, they have lost the traditional source of funding. This, therefore, has altered the way parties are financed. The shifting reliance of parties from due-paying members to the state has significant repercussion on the extent to which party abuses state resources for party and individual benefits. When parties rely on their party members for financing, winning or losing elections does not affect party's survival as much as when they count on their ascendancy in public office for party financing. Katz and Mair (1995) argue that in the mass party model, where sources of party funding comes "within its own reservoir of support", winning or losing an elections might affect a party's programs, but not so much on its ability to survive. However, they added that in the new model of party, in which sources of party funding comes from outside of the party realm, winning or losing an election affects less on party programs because of the party's tendency toward

clientelistic appeals, but it affects greatly on the party's "sheer survival" (Katz and Mair, 1995: 16).

Parties in new democracies which do not provide state funding have to rely on financial donation from private individuals. However, in order to obtain and sustain the cycle of financing from private individuals, it is inherently the case that the financial donors receive something in return. It is, therefore, through this venue of party financing that contributes to the existence of clientelism. Actors in this reciprocal relationship comprise of the patron, who is the political party and its leaders, and the client, who is the financial contributor to the party coffin. The persistence of clientelism is made possible through the ability of parties in government to control state resources, ranging from public contracts to military and security apparatuses, and especially coupled with their close personal connections with business individuals. Patron and client interact in a repetitive, and mutually-beneficial basis of exchange relationship. For the client, the form of clientelistic exchange here involves the provision of both material and non-material goods (Muller, 2006). While the former usually includes the provision of government positions, titles or "kighthood" (Chhub, 1982: 11, cited in Muller, 2006: 190), the latter involves various forms; however, some of the most common and recurring benefits include public contracts, license, subsidies, tax relief, among others (Biezen and Kopecky, 2007; Mainwaring, 1999; Tomsa and Ufen, 2013). In addition to these two forms of benefits, it is also suggested also that client is generally "protected" from any legal repercussions of its activities (Muller, 2006: 189).

The clientelistic relationship in party financing politics generally takes the form of rent-seeking activities. Rent-seeking refers to the “selective release of a wide variety of public material resources, including contracts, subsidies, ‘pork barrel’ legislation, in order to secure electoral support, either from individuals or from selected segments of society (Kopecky, 2006: 259). While such practice and behavior are apparently anti-democratic, rent-seeking practices, however, are generally masked with the official purposes as “norm application” (Muller, 2006: 189). Because many of the patronage practices are conducted in disguise of state functions, they are not legally considered as illegal acts. Rent-seeking activities often exist in the bidding process for public contracts. Hutchcroft (1997) challenges the common assumption that privatization of public projects can eliminate rent-seeking and argues that such assumption is in fact inaccurate. He posits that the privatization of public contracts does not necessarily combat rent-seeking because rent-seeking can potentially emerge during the bidding process, in which contracts are usually awarded to well-connected business individuals or politicians (Hutchcroft, 1997: 641). Therefore, in party patronage, licenses and government contracts are generally perceived to be given to inefficient and corrupt firms (Kurer, 1993: 263). Mainwaring (1999: 180) echoes this fact and suggests that “success or failure in many undertaking depends less on one's talent and organizational skills than on connections to politicians.”

Party Financing and Party Autonomy

A political party is institutionalized when its party organization “is not subordinated to the interests of a few ambitious leaders; it acquires an independent status

and value of its own” (Mainwaring and Torcal, 2005: 16). While a party organization can be weakened by various factors, one of the most outstanding causes is the ways in which the party is financed (Chhiber, 2011; Hicken, 2006). Chhiber (2011) argues that centralization of party financing from top party leaders renders the party vulnerable to influence from the top leaders. Generally, clientelistic parties are comprised of chains of patronage networks of party leaders which, through their ability to generate financial resources to run the party machine from their patronage links, tend to act independently from party structure and rules, thereby potentially causing negative ramifications on party organization and discipline (Croissant et al., 2002; Mainwaring, 1999). The patronage networks of the party leaders which give life to the party can cause intra-party fragility due to the dominant ability of party leaders to mobilize funding for the party. Likewise, Warner (1997: 542) postulates that while it is appropriate to conclude that politicians in clientelistic parties have strong incentives to stay within the party due to their ability to gain access to patronage benefits, it could be misleading to conclude that there would then be no internal competition for access to lucrative resources. This intra-party competition would subsequently lead to the existence of factionalism.

Factionalism within parties, resulting from the centralization of party financing, can nullify the commonly-held assumption, particularly by Schumpeter (1954) and Downs (1957), that parties are rational actors seeking to maximize votes to win elections. While it would be misleading to argue that parties are not rational and that they do not seek to maximize votes, it is worth noting that parties are not necessarily able to maximize votes without any constraints. Kollner and Basedau (2005: 6) contend that

parties are not “homogenous organizations which are sure of their goals and which follow some sort of unitary will,” and that they are comprised of “coalitions of political actors who pursue their individual interests and goals,” based on rent from state resources. Parties which are largely dominated by the top leaders or factions are highly likely to be subject to the interests of the leaders or factions that are particularly resistant to any changes to party policies deemed harmful to their interests or dominant position within the party. Therefore, it is not surprising that the behavior of actors in the coalition is strongly influenced by the mechanism from which party resources are obtained and that factionalism may exist within the party structure. The extent to which political parties can act rationally hinges primarily upon the degree of autonomy of the party. In other words, from where and how the party receives its funding determines whether the party is able to act as a rational actor. Centralized party financing can potentially undermine the ability of a party to act collectively for the benefit of the party due to the dominant control of the party leader or faction, whose position of prominence is closely associated with its ability to provide patronage benefits to the party financiers.

A political party whose primary source of funding is derived from private financiers, who channel their money or political support to the party directly through party leaders or factions and not through party organization, is highly likely to be subject to dominant and, with that, undemocratic control from the party leaders or factions. In this scenario, political elites, especially the top leaders or the leading factions, are pressured to strike a balance between its vote-maximizing mission and maintaining their dominant position within a party (Mainwaring, 1999). The dichotomous relationship

between the two choices run counter to the “rationality” at play here because a rational choice for the party leader is not necessarily deemed rational for the party, and vice versa. Owing largely to the very fact that the prominence of a party leader relies on his/her ability to mobilize resources from financial contributors to the party and that any change to the status quo of the party program is perceived as a threat to the relative power of the party elites, party leaders would opt for an option considered rational from their perspective, which is to maintain their dominance within the party, although the decision is taken at the expense of the party’s ability to maximize votes and the necessity and urgency to adjust its policies (Kitschelt 1989; Panebianco, 1988). To make this case clearer, Mainwaring (1999: 172) explains that:

The prevalence of individual or faction logic over collective logic undermines the extent to which parties behave as utility maximizers. An individual or a faction may fear that changing to position X (held by their competition within the party) will weaken their position. Even if position X would enhance the party’s vote-maximizing potential, it may not be a desirable option for the leaders who control the party. Individuals and factions adopt strategies to maximize their own interests, but that does not necessarily maximize the party’s vote-getting potential.

Hence, this dynamics indicates that the constraint for parties to act as rational vote-maximizers emerges from individualism within the party or factionalism between party leaders. These leaders or factions might have their interests vested in certain groups of elites or projects. Therefore, any party policy change that threatens their interest and influence within the party is practically undoable. Kitschelt (1989) posits that not only are party leaders susceptible to their need to win votes, they also are held liable to party activists, who significantly contribute to the leaders dominant position within the party. In the case of party financing, those “activists,” to whom party leaders owe great

gratitude, are apparently party financiers. Party leaders cannot afford to thwart their financial backers, and, therefore, choose to opt for strategies that do not necessarily enable the party to maximize votes (Mainwaring, 1999: 172).

CHAPTER III: CLIENTELISM AND PARTY INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF THE CAMBODIAN PEOPLE'S PARTY (CPP)

This chapter assesses the causal consequences of clientelism on party institutionalization of the Cambodian People's Party (CPP), the former hegemonic party during the authoritarian regime and the long-ruling incumbent. Clientelism, in this context, is comprised of actors from two types of patron-client relationship: party-elites and party-voters. In these two relationships, while the patron remains the same (the party), the client (elites and voters) changes. In analyzing these two causal relationships, this chapter presents two interrelated arguments. First, it argues that clientelism in Cambodia is born out of institutional origin, allowing the ruling CPP to legally manipulate its ascendancy in public office for private, partisan benefits. It is through the platform of political financing and the CPP's historical legacies from its single-party control on the state's political and economic structures during the 1980s that allow the CPP to consolidate its power and secure its legitimacy. Last but not least, it suggests that despite the effectiveness of clientelism for the CPP to dominate electoral politics in Cambodia, the CPP's extensive use and reliance on clientelism has significantly hindered the party's organizational autonomy and value infusion, thereby weakening its ability to effectively institutionalize its party organization.

The chapter starts with a brief history of political party development in Cambodia, starting from post-independence to post-conflict period. It subsequently analyses the manner through which clientelism in post-Khmer Rouge Cambodia emerges, solidifies,

and finally assesses its consequences on party institutionalization of the CPP, based on the measures of party autonomy and value infusion.

History of Political Party Development in Cambodia

After gaining independence from France in 1953 until today, Cambodia has had five different regimes, with each one having different characteristics. This section divides party politics in Cambodia of the five regimes into two time frames- pre-Khmer Rouge and post-Khmer Rouge. The Khmer Rouge regime is used to separate the two periods because the collapse of the Khmer Rouge has seen drastic discrepancies with that before the Khmer Rouge period. Firstly, while pre-Khmer Rouge party politics allowed multi-party elections, post-Khmer Rouge political landscape, particularly during the People's Republic of Kampuchea (PRK), was dominated by the authoritarian single party state, the Kampuchean People's Revolutionary Party (KPRP). It is worth emphasizing here, however, that although it is presented earlier that pre-Khmer Rouge party politics allowed for elections, this chapter does not in any way argue that pre-Khmer Rouge elections, both during the Sangkum Reatre Niyum and the Khmer Republic regimes, were free and fair. Secondly, characteristics of party politics in the post-Khmer Rouge period continued to pose significant and long lasting influence on electoral politics after the democratic transition in 1993. Therefore, the post-Khmer Rouge party politics is the core concern of this thesis.

Chronology of Party Development in Cambodia

The Sangkum Reastr Niyum Regime (1953-1970)

The birth of political parties in Cambodia can be traced back to 1946 when, following the second amendment of the Franco-Cambodian commission allowing for an unprecedented enfranchisement of universal male suffrage in Cambodia, political parties were allowed to exist (Chandler, 1991: 28). Political parties during the time were mainly formed and led by royalist families and intellectuals, including the Liberty Party, established by the French; the Democratic Party, founded by people including Sim Var, a former editor of *Nagara Vatta* and Ieu Kosuss, a prominent intellectual from Battambang and Prince Sisowath Yuthevang; and the Progressive Democrats, led by Prince Norodom Montana (Chandler, 1991: 29). The subsequent parties included the royalist Khmer Renovation Party and the Victorious Northeast Party (Ibid). One of the parties established in the early 1950s, and whose party development is the center of this thesis, is the communist, radical left Khmer People's Revolutionary Party (KPRP), supported by the Vietnam Workers' Party. The KPRP is the predecessor of the Communist Party of Kampuchea, which ruled Cambodia during the Khmer Rouge regime, and of the Kampuchean People's Revolutionary Party, which ruled Cambodia during the People's Republic of Kampuchea, from 1979-1989, and of the Cambodian People's Party, who has been the only ruling party since the first election in 1993.

The constitutional reform also noticeably resulted in the elimination of Royal absolutism and granting of power to elected politicians (Leifer, 1968: 126). Following the Geneva Conference in 1954, it was officially agreed that a democratic election would be

held under international supervision in 1955, and that the constitutional monarch would have to accede to a provision that gives less power to the King (Ibid). Seeing his power declining and in search for his revival of power, King Norodom Sihanouk abdicated the throne in favor of his father, Norodom Suramrit, to establish *Sangkum Reastr Niyum* (Popular Socialist Community), a political grouping based largely on Buddhist socialist principles in order to compete in the election (Zeeuw, 2009: 232). Through his heroic symbol as a “Father of Independence” and a well-revered “Kingship”, the now Prince Sihanouk obtained landslide victory in the election. During the Sangkum period, political, economic and social lives of Cambodian people and political parties mainly subordinated to Prince Sihanouk’s control. Displeased with the Sangkum regime, the KPRP, among other left-wing parties, rejected to join political forces with the Sangkum. Thus the opposing parties were only able to operate their activities clandestinely (Zeeuws, 2009: 233). The Sangkum regime, due to its dominant control on the country’s politics and suppression of the opposition, continued to be a hegemonic regime party until late 1970s, when Sihanouk’s tilted position toward the North Vietnam during the Cold War resulted in him being ousted from power in an American-backed coup led by General Lon Nol’s conservative political group. The rise to power of Lon Nol led to the creation of a pro-US regime called the Khmer Republic.

The Khmer Republic Regime (1970-1975)

The coming to power of the Khmer Republic saw a rapid transition from constitutional monarchy to a presidential system. The Khmer Republic, despite allowing for elections and political opposition, was characterized as an oppressive regime due to

its oppression of political rights and intimidation of the royalists and the communists. The 1972 elections, in which some opposition parties, including the Democratic Party and the Republican Party, boycotted the election, resulted in a landslide victory for Lon Nol's Social Republican Party (Chandler, 1991).

The Khmer Republic, in spite of its tight grip on domestic politics, faced significant challenges from Sihanouk-initiated resistance forces jointly led by the Vietnamese and the Chinese-backed Communist Party of Kampuchea (CPK), better known as the Khmer Rouge, the successor of the KPRP. In 1972, the Vietnamese forces pulled out of the resistance force, so the CPK subsequently took over the force. Despite its departure from the force, the North Vietnamese continued to provide the Khmer Rouge forces with military assistance. Military tension between Lon Nol and the Khmer Rouge forces ended in early 1975, when the former, despite military assistance from the US, was defeated by the latter's better trained and well-managed military. The collapse of the Khmer Republic paved the way for the arrival of one of the world's most brutal regimes - the Khmer Rouge regime.

The Democratic Kampuchea Regime (1975-1979)

Commonly known as the Khmer Rouge regime, the Democratic Kampuchea (DK), modeled on a radical Marxist-Leninist ideology, aimed at transforming Cambodia into a communist utopian dependent on agricultural surplus. During the regime, political, economic, and socio-cultural structures were controlled by the communist party state, known as the *Angkar*, or organization. Given the regime's authoritarian nature, it is not surprising that political competition was non-existent. It was alleged that the CPK's

leadership structure was not disclosed during the first few years and that it was only commonly referred to as *Angkar*. Only later was it known that the CPK's leadership was led by Saloth Sar, better known as Pol Pot.

The People's Republic of Kampuchea Regime (1979-1989)

On January 7, 1979, the People Army of Vietnam (PAVN) and the Cambodian-led Kampuchean United Front for National Salvation (KUFNS) defeated and ousted Khmer Rouge forces and subsequently established the People's Republic of Kampuchea regime. After the defeat of the Khmer Rouge by Vietnamese forces, the People's Republic of Kampuchea (PRK), a Vietnamese-backed regime, was established. The PRK was led by former-Khmer Rouge cadres who had fled to Vietnam in 1977 and by Hanoi-trained revolutionaries and was largely supported by political, economic and military assistance from Vietnam and the Soviet Union. The collapse of Pol Pot's tragic regime left the PRK with almost completely-destroyed human resources, local infrastructure, economic structures, and state institutions. Therefore, the PRK, following its rise to power, faced a daunting task: restructuring Cambodia largely from scratch (Vickery, 1990; Hughes, 2003). During the regime, political competition was non-existent. The Marxist-Leninist modelled Kampuchean People's Revolutionary Party (KPRP) was the single party state. It is worth emphasizing here that the foundation of post-Khmer Rouge Cambodian politics started during this regime, mainly because the regime's single ruling party, the KPRP, is the predecessor of the Cambodian People's Party (CPP), the only ruling party in Cambodia after the first election in 1993 whose senior party cadres continue to occupy top government positions until today.

Like its preceding regimes, the PRK was also influenced by Cold War politics. Generally referred to as the “Vietnamese puppet” government, the PRK, despite its dominant control on domestic politics and economy, lacked severe international legitimacy. The United States, China, and France, as well as some other democratic countries in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), are among the main critics of the PRK. In addition to the lack of international legitimacy, the PRK also faced strong opposition from three resistance forces of reformers stationing along the Cambodia-Thai border areas. The three groups primarily included Sihanouk’s National United Front for an Independent, Neutral, Peaceful, and Cooperative Cambodia, commonly shorthand as FUNCINPEC; Son San’s Khmer People’s National Liberation Front (KPNLF); and the Khmer Rouge’s Party of Democratic Kampuchea (PDK). These forces received political, economic and military support mainly from the United States, China, and Thailand, joint together and established the Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea (CGDK), headed by Sihanouk. From the mid- to-late 1980s, factional fighting between the PRK and the CGDK continued unabated. It was not until after the end of the Cold War — when the Soviet Union cut its economic and military supplies to the PRK, Vietnamese forces officially withdrew from Cambodia and the PRK was renamed the State of Cambodia (SOC) — that the warring factions reached an externally-imposed political agreement to hold a UN-supervised election in 1993.

Despite fierce controversy surrounding the defining characteristics of post-election power structure and the language choice of the Khmer Rouge’s “genocide,” political solutions were eventually reached, and with that, led all the factions to the

signing of the Accords on a Comprehensive Political Settlement of the Cambodia Conflict, also known as the Paris Peace Accords (PPA), on 23 October, 1991. The PPA is the milestone to the settlement of Cambodia's conflict because it not only officially ended Cambodia's civil war (although the Khmer Rouge eventually boycotted the election and continued to disrupt the election process), but also paved the way for the (re)establishment of Cambodia's multi-party democracy in 1993 supervised by the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC).

Upon UNTAC's arrival in Cambodia, party politics started to be revitalized. Political parties were no longer banned. The armed forces of the CGDK therefore had to transform themselves into full-fledged political parties, except the Khmer Rouge faction due to its boycott of the election. The FUNCINPEC became a party and was led by Prince Ranariddh, the son of King Sihanouk. The KPNLF, now renamed the Buddhist Liberal Democratic Party (BLDP), was led by Son San. The KPRP, which during the SOC regime in 1989 was renamed the Cambodian People's Party (CPP), was led by Chea Sim.

The 1993 election result, which gave FUNCINPEC electoral victory, took the CPP, which came second, by surprise. Despite its victory, FUNCINPEC could not secure enough votes needed by the two third majority to form the government. Therefore, FUNCINPEC had to form a political coalition with the CPP. Due to the CPP's demand and to King Sihanouk's anticipation of escalating conflict if the coalition failed, the FUNCINPEC-CPP power-sharing arrangement eventually created two Prime Ministers, with FUNCINPEC's Rannaridh being the first and CPP's Hun Sen being the second,

(Roberts, 2000). The coalition, while appearing rather stable at the beginning, became more and more hostile as each side tried to outmaneuver the other. Due to the relatively more superior political, economic, and security strength of the CPP, the coalition was eventually broken by a CPP-led coup on 5-6 July, 1997, after which Prince Rannaridh went into exile abroad and a number of FUNCINPEC officials were executed and imprisoned. After the coup, a significant number of both FUNCINPEC and Khmer Rouge officials defected to the CPP in exchange not only for personal and familial securities but also for patronage access, thereby putting the CPP at an unassailable position in the country.

To date, Cambodia has held five national elections and three local elections. Despite its electoral defeat in the first election, the CPP had been able to capture both national and local politics as shown in its dramatic increase of National Assembly seats from a mere 50/120 in the first national election in 1993 to 90/123 in the fourth national election in 2008. However, the fifth national election in 2013 saw an unprecedented electoral decline of the CPP from 90 to 68/123 (whose details will be discussed further later). While the electoral dominance of the CPP relative to other parties can be explained by various factors, including Cambodia's close-list Proportional Representation electoral system (Zeeuw, 2009), the following section argues that the CPP's hegemony in Cambodia's party politics is attributed to the uneven level of party institutionalization after the election.

Explaining Party Institutionalization in Post-Transition Cambodia: The Influence of Historical Legacies

Despite rounds of democratic elections since 1993, Cambodia's party system remains fluid, and individual party institutionalization is largely uneven, with the CPP being the most institutionalized (Peou, 2014: 214). The CPP is the only political party in Cambodia since the first election to have maintained its existence without any party merger or schism. However, the CPP's party institutionalization, as will be shown below, is still weak, particularly when assessed in terms of its value infusion and party autonomy. This section argues that the political hegemony of the CPP is due to its party origin, being the former hegemonic party during the PRK regime. The historical legacies of the CPP during the authoritarian regime wielded significant influence on party institutionalization of the CPP in the post-authoritarian/post-conflict elections. As will be argued in the following, the historical legacies of the CPP allows the party to easily consolidate its power from its ascendancy in public office through the use of clientelism. Although clientelism has been an effective strategy for the CPP to institutionalize its party and consolidate its power, an extensive reliance on clientelism significantly undermines the CPP's internal democracy and its development of a distinct party platform.

Political Economy of the People's Republic of Kampuchea (PRK)

Because the PRK is the regime from which the CPP derived its party organization and in which the CPP's historical legacies are embedded, an understanding of the PRK is crucial. At the outset of its re-establishment following the collapse of the Khmer Rouge's

CPK, the PRK, under the Kampuchean People's Revolutionary Party (KaPRP), a rebranded version of the original Khmer People's Revolutionary Party (KPRP), was modeled on a Marxist-Leninist ideology. The rebranding of the PRK's KPRP was primarily done not only to reconnect itself to its communist roots in the early 1950s but also to distinguish itself from the Khmer Rouge's Communist Party of Kampuchea (CPK) (Vickery, 1994; Gottesman, 2003). However, the newly-invented KPRP was not officially created until the Party's fourth Congress was held in May 1981 (Vickery, 1994: 103). The Party was operated in conjunction with Marxist-Leninist ideology and in close partnership with the Vietnamese Communist Party, receiving tremendous political and economic advice from the Vietnamese advisors. The PRK regime was mainly funded by economic assistance from the Soviet Union and Vietnam until the end of the Cold War.

Despite the KPRP's supposed commitment to Marxism-Leninism, the KPRP was, to a large extent, not pure communism. Political and economic changes in the late 1980s and early 1990s, particularly after Hun Sen became the Prime Minister in 1985, induced the KPRP to abandon and eventually adjust its ideological position from socialism to clientelism to fit with the actual situation of Cambodia's political and economic circumstances during the time. The KPRP's abandonment of its original ideological baggage and its establishment of a dense patronage web within the state apparatus have significant bearing on Cambodia's party politics from then until today.

Because the political challenges the PRK— the lack of international legitimacy and opposition from the resistance forces— has already been presented, a look at the PRK's economic circumstances is necessary here. Indeed, the PRK's economic structure,

notably after the transition from socialist to market economy in 1989, is the foundation of the clientelism in post-Khmer Rouge Cambodia.

From the mid-to-late 1980s, economic calamities in Cambodia, resulting from both domestic and international factors, potentially threatened the regime stability and legitimacy of the PRK, thereby necessitating the regime to gradually, and eventually, abandon its socialist economy and subsequently embrace market economy in 1989.

Domestically, the PRK had to deal not only with famine, severe flood, and long drought but also with the lack of capital to renovate even light-scale industry to produce goods and pay farmers in exchange for their agricultural outputs (Slocomb, 2003: 123).

Cambodia's weak economy during the time disabled the government not only to pay farmers, but also civil servants and the military for their services and loyalty to the regime (Slocomb, 2003: 193). Internationally, the defeat of the Soviet Union at the end of the Cold War abruptly cut economic and military supplies to the PRK government, which further exacerbated the regime's stability. Gottesman (2003) suggests that towards the end of the Cold War, "Cambodia had lost some hundred million rubles in commercial credit and a long list of imports, including construction materials and parts, vehicles, pharmaceuticals, chemicals, and most important, fuel (p. 316)." In 1989, the Soviet Union completely cut its annual fuel supply of 200,000 tons to Cambodian military, thereby causing growing panic among the ruling elites (Gottesman, 2003: 317).

As described above, the PRK regime was profoundly disturbed by economic misfortune starting in the 1980s to the end of the decade. What caused greater concern for the regime, additionally, was their inability to secure loyalty and commitment from their

party cadres and civil officials to materialize its intended socialist goals - a scenario too costly for the regime to let it happen. Moreover, the PRK was also fearful of the possible defection of their unpaid civil officials and soldiers to the resistance forces at the border areas. During his speech given to a visiting Vietnamese delegation, Prime Minister Hun Sen stated that “the political situation prevents us from reducing our workforce because if we release them from the administration, where will they go? Sihanouk and Son Sann are recruiting people away from us” (Gottesman, 2003: 316). Therefore, as the situation gradually worsened and signs of recovery were slim, the government started to look to private credits for alternative sources of money to recover the economy and to bankroll the regime. Margaret Slocomb (2003) observed that:

The most serious concern for the government, both in practical terms and in terms of extending its ideological hegemony, was the upward trend of free market prices. The government knew that it could not revive the economy without the help of the petty bourgeoisie. The government lacked both the capital and access to large-scale credit which it required to develop even light-scale industry. It was therefore virtually at the mercy of the free market to supply consumer demands, which increased commensurately with economic recovery (Slocomb, 2003: 121).

While the need to privatize public enterprises and ultimately to transform Cambodia into a market economy was mainly perceived to have been caused by economic problems at home, it was also observed to have been stipulated by the country’s uncertain political future. Citing Prime Minister Hun Sen’s briefing to a group of Vietnamese delegates in Phnom Penh, Gottesman narrates:

In the spring of 1989, the leadership considered the possibility that a political solution might entail power sharing and that the resistance might lay claim to state assets. In anticipation of such a scenario, it decided to transfer the state’s entire industrial sector over to the Party.” “If there is a political solution, we want all state factories to become private factories,” Hun Sen told a visiting Vietnamese delegation, “because if we leave them with the state, we will face problems when

the three parties come and spend money that belongs to our factories, which we have operated for ten years”. The result, he warned, would be that state assets would no longer be available to support the Party and its cadres (Gottesman, 2003: 317).

Having carefully considered the pros and cons of a transition to a market economy, Prime Minister Hun Sen in 1989, in Gottesman’s words, “finally arrived at an economic system that made sense to him” (Gottesman, 2003: 207). By that time, he had shifted the PRK's economic system from a socialist model to a free market system. Following the economic transition, public enterprises were mainly sold cheaply to party cadres as rewards for their service to the party because they, unlike state officials, had no salary (Gottesman, 2003: 329). Business opportunities flourished and enabled business people and politicians to strengthen their relationship for mutual benefits (Verver and Dahles, 2015: 56), a starting point which subsequently paved the way for the consolidation of Prime Minister Hun Sen’s patronage network.

Institutional Origin and Party Institutionalization of the CPP

Following the political deals among the Cambodian factions reached at the Paris Peace Accord, a UN-organized multi-party election was to be held for the first time in Cambodia after the collapse of the Khmer Rouge. This election gave legitimate birth to modern political parties in Cambodia. In other words, Cambodian political parties, of course including the CPP, were born out of an institutional origin.

As the only party during the 10-year period of the PRK regime, the then KPRP had well established its party structure from national to local levels and dominated Cambodia’s state apparatuses. Therefore, prior to the election, the CPP already had an existing party apparatus in the state, experienced party cadres, and a well-financed party

organization. However, the rebel-turned parties of the externally-funded CGDK, which received parliamentary status immediately before the election in 1993, had a much weaker party organization compared to the CPP.

Despite its electoral defeat in the first election, the CPP was able to continue to expand its existing party structure at all levels. With its expansion of the party's organizational structure for the past years, the CPP is now known to have "the best party organization in the country" (Peou, 2014: 221). The number of the members of the party's most important organ, at least formally, the Central Committee, has continued to increase over time, starting from merely 64 in the early 1990 to 545 following the last Party Congress held in early 2015. Every sub-national level of state apparatus is comprised of the CPP's branches and sub-branches (Zeeuw, 2009: 253). The CPP's party structure is comprised of many branches across the country. Zeeuw describes the CPP's structure as:

Each branch (of the CPP) consists of a committee that ranges from 5–9 members at the village level to 27–33 members at the district level. The branches are responsible for keeping track of, managing and addressing the problems of ordinary citizens, often in close coordination with the local CPP-affiliated authorities" (p. 253).

Moreover, the CPP is also has significant influence on the country's armed forces and judiciary, is the most well-financed and wealthiest party, and hence is the most "self-sustainable political party" (Peou, 2011: 72). Therefore, the institutional origin of Cambodia's democratization provided the CPP with significant advantages to institutionalize its party and consolidate its tight grip on power.

However, the manner through which the CPP has institutionalized its party organization has not been through programmatic policies or ideologies. Rather, it has

been relying extensively on clientelism to mobilize voters, to secure loyalty from its party members, and to generate funding for the party. The following section looks at the evolution of clientelism and assesses how clientelism affects party institutionalization of the CPP.

The Consolidation of Clientelism

Clientelism in Cambodia initially emerged following the economic transition from socialist to market economy in the late 1980s, gradually consolidated after the first UN-organized election in 1993, and especially intensified following the 1997 coup, after which the CPP, particularly Prime Minister Hun Sen, secured an overwhelming control on the country's patronage resources (Robert, 2001; Un, 2005). It is worth emphasizing here, however, that clientelism is not a new political phenomenon in Cambodia. It has existed since the pre-colonial Cambodia. The patronage system in the post-Khmer Rouge Cambodia, however, is not simply inherited from the past practice; rather, it is re-invented by political and economic conditions after the collapse of the Khmer Rouge regime (Springer, 2010: 67).

As will be detailed below, clientelism in post-Khmer Rouge Cambodia emerges out of the platform of party financing and the historical legacies of the ruling CPP. These institutional advantages have provided the CPP with advantageous positions in the electoral politics to consolidate its power over time through its countrywide patronage network within the state and security apparatuses.

Clientelism and Party Financing

The venue through which clientelism can persist and consolidate after Cambodia's political and economic transition is party financing. Within this platform, a reciprocal exchange relationship between party and elites takes place at the expense of state resources, a phenomenon commonly referred to as "patronage." In patronage politics, resources are rewarded to individuals or groups not based on meritocratic quality, but rather on political connection and private financial returns. Patronage politics in post-conflict Cambodia has intensified since the early 1990s by the establishment of increasing informal linkages between the CPP and business elites who are well-connected with senior CPP members, especially with Prime Minister Hun Sen. These business people, in exchange for their political and financial contribution to the CPP's dominance in Cambodian politics and its senior officials, are rewarded with public resources, including public contracts, land concessions, and security protection (Un, 2005; Un and So, 2009; Verver and Dahles, 2015). The persistence of clientelism through party financing exists within the institutional framework of political parties in Cambodia: an unregulated party financing.

Article 81 of Cambodia's Law on Election of Members of the National Assembly (LEMNA) provides that "all expenses for electoral campaign incurred by a political party or a candidate shall be borne by that political party or candidate" (LEMNA, 2013). This provision, therefore, indicates that political parties are required to be financially responsible for their party activities. While this legal provision can be seen as an opportunity for the incumbent due to its ready access to financial and state resources, it

poses great challenges to the non-dominant political parties, which usually do not enjoy similar access to resources. In Cambodia, the ruling Cambodian People's Party (CPP), who has been the only ruling party after the collapse of the Khmer Rouge regime 35 years ago, has been enjoying special privileges to financial resources from business tycoons through its control on patronage resources and its close personal relationship with key government officials.

The embedded patron-client relationship between the CPP and its financial backers in Cambodian politics takes the form of "*oknha*" politics. The mutual dependence of both actors in the relationship is so deepened in state structures and institutions that it has been characterized, according to Verver and Dahles (2015), as the "institutionalization of Oknha" in Cambodia. Traditionally, the term was a royal title, whose meaning is synonymous with the English title of "Lord", to be espoused by the King to philanthropists such as "religious leaders, governors, ministers or personal councilors who offered exceptional service to the throne" (Verver and Dahles, 2015: 48). Nonetheless, Oknha today has largely become "the preserve of businessmen interested in formalizing their relationship with the State (and by extension the CPP)" (Ear, 2013:72). In the present day, Oknha has been widely regarded as an honorific title given to business people contributing at least \$100,000 or more to local development projects (Odom and Henderson, 2014).

Cited from Duong (2008), Verver and Dahles suggest that business elites who belong to the Okhna club can be classified into two groups. The first group includes Khmer Rouge survivors who developed their (illicit) businesses including casinos,

brothels, or small enterprises during the 1980s. The second group is comprised of people who left Cambodia during the Khmer Rouge and were able to establish a successful business in their host-countries, including France, Canada, the US, and Australia, and afterwards returned to Cambodia following the economic transition (Verver and Dahles, 2015: 56). Some of the first businesspeople who were granted Oknha titles were those who were able to generate early reciprocal relationship with the CPP as well as with Prime Minister Hun Sen personally during the late period of the PRK regime; the later crowd of Oknha noticeably increased following the Hun Sen-led coup in 1997 against his coalition partner, the FUNCINPEC Party.

The first few Oknha in Cambodia included, among others, Oknha Sok Kong, Oknha Mong Rethy, and Oknha Theng Bunma. Sok Kong initially earned Hun Sen's gratitude during the troubling year of the PRK when the regime was running short on fuel. Sok Kong deepened this gratitude even more following the CPP's successful coup against FUNCINPEC Party in 1997 when his petroleum company, *Sokimex*, supplied Hun Sen forces' tanks with free fuel (The Phnom Penh Post, 2000). Sok Kong's loyalty to Hun Sen and the CPP was subsequently rewarded. In 1999, Sokimex Group was granted the exclusive right to control and manage revenue from Angkor Wat ticket sales, which has since been slammed by the opposition for corruption and mismanagement (Raksmey, 2014). Shortly afterwards, the right to develop an old French prison in Siem Reap was conferred to Sok Kong's Sokha Hotels, after which a five-star resort was constructed. Later on, the development of Bokor Mountain was given to Sokimex. Besides these concessions that the company received from the government, Sokimex's

business portfolio is also comprised of “ garment factories, rubber plantation, property development, and a small private airline” (Strangio, 2014: 132). In 2000, Sam Rainsy, the then opposition leader of his namesake Sam Rainsy Party, accused Sokimex of “conducting business in a manner that hurts both consumers and the country” and claimed that Sokimex was the “financial pillar for the ruling CPP” (The Phnom Penh Post, 2000). Similarly, Oknha Mong Retthy, a business tycoon in agribusiness, construction, and real estate, who in 2006 was appointed as a CPP senator, has also been allegedly identified by US officials as “Hun Sen’s money man” (Strangio, 2014: 149). Oknha Mong Retthy’s close personal relationship with Prime Minister Hun Sen has also granted a worthwhile business fortune. His Mong Retthy Group owns a significant share of the country’s rubber and palm oil plantations, livestock and real estate, along side a private port in Sihanouk Ville, which was accused by Global Witness of being a “gateway for large-scale smuggling” (Ibid).

Due to the sensitivity of political financing in Cambodia and despite having laws requiring political parties to have an account book to document their incomes and expenses, information about party financing remains largely classified. This, therefore, poses a particular constraint for this paper to obtain data to support its arguments. However, a leaked classified document released by Wikileaks in 2007 reveals information about the patronage exchange relationship between the CPP and the business elites. The Wikileaks cable exposes the business people who are regarded as “Cambodia’s top ten tycoons,” of whom have very close personal relationships with Prime Minister Hun Sen through their positions as either advisors, senators, or board members of the Cambodian

Red Cross, the biggest humanitarian organization headed by H. E Bun Rany, the wife of Prime Minister Hun Sen. Of the ten tycoons listed in the Wikileaks, some of the most well-known individuals whose business interests in land and natural resources have evicted thousands of families and farmers from their homes, and have destroyed a significant share of Cambodia's forest, include Ly Yong Phat, the King of Koh Kong and Yeay Phu & Lao Meng Khin, the Power Couple. These tycoons are alleged to be the main financial backers of the CPP and Prime Minister Hun Sen (Wikileaks, 2007). Although not listed in the Wikileaks, possibly due to his later rise to prominence, Oknha Try Pheap, a prominent logging tycoon, has also been commonly known to be one of the CPP's financial backers (Global Witness, 2006; Pye and Tittthara, 2015; Strangio, 2014). In 2012, an unpublished report documented by a major international conservation group showed that in early 2011, Try Pheap "donated" more than \$130,000 to Ministry of Environment staff, and to a local CPP party branch in the Boeung Per Wildlife Sanctuary in Preah Vihear province, where his company, Pheap's MDS Import Export, was subsequently rewarded with a rubber concession (Pye and Tittthara, 2015).

After the 1997 coup, when Hun Sen and his CPP became dominant, the number of Oknha in Cambodia has noticeably skyrocketed from a mere 20 in 2004, to 200 in 2008, and to about 700 in 2014 (Oudom and Henderson, 2014). Despite the quantitative increase of Oknha, the qualitative status of the Oknha title has been steered away from its original meaning intended to confer honor and prestige to actual philanthropists to become a title embedded in patronage exchange for lucrative public contracts, irrespective of meritocratic quality (Craig and Kimchoeun, 2011: 227; Verver and

Dahles, 2015: 57). The substantial increase of Oknha in Cambodia was also observed by late King Norodom Sihanouk, who reportedly complained about the rising number of Royal Decrees he had to sign to legitimize the positions of new Oknha, generals, and excellencies (The Phnom Penh Post, 2003, cited in Verver and Dahles, 2015: 57).

Hun Sen-led patronage politics emerges not only within the Oknha group but also among state officials, particularly his closest allies from the PRK period. Within his government, his clients possess high-ranking government positions, and, as a reciprocal exchange, they contribute financially to the CPP. For example, Deputy Prime Minister Sok An, a Deputy Prime Minister and Senior Minister in charge of the Council of Ministers as well as Hun Sen's in-law, has been widely known to be a wealthy politician whose power extends across government bodies (Peou, n.d: 3). His business fortune has largely been built upon his control on the powerful Council of Minister and on his connections with wealthy Sino-Khmer business individuals (Strangio, 2014: 132). Another of his closest allies, the former long-serving Minister of Commerce and the current Minister of Industry and Handicraft, Cham Prasidh had also been known to employ his relatives in the ministry to such a great extent that prompted some people to coin the ministry as the "Ministry of Cham Prasidh's family" (Peou, n.d: 3). Both Sok An and Cham Prasidh have allegedly financed the CPP (Ibid). Within the CPP, party officials, particularly the wealthy senior officials, are required to contribute to the party coffer, also known as the "black box" or "hep-khmau" in Khmer (Un, 2005: 227). Former Phnom Penh governor and the current Minister of Rural Development was known to have paid \$20,000 to the Black Box during the 2003 election (Ibid).

The form of contribution offered by the CPP's clients is not strictly confined to cash money. It also takes the form of sponsoring local infrastructure projects including building roads, schools, and pagodas in CPP's disguise. With close ties with those business tycoons, PM Hun Sen can rely on them to fund his development projects. These business tycoons are also very crucial in attracting foreign investment, and, hence contribute to the country's economic growth, for which the Prime Minister and his party can claim credit. For example, Oknha Mong Retthy has been known to be one of the tycoons contributing to Hun Sen's development projects. He owns a construction firm called , *Samnamg Kmeng Wat*, translated literally as "luck of the pagoda boy", indicating his luck in rising to prominence from a pagoda boy as well as his relationship with Hun Sen, who was also a pagoda boy in Wat Neakavorn, before the Khmer Rouge regime. He, through his construction firm, has contributed millions of dollars to finance Hun Sen's rural infrastructure projects including building "Hun Sen's schools", bridges, roads, and pagodas, through which his company receives privileged contracts to develop (Robert, 2001; Strangio, 2014; Un, 2005).

Prime Minister Hun Sen and his party's ability to control the military and police also allows him and his party to enjoy security support and protection from these institutions. In the military apparatus, the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces (RCAF) is the national military force whose Commander-in-Chief has always been a CPP member. Until 2009, General Ke Kim Yan was RCAF's Commander-in-Chief. After 2009, following a fierce factional conflict with Prime Minister Hun Sen, General Ke Kim Yan was deposed, and General Pol Saroeun, a devoted CPP member and a steadfast loyalist to

Prime Minister Hun Sen, was appointed RCAF Commander-in-Chief. Other than having a CPP member as a commander-in-chief, the CPP also made an additional appointment of seven others pro-CPP deputy commanders-in-chief, including Generals Chea Dara, Mol Roeu, Meas Sophea, Hing Bun Heang, Kun Kim, Ung Samkhan and Sao Sokha, to the RCAF (Strangio and Sambath, 2009). In the Ministry of National Defense, Prime Minister Hun Sen has virtual control of the Ministry through a CPP general, Tea Banh. Meanwhile within the police apparatus, staunch loyalists to Prime Minister Hun Sen have also always been appointed National Police Chief. Prior to his death in a helicopter crash in late 2008, General Hok Lundy, who had allegedly been known for his close relationship with Prime Minister Hun Sen, had been the National Police Chief. Shortly after his death, his position was given to Neth Savoeun, the deputy National Police Chief, and Hun Sen's nephew-in-law (VOA, November, 2008).

The ways in which Prime Minister Hun Sen builds his clientelistic relationships within the security apparatuses include establishing family alliances through marriages and providing business opportunities, particularly in land and natural resources sectors. Marriages between children and relatives of senior political elites are seen as a common phenomenon in Cambodia and as a way to consolidate power among the elite few. The clientelistic relationships between the CPP and the security apparatus persist through the reciprocal benefits each receives from the other. While the patron receives security supports from the military and the police; the client, in return for their loyalty to the patron, obtains access to illegal logging business and legal protection. Prime Minister Hun Sen's control over the military and police bodies has been a particularly useful

political tool for him to consolidate his power. His successful 1997 coup against FUNCINPEC Party was largely assisted by Brigade 70, and his 4000-member Bodyguard Unit – both of which are controlled by Hun Sen’s allies. Until today, the security apparatuses have been used by Hun Sen and his party to silence their critics and power challengers (Global Witness, 2007: 63).

In exchange for this loyalty to the Prime Minister and the CPP, senior security officials are generally granted access to illegal logging businesses in the country. In June 2007, Global Witness published a 96-page report entitled “*Cambodia’s Family Tree: Illegal Logging and the Stripping of Public Assets by Cambodia’s Elite*”, revealing the familial and political connections among the ruling elites (Global Witness, 2007). The report suggests the nepotistic and corrupt access to state resources by well-connected political elites. High-ranking military officials are also reported to have contributed to logging businesses in the country. For example, Global Witness report reveals that Sao Sokha, a four-star general and a deputy-chief of RCAF, was found to be associated with illicit timber trade, and so were forces under his control (Global Witness, 2007: 63). Similarly, the report discovered that the police were usually involved in forest crimes and illegal logging (Global Witness, 2007: 66).

Party Financing and Party Autonomy

The manner through which the CPP is financed— that is through Prime Minister Hun Sen’s personalized network of patronage with business tycoons, and government officials— renders the party subordinated to his control and vulnerable to his personalism, thereby weakening party cohesion and autonomy. Prime Minister Hun Sen

has been building up his personal power and financial base independent of the party, which therefore places him above the party (Un, 2004: 218). Within the CPP, factionalism between Hun Sen and Chea Sim and the superseding power of the former relative to the latter have remained an open-secret. The factional conflict between Hun Sen and Chea Sim can be traced back to the PRK years.

During the PRK regime, the then KPRP's party cohesion was relatively strong and well-structured. Margaret Slocomb, in her book, *The People's Republic of Kampuchea 1979-1989*, argues that in the KPRP's collective leadership of the Central Committee, no single individual, particularly Hun Sen, was able to exert his personalistic power to influence the party's direction. She notes that:

Hun Sen never managed to win majority support within the party. The membership of the Central Committee was always weighed in favor of the more conservative left-wing "faction" whose generally acknowledged leader was Chea Sim. Hun Sen's failure to control the Central Committee acted as a brake on his sometime impetuous drive to change the economy. As the Prime Minister and high profile minister for foreign affairs during the protracted peace negotiations, Hun Sen received a lot of attention, from the foreign press. Within the Central Committee, however, he was a member with the same voting rights as other members and was subject to the same party discipline (Slocomb, 2003: 198)

However, starting from the turn of the 1990s, Hun Sen, through his personal base of power and patronage, has significantly controlled the CPP's party structure and organization; therefore, the CPP, as a political party organization, wielded far less influence on party members and the state than Hun Sen and his patronage base did (Gottesman, 2003: 330). In emphasizing the weakening roles of the CPP's party structure, Gottesman indicates that, "Outside the vertical chains of money that bound one official to another, Party status by itself meant little. As the less adaptable members of the

Politburo were discovering, the cold new logic of patronage applied at every level of the party (Ibid).” The power and dominance of Prime Minister Hun Sen within both the state apparatus and the CPP are so hegemonic that they allow him to virtually control the party and the state. In an interview with Dr. Kheang Un in 2005, a former general and presently a CPP senator, was quoted as saying “those within Hun Sen’s network, if they want to make rain, they can. If they want to make thunder, they can” (Un, 2004: 218).

The centralized funding of the party by business elites through Prime Minister Hun Sen’s network greatly undermines the ‘vote-maximizing rationality’ of the CPP. While it is, of course, misleading to claim that the CPP does not seek to maximize votes and to win elections, it is argued here that the ability of the party to exercise its rationality is significantly constrained by the financial donors, thereby reducing the party’s autonomy. An analysis of this argument can be derived from an evaluation of the CPP after its unprecedented decrease of popular support following the July 2013 election.

For the first time since coming to power more than three decades ago, with the exception of its electoral defeat in the first election in 1993— after which the CPP still managed to secure a power-sharing arrangement with FUNCINPEC— the CPP had lost a considerable amount of its National Assembly seats from 90 in 2008 to 68 in the 2013 election. Realizing the credible challenges to its power from the newly merged opposition party, the Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP), the CPP initiated a so-called “deep-reform”. In about two months after the election, Prime Minister Hun Sen, during his six-hour long speech promised to eliminate corruption, which he cited as one of the reasons contributing to the CPP’s shocking decrease of the National Assembly seats, and

instructed corrupt CPP members to “clean their bodies” and “heal their diseases” (Dara and Willemyns, 2013). In addition to the “promise” to eliminate corruption within public service, a cabinet reshuffle was also made in order to improve the quality of Cambodia’s public services (Ibid). The reshuffle saw not only a replacement of a few old ministers with younger, better-educated technocrats, but also a relative decline of Deputy Prime Minister Sok An’s “power fieldom” (KhmerTimes, 2014). Im Sethy, Cham Prasadh, Keat Chhun, Chan Sarun, So Khun, Mok Mareth— Ministers Education, Commerce, Economy and Finance, Agriculture, Telecommunication and Environment have been removed (and transferred to different positions) and replaced with more capable technocrats including Hang Chuon Naron, Sun Chanthol, Aun Porn Moniroth, Ouk Rabun, Prak Sokhon, and Say Samal, respectively. The most prominent among these newly-appointed ministers were the well-respected Minister of Education, Youth, and Sport, H.E Hang Choun Naron, commonly known as “one of the CPP’s most capable technocrats”, who immediately announced and implemented a rather effective reform of school corruption, and the Minister of Commerce, H. E Sun Chanthol, a former General Electric executive (Strangio, 2014: 260).

Some state institutions controlled by Sok An have also been dissolved as part of the “deep reform” package. The Supreme Council on State Reform, a powerful body “in charge of four sub-councils mediating reform in financial policy and within the judiciary, military and public administration”, and the Accreditation Committee of Cambodia (ACC), a government body which administers higher education institutions in Cambodia— both of which were controlled by Sok An— have been dissolved (Naren and

Meyns, 2013). On top of the cabinet reshuffle, to restore people's faith on the CPP, some populist policies have also been implemented that include a wage hike for teachers, civil servants and garment workers and a promise to reform the court system (Sokheng and Worrel, 2013). After the July 2013 election, the desperate need to reform the CPP was evident during the Party Congress held in late January 2015, in which Heng Samrin, the CPP's honorary president, commented that the reforms are equivalent to "the death or life of the CPP" (Ponniah and Sokheng, 2015).

In spite of the urgency and necessity for the CPP to make party reforms to appeal to voters before the upcoming commune council and parliamentary elections in 2017 and 2018, respectively, the party's reform efforts have been largely constrained by the Party, and, in particular, on the part of Prime Minister Hun Sen, to facilitate reciprocity in his own patron-client relationships. It is worth noting, once again, that the ability of Prime Minister Hun Sen to consolidate his power and of the CPP to gain legitimacy from the populace has largely been bankrolled by a small group of political and business elites, who prosper from the CPP's ascendancy in public office. Such interdependent relationship between the party and the elites are so deeply entrenched and institutionalized in the state structure that any immediate defection from the relationship, especially by the patron in this context, is inevitably done at the expense of its continuous access to private benefits. This assessment has also been shared by some political analysts. For instance, Sebastian Strangio commented during a video interview with Voice of America (VOA) in Washington that:

The problem with the Cambodian political system is that Hun Sen relies heavily on a class of tycoons and business people, and powerful military commanders,

and government officials. His rule has been based on keeping these people happy. Now the \$60, 000 question is whether he will be able to reform the system enough to keep people from switching their vote to the opposition while still maintaining the power and support of these individuals who have supported his rule for so long. The government has been taking some positive steps, reforming education, for instance, but when it comes to challenging the entrenched economic interests of the powerful tycoons, and their connection to logging, deforestation, land grabs; that link has been very difficult to sever. There is still an incredible inertia, so the logging continues, land grabs continue, and I think the government only has a limit of power to really stop it. The system relies too heavily on this. (Soeung, 2015).

Similarly, Dr. Kheang Un observes that the CPP's reform efforts can be potentially limited by the party's rent-seeking and patronage culture. He notes that:

Effective reform requires not only new policies but also a restructuring of the government bureaucracy based on meritocracy. This has not yet been systematically adopted due to the CPP's long history of never discarding its loyalists — a culture that has helped to unify the CPP in light of its factional nature (Un, 2015).

More than a year after CPP's reform promise, its ability to implement and deliver the results remains limited, and has allegedly been influenced by economic interests of the elites. Although the newly-reformed Ministry of Environment was able to revoke economic land concession given to companies which “have failed to develop the land per their agreements with the government, the longstanding issues of land grabbing and logging continue unabated” (Sony, 2014). For instance, it was reported that “the Lower Sesan 2 dam project in Stung Treng province was being used as a giant laundry for illegally felled timber, a scheme which it linked to Kith Meng, the chairman of the Royal Group, and another firm owned by Sok Banna, a brother of Sokimex chairman Sok Kong” (Strangio, 2014: 260).

Another equally damaging consequence of centralized funding of political financing is the problem of intra-party democracy. Due to his ability to mobilize resources for the party from his personal patronage network, Prime Minister Hun Sen, who sits on top of party structure, dominates party decisions. His factional conflict with aging CPP President Chea Sim has been an open secret, that is widely known that Hun Sen's faction has well superseded that of Chea Sim's. Although Chea Sim started developing his own patronage network and extending his political power from the center to the province and local administration before Hun Sen, Hun Sen, having learnt "Chea Sim's game", began to establish his own patronage network in the provinces by providing them with patronage benefits and legal protection for their illegal activities (Un, 2004). Due to his control of the government structure, Hun Sen manipulated his administrative power to co-opt powerful figures in the provinces, a move which eventually resulted in growing factional conflicts between Hun Sen and Chea Sim and ultimately created "a sprawling and heterogenous network of ministries, agencies, and provincial and local administrations whose members adhered to the rules of patronage" (Gottesman, 2003: 211).

Hun Sen-Chea Sim factional conflict was at its height following a disagreement between the two factions over the decision to stage a coup in 1997 against FUNCINPEC Party. Shortly prior to the coup, some senior party officials, especially those within Chea Sim's faction, did not support's Hun Sen's attempt to launch the coup. It was reported that Hun Sen's coup "had been opposed by Sar Kheng, the co-Minister of Interior, General Ke Kim Yan, the Armed Force Commander, and, most importantly, Chea Sim,

the CPP's president" (Peou, 2014: 223). Despite Sar Kheng's attempt to protect Ho Sok, FUNCINPEC Secretary of State for the Ministry of Interior, Ho Sok was eventually "extra-judicially executed" by General Hok Lundy, Phnom Penh Police chief and Hun Sen's closest ally (Peou, 2014: 224). Given Hun Sen's dominance within the CPP as well as within the state, there is no doubt that his influence in the party is largely unassailable, much to other party members' dismay.

Prior to the 2003 election, and even the 2008 election, conflicts between the two factions continue to arise with somewhat expected outcomes - the sidelining of Chea Sim's faction. Following Hun Sen's threat to fire General Ke Kim Yan, the commander-in-chief of the country's Royal Cambodian Armed Forces (RCAF) due to his disagreement with Hun Sen's order, Ke Kem Yan was eventually dismissed (Strangio and Sambath, 2009). General Pol Saroeun, a devoted CPP member and a steadfast loyalist to Prime Minister Hun Sen, was subsequently appointed to replace Ke Kim Yan (Ibid). Within the CPP, anti-Hun Sen groups have often been "subdued" rather than "defeated" (Peou, 2014: 222). In May 2012, Prime Minister Hun Sen explicitly warned against any contentions from any groups within the party, implicitly referring to Chea Sim and Heng Samrin, to weaken his hold on power by reshuffling his government cabinet by saying that "Nobody could represent as the master of Hun Sen, not even ... Heng Samrin and ... Chea Sim; they could not be my masters." (Peou, 2014: 222-3).

Prime Minister's Hun Sen's undisputable power and influence within the CPP has also paved the way for the making of a dynastic politics within the party. Despite his initial claim that he "did not want his son to enter politics," the latest political

development within the CPP suggests that a dynastic politics is well under way (Ito, 2013). Hun Sen's three sons have all had key positions within the government. Hun Manet, 37, the oldest son and the heir apparent, graduated in 1999 from the US Military Academy at West Point, is a three-star lieutenant general in the RCAF, the deputy commander of his father's bodyguard unit, and the head of a US-funded national counterterrorism task force. Hun Manith, 33, who also graduated from the US, currently holds the rank of brigadier-general. Hun Many, 31, is a CPP Member of Parliament in Kompong Speu province and the president of the CPP-aligned Union of Youth Federations of Cambodia. (Strangio, 2014: 132).

An even clearer move signifying Hun Sen's establishment of a dynastic politics is the incorporation of 306 new party members, including Hun Sen's sons, as well as the sons and relatives of other senior CPP officials also in the military, as part of the party's much-needed reform to "inject new blood and new thinking into the party's leadership" (Ponniah and Sokheng, February 2015). Within the foreseeable future, no one else in the CPP is able to challenge Hun Sen's power within the party. In commenting on the influence of Hun Sen in the CPP, a CPP party member said, "Hun Sen will hold the prime minister's seat until his retirement" (Strangio, January, 2015). Hun Sen's intention to maintain his premiership has also repeatedly been said by the Prime Minister himself. In 2007, he announced that he would rule until 90 "if people continued to vote for him," but before the 2013 election, he changed his mind and said that he "wished to remain in power until 74." However, in March 2015, he claimed that he would not rule until he turned 90 and asked, "How can someone be the premier until 90? It never happens"

(Sokheng, March, 2015). Based on his power base and dense web of patronage network built upon political, economic, and marriage linkages, Hun Sen is anticipated to stay in power with his supremacy remaining, at least within the foreseeable future (Heder, 2005: 125). Therefore, regardless of when Hun Sen steps down, his power and domination will continue and his heir apparent could be his successor.

Clientelism and Political Program

The Kampuchean People's Revolutionary Party (KPRP), the predecessor of the ruling Cambodian People's Party (CPP) was a party with Marxism-Leninism as its distinct political ideology. Prior to the late 1980s, its ideological commitment was considerably firm. Its commitment to Marxist-Leninist ideology was evident, for instance, in the size of the party's membership and its membership recruitment mechanism. Michael Vickery (1994: 108), based on a report by Pen Sovan to the Party's Fourth Congress, showed that approximately 90% of the real communist in the Party had lost their lives during the Khmer Rouge regime, and that the party membership had increased tenfold after 1979. The report estimated that by the Party's Fifth Congress in 1985, the party membership was still "weak, both quantitatively and qualitatively." Vickery, thus, came to a conclusion that the KPRP's small party membership could have been the corresponding result of the Party's commitment to the party ideology. He argued that "The low figures, and apparent low growth, indicated that the Party was looking for committed, ideologically prepared members who would function as a real vanguard and leadership group, and did not intend to open up party ranks to all comers who might wish to join for opportunistic reasons" (p. 108). Citing a conversational evidence he obtained

from a man he talked to in 1984, Michael Vickery noted that the long process required by the Party when recruiting members and the repeated announcement made by the Party in its newspaper, *Pracheachon*, indicated that the Party was “still emphasizing quality over quantity, which of course is the characteristics of Marxism-Leninism” (Vickery, 1994: 108).

However, the party’s commitment to its Marxist-Leninist ideological baggage started to wane after the late 1980s. After the fifth Party Congress in 1985, KPRP’s party membership expanded considerably. An estimate by Ben Kiernan based on his unofficial interviews with some “well-informed people” put the Party’s membership after 1985 at between 9,000 and 10,000. Further, a survey conducted by a foreign aid organization showed that the KPRP’s party membership stood at around 30,000, with roughly 17,000 candidate members (Vickery, 1986, cited in Vickery, 1994: 108). While the abandonment of the PRPK’s ideological commitment has been commonly perceived by political observers to have been caused by the changing political economic circumstances in the 1980s and 1990s, as this paper argues, its ideological departure was also impacted by “problematic meaning” of Marxism-Leninism” among Cambodian party members. This argument is made, once again, by Michael Vickery, who observes that:

The old generation of PRK/SOC communists, whether of the Vietnam Veteran group or of the KR cadres were never “Marxist-Leninists”. They were first of all, if old enough, independence fighters against the French, then sometimes anti-Sihanoukist guerillas protesting against arbitrary oppression by the police and the military, later fighters against the Khmer Republic, and finally cadres of DK until rejecting Pol Pot and participating with Vietnam in his overthrow. Those intellectuals who might have really read some Marx and Lenin and who joined the guerrillas before 1975 have not survived, except for the handful still active in the DK leadership. Many new PRK cadres at all levels were sent to Vietnam after 1979 for courses of varying lengths, and they all report that part of their

instruction was “Maklenin”, but I never met anyone who had a clear idea of what Marxism-Leninism is, or who cared (Vickery, 1994: 108).

Likewise, Sachsenroder (2012) also shares similar opinions by arguing that the Marxist-Leninist ideology in the KPRP “was not fully understood and sufficiently deep-rooted among the Cambodian clients” (p. 235). A former East German diplomat in Cambodia was also quoted as saying that “the Cambodian counterparts had not understood what Communism was all about. This may explain the easy adoption of market principles and other more liberal features in the new platform of the party” (Ibid). The practice of party membership recruitment, irrespective of ideological commitment, continued to persist throughout the late 1980s and well into the early 1990s; this membership recruitment mechanism had significant bearings on the CPP’s electoral strategy following the Western-imposed multi-party elections in 1993.

The fact that the CPP, as well as other political parties, emerged out of an institutional origin, not out of social origins like in the case of political parties in established democracies, makes it especially difficult for the party to mobilize voters based on its political programs. The weakened ideological commitment of the senior KPRP cadres in the 1980s, coupled with its numerically small party membership and especially its ability to control Cambodia’s political and economic apparatuses during the entire PRK regime, induced the CPP to mobilize voters not based on programs but rather on private, excludable benefits to voters in exchange for their political loyalty in order to compete with other newly-created political parties.

As a party that had been ruling Cambodia largely uncontested since 1979, the CPP now had to compete in an election, which also meant that it needed to mobilize

voters (Hughes, 2003: 59). One year prior to the country's first multi-party national election, the CPP further intensified its membership recruitment efforts and noticeably started to attract mass membership. It was reported that by February 1993, the CPP had recruited almost 2 million party members, thereby enabling the party to expect its members to account for much of the registered voters (Vickery, 1994: 108). It is worth noting here also that the KPRP had never given much, if any, priority to elections during the PRK regime. Although a parliamentary election was held for the first time in 1981, the PRK leadership did not hold the expected second election in 1986, and simply extended the assembly's mandate until 1991 (Gottesman, 2003: 216).

The KPRP's provincial and district committees were still mainly appointed, rather than elected, whereas the appointment of the village chief was generally decided locally (Slocomb, 2003: 63). The KPRP's perception that holding elections was unnecessary was made clear by Chea Sim, who suggested that the party had higher priorities to focus on, rather than wasting money on an expensive election. He said, "To hold an election, we would have to spend a lot of money. We must decide on the economic agenda that the Fifth Party Congress has established; and a system for defending the Thai border must be determined" (Gottesman, 2003: 216). Responding to criticism from a few party members who perceived that the absence of elections could "have a bad effect on politics outside our country," Heng Samrin briefly responded that, "What is important is our actual situation" (Ibid). Not only did Heng Samrin think that elections were unnecessary, he also believed that "a rush into a multi-party political system would cause Cambodia to collapse after the manner of Eastern Europe (Vickery, 1994: 110). Moreover, it was

highly likely that the KPRP leadership was unwilling to share its power with the opposition parties. During a meeting of Prime Minister Hun Sen's Council of Ministers in 1989, Hun Sen said that "If there is a political solution and if opposition politicians came to Cambodia, there should be mutual give-and take. They repay us by recognizing us as the central leader. We repay them by recognizing them as a legal party" (Gottesman, 2003: 306). Given the above evidence, it is easy to conclude that the KPRP, and its successor CPP, did not value the multi-party election system as imposed upon them by the international actors.

As presented in the second chapter, clientelism generally persists in rural areas, where voters prefer immediate, tangible benefits today than uncertain and time-consuming programmatic policies tomorrow (Stokes, 2007; Wantchekon, 2003). Because an overwhelming majority of Cambodian voters live in rural areas and are attracted by clientelistic appeals, Cambodian politicians, especially the ruling CPP, employ populist development projects as their party strategy to compete in elections. The ability of the CPP to perpetuate clientelism among voters has been made possible due to the CPP's and Prime Minister Hun Sen's control on the country's political and economic structures (Un, 2004). Some of the most common strategies used by the CPP to induce voters to vote for the party include offering handouts and local development projects such as constructions of schools, temples, roads, and irrigation systems (Un, 2004: 221).

In trying to assess the CPP's party program or ideology, it is worth investigating the personal traits of Prime Minister Hun Sen, whose power within the party has arguably grown to an unassailable degree. During an interview he gave to Special Correspondent

Dominic Faulder, Hun Sen suggested that people could not clearly identify his political ideology. He was quoted as saying:

Sometimes people wonder what is Hun Sen really. My recall is full of bitter sufferings. When we were in Moscow, we were criticized as liberalists. We were not classified among socialist countries when we were allowed to meet former Soviet leaders. We were classified among developing countries. When we were in Paris, we were called communists. Therefore I always ask myself who I really am. In communist countries I was called a liberalist and in liberal countries I was called a communist. Finally I had to tell myself Hun Sen is Hun Sen. Hun Sen belongs to the Cambodian people (AsiaWeek, n.d).

The “Cambodian people” who Prime Minister Hun Sen refers to in this interview are likely to be “the 9.6 million people- almost 85% of the total population- who live in the countryside” (Slocomb, 2006: 394). Prime Minister Hun Sen’s “flexible ideology” is also observed by Sebastian Strangio, who argues that:

Over the course of his career, Cambodia’s prime minister has played many roles: communist soldier, socialist apparatchik, international statesman, free-market reformer, demagogic demigod. But if Hun Sen’s career has had one constant, it has been his ideological flexibility (Strangio, 2015).

Margaret Slocomb offered an even clearer assessment of political program under the CPP, particularly under Prime Minister Hun Sen. Slocomb asserts that all political regimes in Cambodia prior to 1985, when Hun Sen was officially appointed Prime Minister of the PRK, had “identifiable ideology, to justify its use of state power and to explicate a worldview to which the masses were expected to commit themselves” (Slocomb, 2006: 377). For example, during the People’s Socialist Community (1953-1970), better known as the Sangkum Reastr Niyum, led by the then Prince Sihanouk, the regime’s ideology was developed from Buddhist socialism; in the Khmer Republic (1970-1975), Cambodia adopted “Neo-Khmerism” to take over the throne; during the

Khmer Rouge period (1975-1979), the Khmer Rouge intended to transform Cambodia into “orthodox Marxism” (Slocumb, 2006: 377). Cambodia’s political regime after the collapse of the Khmer Rouge has been widely characterized to be structured by patronage (Gottesman, 2003; Hughes, 2003; Robert, 2001; Un, 2005; Verver and Dahles, 2015).

Clientelism and Value Infusion

In clientelistic parties, value infusion is characterized by “instrumentalist orientation towards parties, rather than more long lasting party loyalty or identification. Party support would be conditional on the expectation of tangible benefits to the individual or community” (Randall and Svasand, 2002: 22). This quote perfectly describes the CPP’s value infusion among its voters. A 2003 survey conducted by the Asia Foundation entitled, *Democracy in Cambodia - 2003*, showed that “most Cambodians do not yet feel very empowered by the democratic process. Cambodians’ attitudes on the electoral process correspond to a clientelist model of politics, in which the role of elections is to select among patrons and make demands upon them” (Asia Foundation, 2003: 43). Two-third of the respondents cited the provision of material benefits as the primary reason for supporting a party, while “keeping the peace” is the second most important motive for voters (Asia Foundation, 2003: 49). The major consequence arising from clientelistic politics in Cambodia is that without distinctive policy platforms, voters are not able to distinguish major policy differences between competing parties. The same survey obviously showed this; it showed that a total of 71% of the respondents “are unable to specify any differences between the parties in the National Assembly”— with 44% of the respondents said they “don’t know if there are

differences between political parties”; 11% said “there are no differences between the parties; and 16% said “there are differences but are unable to specify them” (Asia Foundation, 2003: 48). Eleven years on, in late 2014, another survey conducted by the Asia Foundation entitled, *Democracy in Cambodia - 2014: A Survey of the Cambodian Electorate*, showed similar results. The survey revealed that two third of the respondents, when asked to identify policy differences among parties, were not aware of the policy differences among those parties (Asia Foundation, 2014: 29). It is worth noting however that the CPP, in particular, does have its “Political Platforms” documented in a 37-page Google-documented file, which can be found on its party website (Political Platforms, n.d). Its political platforms feature its historical achievement in “liberating” Cambodia from the Khmer Rouge, reflects its development achievements for the past three decades, and projects its visions of development for the country. Despite its rhetoric-like political platforms, the CPP, as Caroline Hughes (2003) puts it, merely promises, “Lists of principles that amount to buzz-words devoid of real meaning (p. 126). The survey findings illustrated above expressly suggest that political parties in Cambodia have yet to be able to articulate their clear programmatic policies to voters because voters have constantly been courted to vote for a party, especially for the ruling CPP, based on clientelistic appeals. While one may ask why the CPP “should care” about the inability of voters to identify its party platforms when it can simply capitalize upon its access to state resources to deliver clientelistic benefits, it is nonetheless important to try to answer this question.

Although clientelism can be an effective strategy to mobilize voters at the polls, its extensive use by a party can yield negative ramifications for the party, especially in the long run. It is logical to assume that voters, whose loyalty and partisanship to a political party is not motivated by the party's programmatic policies, but instead by clientelistic offerings, are likely to stop voting for that party when they are no longer attracted to the offers, *ceteris paribus*. If this assumption holds true, it would subsequently translate to an unstable voter base. In the case of Cambodia, the patronage politics, which, until the last election in July 2013, had worked well for the CPP in mobilizing electoral support to win elections, had shockingly weakened the CPP's electoral base of support. Despite repeated claims of electoral irregularities by both the opposition party and the civil society organizations, the 2013 election witnessed the CPP's National Assembly seats drastically reduced from 90 (out of the entire 123 seats) in 2008 to 68 in 2013 with the remaining 55 seats being scored by the opposition party, the Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP), a merging coalition between the two prominent opposition parties, the Sam Rainsy Party (SRP) and the Human Rights Party (HRP) (The Cambodia Daily, 2013). While the main causes of the CPP's electoral decline in the last election can be explained by a number of factors, ranging from the changing social demographic of voters, the role of social networking sites, particularly of Facebook, and the waning effectiveness of the CPP's 7-January political rhetoric, a rather subtle explanation underneath the CPP's electoral defeat is that its clientelistic strategies do not yield as much fruit as they used to. The cost of its extensive reliance on patronage politics for electoral success and leadership legitimacy thus far has now started to affect its voter

base. Corruption, nepotism, inefficient public service deliveries, environmental degradation, social injustice, wide economic inequalities, are among some of the most damaging results of the CPP's patronage politics. The CPP's potential electoral clients, both old and new, who now have to suffer both directly and indirectly from the problems mentioned above, have resisted against the CPP's clientelistic appeals, and have voted against the party, as the last election results clearly indicated.

CONCLUSION

More than two decades after the first election in post-conflict/post-authoritarian regime, the institutionalization of Cambodia's political parties remains largely uneven, with the CPP being the only party with a stable structure and organization. This thesis argues that the CPP's higher degree of party institutionalization since 1993 is to a large extent attributed to the party origin or the historical legacies of the CPP, being the former hegemonic party during the authoritarian PRK regime. Through the entire PRK regime, the KPRP's party apparatus had been well embedded in Cambodia's state bureaucracy. The inheritance before the election of the CPP's organizational, human, and financial resources from the KPRP invariably allows the CPP to institutionalize its party organization and strengthen its political forces. As much as how party origin determined the institutionalization of the CPP, other political parties—including the rebel-turned-parties of the CGDK and the subsequent parties emerged in the ensuing periods such as the Sam Rainsy Party (SRP), the Human Rights Party (HRP), and the newly-merged party of the two, the Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP)—were also influenced by their party origin. Almost immediately after the Paris Peace Accords (PPA) in 1991, the rebel-turned parties were immediately granted with parliamentary status to be transformed into full-fledged political parties. Because of a lack of organizational, human, and financial capacities, and coupled with the CPP's dominant control on state and security apparatuses, these parties were not able to solidify their existence. In particular, the FUNCINPEC Party, despite being the electoral victor in the first election, had been sidelined by the CPP and eventually completely lost all of its National

Assembly seats after the fifth national election in 2013. Meanwhile, the SRP and the HRP, prior to their merger in 2012, despite receiving noticeable electoral shares and somewhat structured organizations, had been weakly institutionalized. They are still dominated not only by personalistic control of the party leaders but also by the lack of organizational autonomy due to their reliance on political and financial contributions from external sources, including Cambodian diaspora communities, and local and international non-governmental organizations (Zeeuw, 2009). The only relevant party in Cambodia after the 2013 election is the newly-merged Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP), the political coalition between the SRP and the HRP. Although the CNRP appeared to be a credible challenge to the CPP's political dominance in the electoral politics, it is still too early to determine the extent of political institutionalization of this new party, given its sheer newness in Cambodia's party system.

The mechanism through which the CPP has institutionalized its party and solidified its power has been through its dense network of patronage which developed mainly after Cambodia's transition to the market economy and further intensified following its complete seizure of power after the 1997 coup. Through the platform of party financing and clientelistic voting, the well-financed CPP can attract overwhelming support from rural electorates through its infrastructure projects which are bankrolled by the CPP's Oknha clients. Although this is not mentioned previously in this thesis, it is worth pointing out also that the legitimacy of the CPP's regime has also been brought for by Cambodia's stunning economic growth for the past decade as well as by the CPP's ability to court foreign powers for aid and investment (Ear, 2011; Strangio, 2014).

Although the roles of historical legacies have given the CPP ready access to state resources from its ascendancy in public office, the institutionalization of the CPP has also appeared fluid, when assessed in terms of its value infusion and party autonomy. Through its extensive reliance on clientelism, the CPP has not been able to establish distinct political programs as part of the party's identity, thereby subjecting the CPP's electoral base to rapid decline following external shocks, as evidently shown during the 2013 election results. However, it is important to point out explicitly that the use of clientelism within the CPP has also inversely strengthened its two other dimensions of party institutionalization: systemness and reification. Nonetheless, the mere strength of these dimensions does not sufficiently contribute to an effective institutionalization of the CPP because a well-structured party apparatus and a constant appearance of the party in voters' minds do not lead to strong value infusion and party autonomy.

The 2013 election, which for the first time in history saw the CPP's National Assembly seats significantly decline, implicitly suggests that Cambodia's electoral field is not completely tilted towards the CPP, and that there is room for hope, however small. Although it is still too early to judge the degree of party institutionalization of the CNRP, it is more than certain that today's voters, who mostly are post-Khmer Rouge baby-boomers, are better educated, more aware of and more involved in Cambodia's social and political affairs than are their parents and grandparents, and especially they are less attracted to clientelistic appeals due to their higher demands from the government.

Although the demographic shift of Cambodian electorates is particularly promising for Cambodia's electoral democracy, further improvement is needed in order

to ensure an irreversible trajectory. Experiences from other countries with similar situations, for instance in Indonesia— where party politics after the New World Order had been dominated by the Golkar Party, at least until 2004— suggest that an embarkation of the “de-institutionalization” of the hegemonic party can be a valuable asset to weakening the dominance of the ruling party. However, in Cambodia, the big question remains whether and, if so, how the de-institutionalization of the CPP can be made possible.

The injection of “young bloods” into the CPP’s Central Committee during its last Party Congress in early 2015 can controversially be justified as the beginning process of the de-institutionalization of the CPP. However, this rapid expansion of the Central Committee members has been sharply criticized not only for its nepotistic nature, but also for the continuous concentration of the party’s decision-making power in the Permanent Committee, whose membership is still mainly comprised of the old, revolutionary cadres. Therefore, further examination of the possibility and potential constraints of this de-institutionalization process shall be undertaken.

At the time of the writing of this thesis (late April, 2015), Cambodia’s political climate has reached a remarkable level, where the political “honeymoon” between the CPP and the CNRP, particularly between Prime Minister Hun Sen and H.E Sam Rainsy, has arguably developed to an unprecedented degree (Turton, 2015). Despite some skepticism from political observers and analysts, this development has gone so far to a point where Prime Minister Hun Sen indirectly hinted the possibility of the CPP losing future elections. During their joint-trip to Malaysia, where PM Hun Sen and CNRP

President Sam Rainsy met with Cambodian students and workers, PM Hun Sen made a rare comment to Sam Rainsy, asking Sam Rainsy not to “mistreat” him if, and when, the opposition party one day comes to power (Sokchea, 2015). Regardless of whether this political honeymoon is actually merely a show or a pure political maturity, one big challenging question, which deserves specific attention, is whether there could be a possibility of an “old wine in a new bottle” scenario in Cambodian politics when the CNRP one day assumes power. As this thesis suggests, the ability of the CPP to secure loyalty from its party members has been through patronage politics. These party members, especially the business elites, align with the CPP due primarily to their easy access to public resources. Therefore, given this power relationship, whether these same people would switch their political allegiance to the CNRP and finance the party the way they did with the CPP, and, most importantly, whether the CNRP would let this happen, remain open questions. If this scenario actually materializes, which, given the experiences from other countries, is not unlikely, the enduring practice of clientelism in Cambodia would simply be revitalized, with power simply changing hands. In that case, the old wine would simply get transferred into a new bottle.

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