

## **Abstract**

The objective of this project is to study the affect that international organizations have had on Cambodia through the development aid that they provided for Cambodia through the years. The understanding of influence and international institutions is in this project based on the hegemonic theory formulated by Robert Cox.

Given that coxian hegemonic theory is amongst the less used theories in the studies of international relations it has not been used as much for the study of development. This project therefore provides the study a new insight into the study of development and how international institutions affect the countries they are engaged in.

Cambodia is a country that has seen several crisis situations in the past couple of decades since independence from the French empire. Following the independence Cambodia was formed as a UN protectorate. In its current condition the Kingdom of Cambodia is in a situation where it to a large extent depends on aid from more developed nations. This fact has resulted in the current situation where Cambodia sees a vast amount of aid coming in from the developed world. It is this situation that the project seeks to shed light on.

The project works with the assumption that the Hegemonic force that dominates the international system was formed by the USA and is characterized by a neo-liberal ideology. By this assumption the current world system as well as the ideas that form this system are formed by the USA and the ideas of the dominant social group in this country. Thus the organizations that carry out development assistance in this system are guided by this ideology.

The analysis focuses on three organizations operating in Cambodia: the United Nations Development Programme, the World Trade Organization and the Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights in Cambodia and the World Trade Organization. These three organizations have been selected because they each symbolize a different element of the neo-liberal hegemonic system.

It is therefore the intent of this project to expand the knowledge of development work by utilizing a lesser used theory. The data that is collected will in the analysis be divided into ideas, material capabilities and institutional influence. This method, outlined by Robert Cox, effectively

## Cambodian Institutions in Change – A Study in Hegemonic Influence

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Jesper Rytter Sørensen

divides the analysis up in a way that ensures that the researcher can view development aid as a spread of ideas rather than just a method for poverty alleviation.

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## **Acronyms**

**LDC:** Least Developed Country

**IO:** International Organization

**MFN:** Most Favored Nation

**NGO:** Non Government Organization

**OHCHR:** Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights

**RGC:** Royal Government of Cambodia's

**UN:** United Nations

**UNDP:** United Nations Development Project

**UNTAC:** United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia

**USA:** United States of America

**WC:** Washington Consensus

**WTO:** World Trade Organizations

## **Problem field**

### ***Introduction***

The idea that some states should receive development aid from other comparatively developed states goes back to former president of the United States Harry Truman. In his inaugural address in 1949 he stated that the development of LDC's is tied to the United States national interests; that the security of the United States depended on the development of less developed countries. Since then development of LDC's has come a long way with many organizations involved in the business and all first world nations and some developing nations contributing to the development of the less developed countries.

Given that development aid is awarded to so many countries by primarily western countries and organizations it would be interesting to analyze how the aid affects these countries. For the purpose of this project I have therefore chosen one country on which to perform just such an analysis. Cambodia stands out in the world as a country that has experienced some of the most turbulent events in modern history. From the massacres of the Khmer Rouge in the seventies to the unsuccessful war against Vietnam and the subsequent civil war and interim UN government Cambodia has experienced many problems that have resulted in a state that is dependent on the outside world for a large part of its economy. This unique history means that Cambodia is nearly optimal for an economic analysis of the country's development through the years.

Due to the fact that Cambodia has such a colorful history and interesting present I consider it to be an excellent subject for study. The reason for this is that the country's recent history means that the Cambodian people have been through such a turbulent period that their entire political system has been shattered. This would logically also mean that the civil society, understood as non government organizations (NGO) and similar interest groups have been damaged by recent events.

The Cambodian state has existed in its current form since the early 1990ies when the United Nations formed a protectorate after a long period political instability (state). In this environment the Cambodian state as we now see it was formed with the help of foreign institutions. The current Cambodian state has a presents a good framework for development assistance and indeed the country has a quite large amount of development organizations

currently involved in the country (DevDir).

Cambodia is an interesting choice for an analysis because of the youth of the state as well as the considerable amount of aid the country has received over the years. Having come out of a highly turbulent period including a bloodthirsty regime, the Khmer rouge, a military intervention from the neighboring Vietnam and a subsequent civil war, the country has been eager to receive aid from the outside world (CIA1). This combined with the sheer amount of aid the country has received since the birth of the state, development assistance constituted just shy of \$1.000.000.000 in the year 2008(UN1). The sheer amount of development aid organizations that operate within the country is a testament to how great a role that development assistance plays within the country. Thus the country has received a considerable amount of aid from the developed countries over the years. Since Cambodia receives such a large amount of money in aid from foreign countries and international organizations arguably they are also under a large amount of influence from these actors. It is however interesting to research to what extent these international actors influence the institutions of Cambodia. This is the purpose of this project, to analyze how and to which extent foreign influence and aid has affected the institutions in Cambodia.

The economic situation in Cambodia has however improved in recent times as the national industry has expanded primarily in the garment sector, the nations education has likewise increased considerably. However this increase on jobs and education has corresponded with a considerable increase in the nations fertility rate meaning that there is still a high rate of unemployment as well as illiteracy. This is a fact which Cambodia has in common with other less developed countries: A large supply in labor and a small supply of capital (Shenoy, 1991: p.13).

The thing about development aid is that it will often come at a price in the sense that the aid giving agents will expect the recipients to live up to certain demands to change their institutions. These changes will inevitably be based on how institutions are structured in the countries that the aid giving agencies come from, thus the state institutions of the recipient country will be naturally affected by the aid giving nations. I find this situation quite interesting because it presents an interesting question: How much will the recipient country accept change to it's institutions and how does this affect the national institutions?

Analyzing how this aid has affected Cambodian institutions and civil society will be interesting since Cambodian civil society and civil service has been almost a blank slate since the

government collapsed and the UN moved in to establish a provisional government. The fact that the Cambodian state has been subject to foreign influence basically since its inception makes it a great subject to study the effects of foreign aid on the institutions of a state as well as the civil society of a nation.

The purpose of this project is thus to analyze how the aid from foreign agents have and do influence the institutions of Cambodia. To this extent I find that coxian hegemony theory is ideal as it provides a holistic approach to analyze how international institutions affect and are themselves affected by countries. The strength of this theory rests in the fact that it allows the researcher to view the influence of outside actors on the institutions of the country from a holistic structural perspective. For the purpose of this project this means that I will be viewing the Cambodian society as a whole and therefore be analyzing the influence of foreign institutions on Cambodian society from a more general perspective.

## ***Problem Formulation***

The problem formulation of the project will therefore be as follows:

***How has the aid organizations affected the structure of Cambodian institutions?***

## ***Definitions***

For the purpose of this thesis I understand the term development as meaning aid granted to less developed countries by transnational organizations and developed countries with the intent of raising the standard of living for the people living in the countries. Thus this project is not interested in researching different types of development theory specifically, but rather how the aid provided to less developed nations by outside entities. As such this project understands development aid as the act of a great variety of different actors, including states, IO's, civil society and so forth, providing aid to less developed countries with the intent of helping them to attain a greater level of prosperity, administrative efficiency or other more specific goals.

While I operate with this understanding of development aid, it should be remembered that I

am not studying the affect of development in relation to how it affects poverty in Cambodia. Rather this project is dedicated to studying how development assistance affects the institutions of the Cambodian state.

When I am talking about institutions in Cambodia I am referring to the national administrative system as well as the system of laws that said administrative system oversees. Thus I take a more take a wider view of the Cambodian national system ensuring that the project gain a broad insight into the effect of the hegemonic influence on Cambodia through the analysis.

The concept of Less Developed Countries (LDC) is more complex. The nature of less developed countries and what characterizes them in relation to developed states has been subject to rigorous debate amongst scholars working on the subject. For the purpose of this project I will be using the theories of Sudha R. Shenoy. He argues that the concept of underdeveloped nations itself implies a negative definition since the the very term “underdeveloped” implies the existence of developed countries these being what is commonly refered to as the western world. Shenoy does however recognize the weakness of this definition. To this extent he argues that lumping nations this much together ignores the differences, both cultural and economic, that exists between the nations. As Shenoy puts it “Thus the LDCs are thrown into the one category *not* because they have something positively in common, but because they do *not*: They all *lack* what the developed countries have” (Shenoy, 1991: p.2).

The basic understanding of development aid is that developed nations should help less developed nations to build up their economies. The ultimate goal of this would be to reach the same level of prosperity as the more developed countries and thus alleviate the poverty that the population in these countries suffer from.

Thus when I talk about LDC's in this project the definition that I use is referring to a relative concept. The concept of LDC's is therefore based on a relative definition that relates to their relative economic situation compared to Developed Countries. This makes the definition fairly elastic, however it also makes it simpler: Cambodia is not an LDC because of a specific internal condition, but because of it's poverty compared to more developed countries.

When I refer to neo-liberalism I am referring to the world view that free market liberalism and democratic rule of law are the optimal forms of governance. Thus when I talk of the neo-liberal hegemonic system I am talking about the international institutions governed by this neo-liberal



ideal. The concept of hegemony will be elaborated in the Theory chapter.

## **Methodology**

### ***Project Structure***

I will in the following section explain the method that I will employ to analyze the problem stated in the previous section. The approach of the project will be elaborated and I will stipulate the key points of the analysis.

The chapters will be structured logically so that I will begin with a description and problematization of the subject at hand. Thus I have in the preceding chapter, the problem field, detailed the problem that forms the foundation for this project and which I intend to answer through the analysis and ultimately in the conclusion. The description of the problem field furthermore provides my definition of underdeveloped countries and a discussion of how this definition relates to my problem. This is meant to give the reader a better idea of what the goal of the project is.

Following the methodology-chapter I will provide a thorough description of Robert Cox' Neo-Gramscian hegemony theory. The purpose of this section is to provide the reader with an in depth understanding of the theory that will be used to analyze the problem at hand. This particular theory has been selected for use in this project since it provides the researcher with an excellent framework for studying how civil society and national institutions are affected by international institutions. The strength of Coxian hegemony theory is that it provides the researcher with a structural approach to the problem at hand, allowing for a broad view of the subject. This is a particular strength since I have chosen to research a problem dealing with exactly how international organizations affect the structure of Cambodia's national institutions. It is my opinion that it is therefore the best theory to use for the purpose of theoretical analysis.

Leading up to the analysis I will be providing a brief walkthrough of the recent historical events leading to the Cambodian society we see today. This is meant to provide the reader with a with an introduction to the analysis and to give the reader an idea of the historical context of the current situation in the interest of providing a more enlightened understanding not only of the development of cultural hegemony in Cambodia, but also of it's historical context. This historical section will furthermore provide the reader with an insight into the historical events that led to the current structure of American neo-liberal hegemony as well as an insight into how this hegemony

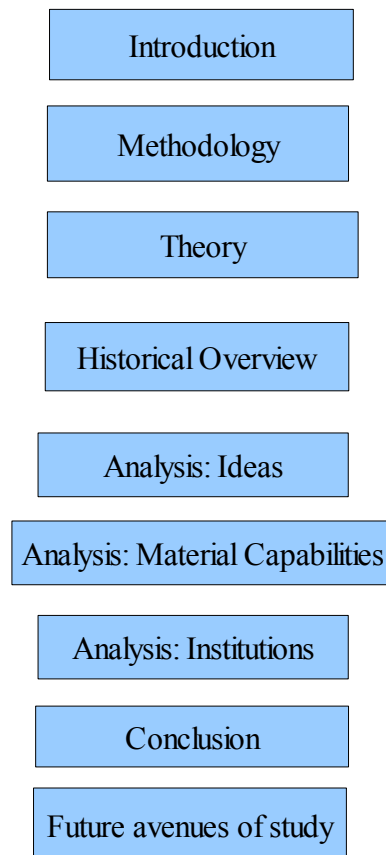
has developed across the years.

The analysis itself will be divided into three parts in the interest of making the structure of the analysis more logical and tangible. Since the problem formulation that I will be operating with requires me to analyze several parts of Cambodian society it is wisest for me to divide the analysis into multiple parts. The three parts are based on the analytical method that Robert Cox specified in his theory (Cox, 1996: p. 98). They will be further defined in the theoretical operationalization that follows the theoretical discussion.

The analysis will deal with government institutions, how they have been formed and how they have developed since their inception. The purpose of this chapter is to provide an analysis of how the government institutions have developed since Cambodia's independence and how international institutions have affected this development. For the purpose of this chapter I will focus on education, crime fighting and industry. These three sectors have been selected since they represent three areas that are focussed rather heavily on amongst the international organizations that operate in Cambodia. For this purpose it will be necessary to study the relevant ministries and which programmes which these ministries have going with international organizations. The international organizations I will be looking into include various UN agencies that operate within Cambodia as well as bilateral agreements that Cambodia has with other countries.

The final conclusion will wrap up the salient points made in each individual analysis and relate it to the problem formulation with the intent to answer it as best possible.

## Project map:



## ***Theoretical discussion***

In this thesis I have chosen to focus on one theory since I consider that it gives me a sufficiently strong approach to the subject at hand so that I can thoroughly analyze the problem at the core of this project. Since I am using a structural theory to analyze this problem I will be taking a broad view of the subject that other theories in my opinion would not grant me.

The fact that I focus on one theory does however put certain limitations on the project since it means that I will be limited to the bounds of that theory. This means that the project will have the logical limitation that anything that the theory does not touch upon cannot be discussed in the analysis. It furthermore means that I exclude myself from the process of theoretical triangulation, the process of utilizing multiple theories with the intent of finding multiple answers and then using these answers to pinpoint the solution to the problem at hand.

I do however consider the current method of using a single theory to analyze the problem

to be sufficient. The strength of this theory, relative to that of triangulation is that I can analyze more in depth when I use only one theory. Thus the analysis will be using coxian hegemonic theory and no other theory.

For the purpose of this project I will be employing deductive reasoning. Deductive reasoning means following a general assumption to a specific logical consequence of this assumption (Bitch & Olesen, 2003: p. 314). In the case of this project that means utilizing Coxian hegemonic theory to analyze specific facts to draw logical conclusions. What this means is that our empirical data will be defined by the theory utilized. This does however also cause the distinct disadvantage that I will be unable to analyze factors that fall outside the domain of the theory.

The distinct weakness of utilizing deductive reasoning and the fact that it limits the explanatory strength of the project to the selected theory is that I willfully limit the width of the project (Flyvbjerg, 2004: p. 5). However I consider this to be an acceptable limitation since the strength of deductive reasoning is that it gives the researcher some strict parameters to work with thus allowing the researcher some very specific conclusions based on the material at hand. This means that the validity of the study is strong since the theory itself provides the researcher with the tools he needs to answer the problem at hand. Conversely if the researcher was to take a more ad hoc approach to the subject at hand there would be a greater risk that the project would become too broad and thus the problem wouldn't be answered satisfactorily.

Ultimately coxian hegemonic theory simply lends itself better to deductive reasoning since Robert Cox himself views academia as a critical field rather than a practical one. Cox views the field of academics as fundamentally different from that of practicing development. For practitioners of development the immediacy and problems that require an instant response necessitate a relatively short term view of the world compared to that of a critical scholar. Cox asserts that to these practitioners of development problem-solving theory must take precedence as it allows the practitioner to reach the goals of solving problems within the parameters set by the dominant social order (Cox, 1994: p. 101). In this framework the present is taken as given and focus on how to solve particular problems within the existing order of the world is therefore naturally based on how the system that exists are currently structured and not how they came to be. On the other hand, the task of Critical Theory should be to consider longer-term change, by standing back from the existing order of things to question how that order came to being, how it might be changing, and how that change may be affected and channeled. Cox thus views the critical theory as being one which deals with structural issues rather than practical ones, and it is this approach that this

project is dedicated to following.

The project follows a case study approach. This means that the project deals with a specific case which itself relates to a specific point in time. Case studies have often been criticized because you can't generalize based on a single case (Flyvbjerg, 2004: p.1). This could be a major concern, but the purpose of this study is not so much to perform a detailed study on how development aid affects recipient countries in general. This study is rather dedicated to studying how Cambodia as a state, which was formed as a UN protectorate, has been affected by outside influence. Thus I am not seeking to perform a study that can be generalized to all aid recipient countries, but rather to analyze a specific case where international aid donor organizations have had a direct hand in the formation of of a state with the intent to gain insight into how this influence has affected the political structure of the Cambodian state.

While considering the argument against case studies one must also consider the fact that case studies deal with data in the context of its immediate environment whereas theoretically dictated and defined analysis inevitably raises the data from its contextual environment and analyzes it in a predefined manner (Flyvbjerg, 2004: p.2). While this project will base its analytical approach on a theoretical framework I will be working with the data in its contextual environment, thus achieving a mixture of the two.

In terms of the project at hand a theoretically based case study is a strong basis for the approach to the subject matter. I consider this to be the case since Cambodia's history is so unique. This means that a more general approach might actually detract from the usefulness of the findings. Since a general approach to a specific problem will logically fail to see nuances in the issue at hand a dedicated case study will provide a better view of the situation in the country.

In terms of this project it therefore means that the project will have elements of both types of study. While this ensures that the project doesn't become too theoretical by giving it a grounding it in a factual case. It does however mean that there may be some elements of the case that will inevitably be overlooked since the empirical data is defined by the coxian hegemonic theory.

## Theory

This section is dedicated to discussing and elaborating coxian hegemony theory, the theory that I have selected to serve as the analytical basis of this project.

### ***Antonio Gramsci***

Robert Cox bases his theory of hegemony on the method Antonio Gramsci stipulated in his collected works known as the "prison notebooks"(Cox, 1996: 124). Antonio Gramsci, himself was a Marxist theorist, based his studies on the question of why the communist revolution hadn't occurred in western countries according to Karl Marx' predictions as it had in Russia. To this point Gramsci argued that there in the western world exists a hegemonic system created by the ruling class which enforces and reproduces the notion that the current system is the natural situation. Thus, while hegemony in international context is usually used to refer to one states dominance over another, regionally or globally, the gramscian understanding of the term rather refers to the dominance of one idea over another, usually to the benefit of certain social classes in relation to another. This definition had been used previously under the third International in the sense that "the workers exercised hegemony over allied classes and dictatorship over enemy classes"; meaning that the workers led an alliance of classes against the oppressing classes (Cox, 1996: 126). Gramsci however turned this definition around and argued that it was the bourgeoisie that led such a hegemony over other classes. The objective of Gramscian hegemony theory is as such to describe this how this hegemony takes form in society. How the bourgeoisie leads this hegemony.

The hegemony that Gramsci describes acts not only through the state, but also through nonstate actors for example the churches, the media, the educational institutions and so on (Cox, 1996: 126). These institutions produce and reproduce the values and ideals of the leading bourgeoisie so efficiently that they become common sense to the lower classes who would otherwise revolt against the status quo. Thus the hegemony operates not only by the upper class teaching their values, but it's actually become a part of the overall culture. It exists as part in the accepted societal morality, in the religious values and in the political environment.

The hegemony that the upper classes hold over culture and values is usually enough to legitimize their power over the people of the nation by means of acceptance. This power, purveyed by the upper classes through civil society, constituted by afore mentioned churches, educational

institutions, media and so on, constitutes the structure of any given society, called the “historic bloc”. Historic bloc refers to the structure of the society, the economic base of the society, the cultural flows that are current and the political system that exists within it. In order to account for and analyze the current historic bloc it isn't enough to simply study one element of it isolated, instead it is necessary to take a holistic approach when dealing with the historic bloc. In other words to view the structure of the hegemony as a whole in order to establish a thorough picture of the society.

The Gramscian definition of power is similar to that employed by Machiavelli. Machiavelli who describes power as a centaur: Where the centaur is half man, half beast, Machiavelli sees power as half coercion, half consent. In other words no matter how much force you utilize, if people don't accept your power it is all for naught(Cox, 1996: 127). In regards to society, Gramsci argues that the coercion will always be latent and only used in marginal cases, it is the consent that gives the upper class power.

The historic bloc itself is by no means a historical constant and is indeed in a state of constant change because of the dialectic relationship that exists in all of society. The factors that affect the historic bloc are numerous, but include class relations, the structure of the economy, and so forth (Cox, 1987: 389). In addition to this the factors that make up the historic bloc are also more or less fluent as indeed the structure of class relations themselves are formed as an integral part of the historic bloc and as such not a fact of nature. The historic bloc is as such the system of society and not the state itself though it should be noted that it is entirely possible for the society to change without it affecting the historic bloc in what is known as *passive revolution* (Cox, 1996: p. 137).

While social institutions produce and reproduce the values and ideals of the upper class they also have another tool at their disposal. In what Gramsci calls *Transformismo* hegemonic institutions will incorporate critics into their structure (Cox, 1996: p. 139). Transformismo is defined as the act of incorporating leaders of opposing organizations or parties into the hegemonic system, thus neutralizing their revolutionary potential. This mechanism ensures the resilience and longevity of the hegemony since it allows the hegemony to incorporate opposing leaders who might otherwise threaten it's dominance. By incorporating the outside opponents into the hegemonic structure their revolutionary potential is essentially nullified because they are allowed to integrate some of their ideals into the hegemonic structure in a more docile fashion.



## **Robert Cox**

The aim of Robert Cox is to raise Antonio Gramsci's theory to the international level. To this purpose he shares Gramsci's views of hegemony, he simply states that hegemony on the international sphere is the dominant system at the time. The primary difference between Gramsci and Cox is as such that where Gramsci points to national institutions as the purveyors of hegemonic ideals Cox points to international institutions as the ones that perform this operation on an international level (Cox, 1996: 135).

Cox posits that the strongest states in the international sphere maintain the status-quo, benefiting themselves, through hegemonic systems. This means, Cox argues, that the hegemonic ideals are transferred from the core countries, those that are strongest and have already adopted the hegemonic ideals, to the periphery, the developing countries that have yet to adopt these ideals. For this purpose Robert Cox uses the Gramscian term *passive revolution* to describe the process. Thus Coxian passive revolution is basically where periphery countries gradually adapt to the economic, social and political conditions of core countries or in some cases have them thrust upon them (Cox, 1996: 129).

Given that hegemony goes from Core countries to periphery countries it is understood that hegemony is always that which has already been adopted by these countries and which these countries have incorporated into their social structure through the international institutions established by the core countries through the states of the periphery countries. In order for an international hegemony to be established it is however necessary for there to be a state strong enough to have global reach in order for there to be created international institutions with sufficient power to impose the hegemony of the core states upon the periphery countries. Thus the international hegemony is effectively the international expression of the national hegemony of the core states (Cox, 1996: 137).

As specified earlier, Cox mainly deals with a system of international organizations which he describes as the “process through which the institutions and [the hegemony's] ideology are developed” (Cox, 1996: 137). Cox describes the features of the organization as such:

*“1. The institutions embody the rules which facilitate the expansion of*

*hegemonic world orders*

2. *They are themselves the product of a hegemonic world order*
3. *They ideologically legitimize the norms of the world order*
4. *They co-opt the elite of the peripheral countries*
5. *They absorb counter hegemonic ideas” (Cox, 1996: 138)*

When the international organization is established it will be only be at the initiative of core countries , or at least with their consent. The core country will then ensure the peripheral countries consent, this is done in a hierarchical manner, the second tier countries will be consulted first and more peripheral countries second (Cox, 1996: 138). The distribution of power is balanced either with relatively more power for the core countries or with power balanced evenly between the participating countries. There is furthermore an informal structure reflecting the different levels of real political and economic power. It is these informal power structures which underlie the formal procedures for decisions.

As on a national level, transformismo exists in the international sphere. Robert Cox describes it as the way in which international organizations co-opt local talent from the peripheral countries who come with the intent to change the organization from within, but end up working within the structures of the passive revolution. They are at best able to transfer elements of modernization to the periphery countries, though within the interests of the local powers (Cox, 1996: 139). Transformismo also makes it is less likely that a structure capable of wresting power from the hegemonic system is established.

The local elite will already have been co-opted into the existing hegemony and are as such not available to lead such counter-hegemony. Not only are the leaders not available to lead a counter-hegemonic structure, but their ideas will typically be coopted along with them in a more docile and acceptable form, thus ensuring the stability of the hegemonic system.

### ***Critique of Coxian Hegemony***

I will in this section introduce the reader to the critique that other academics have leveled at the chosen theory. The purpose of this critique is to give the reader a better understanding of the limitations of the theory and thereby also a better grasp of the purpose and direction of this project.

One of the most common critiques directed at Robert Cox's theory of hegemony is that the roots of his understanding of hegemony stem from Antonio Gramsci's world view. The argument is that Gramsci's theory of hegemony is historically grounded in Gramsci's own era and that it therefore cannot be generalized beyond fascist Italy in which Gramsci lived (Berry, p.5). John Bellamy argues that Gramsci did not comment on the world system as a whole, but rather focused on the internal situation in Italy at the time, by this logic he argues that, since the original Gramscian hegemony theory does not directly address globalization. Coxian hegemony theory which is based in Gramscian methodology is therefore not valid since it is based in a specific time frame and is therefore not a universal theory (Germain & Kenny, p. 3). The claim that Coxian hegemony theory is not universally applicable is a serious claim since the validity of a social scientific theory rests in whether or not it is universally applicable.

Another critique of Coxian hegemony theory is that the strength in the world order should not be found in a complex interaction of cultural values and ideological ideas, but rather in the inherent economic strength of the market capitalistic system (Bieler & Morton). The critique argues that by looking for historic blocs constructed by ideas and values you run the risk of building up a idealist account of economic policy and thus undermining the principle of economic materialism which forms the core of marxist teachings.

Kenny and Germain argue that Cox holds a 'simplistic' understanding of global neo-liberal hegemony. They claim that the idea that the hegemony is saturated via a combination of multinational agencies and hegemonic empowerment is not holistic (Berry, p.25). He further argues that the very idea of hegemony is problematic to measure. If there truly is such a thing as a neo-liberalist hegemonic project, how would you go about measuring its influence? Likewise, as Cox incorporates World Systems Theory, he opens his theory up to the same criticisms as the said theory.

Leo Panitch's criticism of the Coxian hegemony theory is based on his argument that the theory creates a view that is too top down. He argues that Coxian theory views globalization as an outside-in process, in other words that globalization goes from the global to the national. His criticism is that the theory thus misses the level that goes between the global and the local (Bieler & Morton).

While I recognize that the above mentioned scholars bring entirely valid criticism to bear

against coxian hegemony theory I nevertheless consider this theory to be the most valid theory for the problem at hand. Since the object of this project is to assess aid agencies power to influence Cambodian national institutions and civil society I find that Coxian hegemony theory provides the optimal framework for analyzing the problem at hand. I find that the Coxian hegemonic theory provides an approach which avoids the Gramscian pitfall, mentioned earlier, of generalizing a specific historical situation into a major theory. As such I have chosen Coxian hegemony theory as the theory for this project.

### ***History of the American Hegemony***

I will in this section give a brief overview of how the world system that Robert Cox collectively calls "Pax Americana" came into existence.

The American Hegemony was forged out of the period following the second world war after Great Britain was incapable of sustaining the hegemony which they had until then managed to sustain. Previous to the current pax Americana the world had seen a period of British hegemony, though this was ended after two world wars and the great depression. Great Britain had simply sustained too great damage following two world wars to maintain their empire let alone their hegemonic status in the world.

Following the second world war the USA found itself in a position where it was the strongest state in the world by far. The American economy alone accounted for almost half the global output and was running enormous surpluses not to mention that the American economy accounted for the vast majority of credit in the world (Patrick). The American industry was at this time unharmed by the war whereas the rest of the industrialized world was ravaged by war meaning that the USA was the only country that could re-supply the defeated countries (Milner 2008, p. 185). This in addition to the fact that the USA was the sole nuclear power in the period following the second world war meant that the USA was in a prime position to assume the position of world hegemon (Patrick).

The economic and political system that grew out of this period is commonly known as the Bretton Woods system and includes such institutions as the UN system, the IMF and the World Bank. The US plays a significant role in all these institutions and as in the case of the IMF commands a veto vote (Wallerstein, 2008: p. 213).

The WTO started off as the GATT, General Agreement on Tarrifs and Trade, and was signed into effect in Geneva, Switzerland. The main purpose of this organization was to further the liberalization of world trade. The GATT conducted eight rounds of talks dedicated to addressing various trade issues and resolving international trade disputes. After seven years of negotiations in the 1980'ies and 1990'ies the Uruguay Round was held. The result of this round wasan agreement to reduce trade barriers and to create more comprehensive and enforceable world trade rules. The final result of these negotiations was the creation of the WTO which was formed as a result of this agreement on January 1, 1995 (Duke). Since it's inception the WTO has served as a forum for debating economic liberalism and the washington consensus. Both those who endorse and those who oppose the Washington Consensus find place to voice their opinions of the agreement here.

A further example of American command over the world system is the Washington Consensus(WC) formed in 1989 by the US government along with the World Bank and IMF. This agreement has formed a guideline for developing countries pointing in the direction of privatization of industries and institutions, financial deregulation and reductions of trade barriers as a method of development (Wittkopf, 2008: p. 567).

The Washington Consensus has its roots during the peak of Reagan and Thatcher's dual reign as international advocates of neo-liberalism in the 1980ies. The WC has since the signing of the agreement come to symbolize the belief of key opinion-formers that global welfare would be maximized by the universal application of neoclassical-economic policies, which favor a minimalist state and an enhanced role for the market(Baylis & Smith, 2008: p. 588). Significantly, since the 1990's the WC has dominated the creation of policies in global governance institutions such as the IMF and World Bank and can thus be understood as an essential part of the post-1945 system(Paloni & Zanardi, 2006: p. 115). It can be argued that because of the WC, US hegemony has been bolstered in that a set of principles on global governance, preferable to US interests, have been utilized within international institutions.

Throughout the history of the American hegemony it has seen several setbacks. The USA's first war following the second world war was the Korean war fought between the USA and the Republic Korea on one side and Peoples Democratic Republic of Korea on the other side, later joined by the Peoples Republic of China. It began on 25 June 1950 when North Korea crossed the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel. Following this aggression from North Korea the UN security council both

condemned the aggression and called for "police action" against North Korea (Answers.com). This is the first example of the UN system being used to suppress the spread of counterhegemonic ideas. In this instance the USA found that the spread of communism in east asia beyond China and the Soviet Union was against their interest. Following the failure to defeat North Korea, South Korea became a bufferstate and thus an integral part of the American containment strategy against communism in the region. This conflict, while not a military victory because the American led UN alliance failed to effectively defeat North Korea, was a political victory for the USA because they managed to demonstrate their dominance over the UN system.

The first major setback came during the Vietnam war, coincidentally Cambodia was involved in this conflict albeit indirectly. The Vietnam War from 1959-75 signaled a shift in strategy for the US, that was now directly deploying American troops into the Vietnam War in attempt to win the fight against communism. The containment strategy was not only used in East Asia but also in other parts of the world, but the loss of the Vietnam War meant a subdued role for the militarized American foreign policy in the following years (Wittkopf, 2009: 43-50). The fact that the Vietnam war was televised also meant that the USA took a considerable blow to its prestige as demonstrators in large parts of the western world protested against how the war was carried out.

The American Hegemonic system is therefore still quite vibrant and strong in the region as there haven't been any other countries that have had the capacity to provide a valid challenge their power over the hegemonic system. Thus the current hegemonic system of international institutions continues to be under the dominance of american ideals and values.

The american style of institutional dominance is characterized by a neo-liberal doctrine, as defined in the WC. This is therefore the primary ideals that the Cambodian state is affected by when it receives aid from international institutions that are part of the American centered hegemonic system.

### ***Theoretical operationalization***

When analyzing the problem it is prudent to divide the analytical sections into sub-sections in order to make the process of analysis easier and more concise. To this end it is necessary to first of all look at each individual section of the analysis in a way similar way thus making the final

conclusion a more surmountable process.

When using a term such a hegemony it is necessary to note that this can be a loaded term. The understanding of hegemony that I employ in this thesis is nothing like the one found in liberalism or realism where the word means one states dominance over another, rather I use the one that Robert Cox stipulates in the following paragraph:

*“I use ‘hegemony’ to mean a structure of values and understandings about the nature of order that permeates a whole system of states and non-state entities. In a hegemonic order these values and understandings are relatively unstable and unquestioned. They appear to most actors as the natural order. Such a structure of meanings is underpinned by a structure of power, in which most probably one state is dominant but that states dominance in itself is not sufficient to create hegemony. Hegemony derives from the ways of doing and thinking of the dominant social strata of the dominant state or states insofar as these ways of doing and thinking have acquired the acquiescence of the dominant social strata of the other states. These social practices and the ideologies that explain them and legitimize them constitute the foundation of hegemonic order. Hegemony expands and is maintained by the success of the dominant social strata’s practices and the appeal they exert to other social strata, through the process that Gramsci described as passive revolution. Hegemony frames thought and thereby circumscribes action”*  
(Cox, 1996: p. 151)

I find this definition of Hegemony to be sufficiently succinct and precise for it to be used in the analysis and therefore I will not further upon it.

After going through the theory it becomes clear that Coxian hegemony theory operates with certain elements that can be broken apart for analytical accuracy. For the intent of the analysis I will be dividing each analysis into 3 equally important sections (Cox, 1996: 98):

- **Idea:** The ideas behind which the international organizations operate and which they seek to implant into the recipient country. Ideas comprise intersubjective meanings and collective images of social order. The former are defined by historically shaped conceptions of the nature of social relations in society (for example) which in turn reinforce expectations of behaviour. This seeks to explore the deeper ideas behind the influences that the aid causes and the affect that these ideas have on the recipient country. The ideas are those same values and ideals that were formed in the hegemony of the upper class in the strongest state and which now make up the driving force behind the international organizations. According to Robert Cox an Idea is composed of intersubjective meanings and collective images of social order. What this means is that
- **Material Capabilities:** This section will delve into the capacity of the organization. Cox defines material capabilities as the productive and destructive capabilities of an organization. Examples of these capabilities are the technological and organizational stocks, for example: natural resources that can be transformed through technology, stocks of equipment (FX: industrial or weapons) and wealth.
- **Institutions:** Institutions are the product of the ideas and material capabilities. Institutions are thus the historical structures that are built as a result of the group in power, the organisations that are constructed to project and affirm the ideas and reinforce of that group. Therefore the ideas that shape the international institutions are built from the hegemonic structure in the dominant state and the dominant state possesses the material capabilities to form and preserve the international institutions. Through the use of conflict resolution mechanisms they minimize the need force thus becoming a vital element in the hegemony of the ruling state.

These are the three analytical sections that Robert Cox himself identifies as important to the analysis of the progress of hegemony. These are the analytical sections that I will be following when I analyze how the international hegemonic structures have affected Cambodia.

In the analysis I will be focusing on three organizations operating within Cambodia. These three organizations will be chosen based on the criteria that they each deal with different areas of development and that they each possess a strong enough presence to significantly exert hegemonic influence on Cambodia. The three organizations that I have chosen for this analysis are therefore:



- **The UNDP:** The UNDP was founded in 1965 with the merging of the United Nations Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance and the United Nations Special Fund. As an organization it is engaged with promoting democratic governance, poverty reduction, crisis prevention and recovery, environment and energy as well as fighting HIV and AIDS as stipulated in the UN's Millennium Development Goals. For the purpose of the analysis I will be focusing on the good governance part of the UNDP agenda.
- **The OHCHR:** The Office for the High Commissioner of Human Rights is represented in Cambodia with the purpose of observing that the Cambodian government is upholding the Human rights of their citizens.
- **The WTO:** Established in 1989 based on the previous General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade the WTO is in its own words: “an organization for liberalizing trade. It’s a forum for governments to negotiate trade agreements. It’s a place for them to settle trade disputes. It operates a system of trade rules.” (WTO). The WTO has been chosen for this as it is one of the major organizations endorsing trade liberalization.

The organizations are picked with the intention of ensuring that I cover as many aspects of development within the as I can. It is my opinion that when I pick these three organizations, one that operates with good governance, one that operates with human rights and one that operates with trade liberalization that I get a broad view of the affect that aid giving organizations have on Cambodian society.

The organizations that I have chosen all fall under the system that centers around the USA and the institutions that the USA has formed to

When talking about development aid a term that often appears is capacity building. For the purpose of this analysis I will be using the UNDP definition of capacity development which it defines as such:

*Capacity development helps to strengthen and sustain this foundation. UNDP defines it as the process through which individuals, organizations and societies obtain, strengthen and maintain the capabilities to set and achieve their own*

*development objectives over time. It is the 'how' of making development work better and is at the heart of UNDP's mandate and functions. (UNDP, 2008: p3)*

By this definition capacity is defined as the ability for individuals and societies to define their own fate and future. This gives capacity development a fairly broad definition meaning that a lot can fit under this umbrella term.

Following the logic of this definition is that development work angled towards increasing the options of the citizens of recipient countries and strengthening their access to these options. Thus development is not just about raising people out of poverty, but also about ensuring peoples legal rights. This means that any development work that solely focuses on issues of wealth will not necessarily be sufficient to cover the definition that the UNDP goes by and that I will be using for the purpose of this project. So therefore I will in this project be viewing development work as being aimed towards not only poverty alleviation, but also that it is aimed towards strengthening the rights of the citizens.

When talking about good governance the definition of this is linked to the term capacity building. So when talking about how development organizations promote good governance relates to the encouragement of sustainable human development. Sustainable human development means encouraging empowerment of the citizens, supporting safe interaction between the people, supporting equity in the society, environmental and economic sustainability and security for the citizenry. The UNDP considers good governance to be related to sustainable human development as good governance needs to ensure these things. Governance is seen as the exercise of economic, political and administrative power. Thus the encouragement of good governance is to strengthen these elements. When the UNDP talks about good governance it therefore talks about the need for governance to be participatory, transparent and accountable (UNDP1)

## Historical Overview

I will in this section provide the reader with a historical overview of the Cambodian state. This is to give the reader a better understanding of the historical context with which this project

Cambodia has a rather unique history in that it recently suffered a complete collapse of the state and the current regime is therefore starting more or less from scratch with the aid of international organizations such as the UN. I will in this chapter give the reader a quick overview of this history with the intent of giving the reader a historical perspective on the analysis to further the readers understanding of the subject at hand.

In the late 1860ies Cambodia had experienced civil wars as well as numerous invasions from the neighboring countries of Siam and Vietnam. It was in this situation that French explorers arrived in the region. The Cambodian king was incapable of defending the territory and so asked France for protection which the French empire, eager to expand its holdings, was all too eager to provide (CambodiaTribunal).

France quickly expanded its role in the region from guaranteeing Cambodias independence to taking a more active role in the running of the country. Before the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Cambodia was a colony in all but name as France took over large parts of the National bureaucracy and thus took control of the country.

Following the second world war Cambodia attained independence from France in 1953 after king Sihanouk went into a self imposed exile in protest over the French governments initial opposition to Cambodian independence (State1).

In the year 1965, during the Vietnam war, Cambodia cut formal diplomatic relations with the USA while allowing Vietnam to establish bases on Cambodian soil, effectively overturning Cambodia's previous policy of neutrality in the conflict(Asianinfo). Ties to the USA were however reestablished shortly thereafter as the Cambodian economy went into turmoil.

In 1970 general Lon Nol ousted the Sihanouk government from power, abolishing the monarchy and renaming the country as the Khmer Republic. Lon Nol requested that Vietnam withdraw the soldiers that they had stationed in eastern Cambodia, however these requests went

unheeded. He had hoped for US assistance, but the Americans were unable to provide sufficient aid to both oust the Vietnamese forces and combat the Cambodian communist insurgents as they were busy dealing with the war in Vietnam(State). In the meantime Sihanouk was persuaded to establish a new government with the Khmer Rouge while in exile (Asianinfo).

The Khmer Rouge led by Saloth Sar, better known as Pol Pot, took the capital, Phnom Penh, in 1975 and established a new state called Democratic Kampuchea. The Khmer Rouge government forced the city dwellers to abandon the cities to live an agrarian lifestyle, which they considered superior to the urban lifestyle. They furthermore annihilated the intellectual and religious elite as well as anybody who was suspected of opposition to the government. During the Democratic Kampuchea period farming was collectivized, the industrial sector was abandoned and torture of suspected dissidents was widespread(state). Anyone who refused to carry out their orders immediately was summarily executed. In total the brief Khmer Rouge era, lasting from 1974-1979, cost approximately Cambodia two million people (mekong1).

The Democratic Kampuchea's relations to the neighboring countries of Thailand and Vietnam were strenuous at best as a result of repeated border clashes and ideological differences. The reign of the Khmer Rouge came to an end when their planned attack against Vietnam was preempted by a Vietnamese invasion. The Khmer Rouge, unable to resist the Vietnamese invasion fled west where the strongly anti-Vietnamese government of Thailand offered them assistance (Asianinfo).

In Cambodia proper a new government was installed by the Vietnamese occupation forces led by Heng Samrin (Cambcomm). This new government, called Peoples Republic of Kampuchea, is not recognized by the United Nations. During this period Vietnam has 180.000 troops stationed across Cambodia, whereas the Heng Samrins government had only an army of 30.000 soldiers at its disposal, an army suffering from low moral and widespread desertion.

During this period there was a strong resistance movement against the Vietnamese occupation and the existing resistance against the Khmer Rouge consisting primarily of old Khmer republic soldiers was strengthened and would come to form the Khmer People's National Liberation Armed Forces (KPNLAF) which pledged loyalty to former Prime Minister Son Sann, and Moulinaka (Movement pour la Liberation Nationale de Kampuchea), loyal to Prince Sihanouk. The Khmer People's National Liberation Front (KPNLF) was formed in 1979, by Son Sann. Prince Sihanouk on the other hand formed his own organization, National United Front for an

Independent, Neutral, Peaceful, and Cooperative Cambodia (FUNCINPEC), as well as its military arm, the Armee Nationale Sihanoukienne (ANS) in 1981. All these resistance movements meant that the Vietnamese never managed to establish Cambodia as a vassal state under Heng Samrin as opposing sentiment was simply too strong among the Cambodian population (CambComm). The differing armies did however cause considerable trouble as infighting between different Cambodian factions was all too common,

Though Vietnam had plans to be out of Cambodia by 1990 these plans were delayed by the negotiations that Cambodia was carrying out with the UN. Vietnamese troops did however finally in August 1990 and Vietnamese troops left Cambodia in 1991.

In the 1991 Paris Conference the UN was given full authority to supervise a cease-fire, to repatriate displaced Khmer along the Thailand border, to disarm the various factions that had emerged through this period. The UN transitional authority in Cambodia, which was tasked with these objectives, arrived in Cambodia on March 16 1992 to oversee the implementation of the UN settlement plan in Cambodia.

Elections were held in 1993 and an impressive 4 million, or 90 percent of all eligible voters, turned up to vote in spite of the fact that the Khmer Rouge attempted to bar people from voting. In the elections which were won by Prince Ranariddh FUNCINPEC party with 45,5 percent of the votes, this party then formed a coalition government with the other parties (state). This government operated within the constraints of a constitutional monarchy with the former prince Sihanouk being crowned King of Cambodia.

Most of the remaining Khmer Rouge fighters were disarmed in 1997 as part of the government amnesty thus putting an end to the civil war that had ravaged the country for almost three decades. The leaders of the Khmer Rouge war criminal are to this day being tried in a UN tribunal for the atrocities they committed during the Democratic Kampuchea part of Cambodian history.

To this day the UN is still heavily invested in Cambodia in an effort to help the country develop. Thus there are currently 23 UN organizations operating within Cambodia's each working

with their own fields of development. And great many more

All in all Cambodia has suffered through decades of civil war, dictatorship and one of the worst genocides in modern history. All of this has left the country in a situation where it is today, dependent on aid from the surrounding world.

## **Analysis: National Institutions**

This section is dedicated to analyzing how the Cambodian institutions have been affected by the aid the country has received from UN institutions. This analysis will be divided into two sections each of which will be divided into the three virtues that are stipulated by Robert Cox as being at the center of hegemonic institutions: ideas, material capabilities and institutions. These are the same as have been described in the chapter theoretical operationalization.

The analysis itself will be performed by analyzing the data that is available from the relevant agencies as well as other sources such as news agencies etc. Thus the data will primarily be gathered through computer technology by utilizing the sources that are made available to the researcher over the internet.

I will for the purpose of this analysis assume that the traditional form of governance in Cambodia has tendencies towards a centralized bureaucracy. I base this assumption on several facts, fx. Cambodia as a country simply doesn't have the national infrastructure, communication and transportation, to support a decentralized form of government. Furthermore the amount of corruption in the country reaches a point where one can question whether the government is actually capable of ruling the country effectively, with government officials who do not live off their salaries, but rather exploit the resources that they are allotted (USAID 1, p. 4).

### ***Ideas:***

As is evident from the previous historical overview after the many disastrous events in Cambodian history Cambodia's national institutions were largely non-existent, having been wiped out due to the many conflicts that ravaged the country after it's independence from the French colonial empire. Thus the UN organizations that come to aid the country have a practically empty slate to work with in this country.

The purpose of UN activity is to provide "direct assistance, technical support, policy advice and capacity development to partners in government, civil society and local communities"(UN2). To this purpose there are 23 UN organizations currently engaged with various tasks. Thus

Cambodia can be considered to be under some significant influence from international organizations.

The following organizations all belong under the larger umbrella that is the Bretton Woods system created in the period following the second world war largely at the behest of the United States and their western European allies. This system can as such be seen as the institutionalized form of American hegemony on an international basis, these institutes are those that serve to perpetuate the ideals and values of the American hegemonic structure. The following analysis will serve to analyze how they each specifically affect the structure of Cambodian society.

## **UNDP**

The UNDP is the largest UN organization engaged in Cambodia. The basic ideas that the UNDP operate under fall under the UN millennium development goals. It primarily focuses on the on the areas of poverty reduction and democratization within Cambodia (UNDP1). While the UN hardly has a monopoly on the idea of eliminating poverty, indeed most NGO's involved with development of LDC's have this as their primary goal; I would however argue that the idea of decentralization of the state bureaucracy is an example of a dominant idea from a foreign source making inroads in Cambodian society.

The ideal of democratization is according to the UNDP, in its own words to: “enable civil society and legislature to exercise effective checks and balances on the executive” (UNDP2: p. 2). Thus the UNDP seeks to strengthen the power of the civil society and the limit the power of the government. Thus the UNDP guides their efforts by the ideal that the executive branch of the government should be limited in it's power thereby conversely strengthening the power of the citizens of the state. This is where the organization fits into the neo-liberal hegemonic system: The organization is dedicated to alleviating poverty and promoting democratic governance in the style found in the core countries in the west.

The idea that through decentralization of the state bureaucracy Cambodia will strengthen the overall governance of the state here falls under the intersubjective image of world order promulgated by the neo-liberal influence of the US hegemony. This idea of a decentralized state and citizen participation is largely in tune with the neo-liberal democratic state that the American



hegemonic structure promotes. Thus the would with the application of these ideas seek to directly push the Cambodian society and state system towards a more liberal and western style society, in effect cause a passive revolution to occur within Cambodian society. Not only would this affect the productive powers, but also the very fabric of society to adopt a more western style of government causing the society to drift to a more Americanized type of society.

This basic idea that government authority should be decentralized with the intent to “strengthen and expand local democracy” and to “promote local development and to reduce poverty” is that when the power is closer to the people the hope is that they will be more invested in the exercise of power and thus be more active in the democratic process. Given that democracy is still young in Cambodia and the ideas of decentralized authority have yet to fully take root. This is where the UN aid comes in as decentralization is a central element in the United Nations Development Assistance Framework or UNDAF.

The UNDAF is the overall framework that the UN organizations in Cambodia operate under. The central tenets of the UNDAF are as follows:

- Good Governance and the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights
- Agriculture and Rural Development
- Capacity Building and human resources development for the social sectors
- Development of the National Strategic Development Plan (UN2)

As can be seen above the UN organizations have a fairly wide range of goals in and the UNDP's mandate stretches over a large most of these areas. The UNDAF forms the framework of UN work in Cambodia and is thus represents a major part of the work of aid organizations that work to affect Cambodian society. These goals all fall well within the ideals of the neo-liberal hegemonic system and the ideals of good governance in general. It is here that we see the ideals of good governance most clearly represented. The ideal that the government should defend the peoples rights and the idea that it is through the governments efforts that sustainable development is brought about.

As such the UNDP's role within the neo-liberal hegemonic system is fairly broad. Its objective is to preserve and propagate the ideas of democratization and decentralization as well as poverty reduction within the system and to assist the less developed states in adopting them.

Where my other choices of organizations for analysis are dedicated to ideas within the hegemonic system that are relevant most countries, free trade and human rights are both relevant discussions within developed countries, the UNDP deals with issues that are mostly relevant to less developed countries. This makes the UNDP more of a dedicated development agency, working to ensure that less developed countries develop along a path that is fortuitous to the hegemonic system and furthers the ideals and values of the hegemonic system.

## **OHCHR**

The Office for the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) is dedicated to promoting the universal declaration of human rights in the UN member countries.

In Cambodia the OHCHR focuses on the issues of supporting the development of a legal and institutional framework which in the host countries which protect the citizens right to exercise their human rights, consistent with the international human rights standards as stipulated in Cambodia's Constitution. The OHCHR furthermore monitor the implementation of laws as well as the actions of state institutions responsible for respecting rights, reporting problematic areas to the Government and other relevant actors for corrective action, and looking jointly for solutions. Supporting the Government's cooperation with the Human Rights Council and its mechanisms, and promoting the ratification of international human rights treaties. Supporting the capacity of civil society actors (human rights NGOs, women's associations, media, trade unions, and others) to monitor and advocate for human rights, and protecting their activities through fostering a climate of mutual respect, dialogue and cooperation with the Government (OHCHR1).

The human rights convention constitutes an intersubjective idea that all signatory countries agree to align themselves with. The idea is basically that all countries will respect a number of basic rights that all humans are considered to possess. Considering that the Human Rights Convention was written as part of the formation of the UN it is a part of the neo-liberal hegemony and the spread of the human rights convention is therefore a part of the propagation of this hegemony. This is where the OHCHR falls in under the neo-liberal hegemonic system, as an organization dedicated to the preservation and propagation of the Human Rights portion of the American hegemonic system.

In Cambodia the OHCHR is primarily engaged with the issues of land and livelihood, rule of law, civil society and fundamental freedoms, and prison reform. These are the issues that form the basis for OHCHR's work in Cambodia and are as such the primary points at which the OHCHR will focus its efforts. For the purpose of OHCHR's work in Cambodia they will therefore focus on issues of how well the Cambodian state respects the rights that its citizens.

The issues that guide the OHCHR's work in Cambodia is therefore those that relate to the breach of Cambodian citizens human rights. When viewing considering the strength of the OHCHR's work within the country and how it carries out its work one must remember that the organizations primary role is to observe and advise, not to control or even to directly intervene.

## **WTO**

The WTO is as mentioned in the historical section a product of the American ideal of free trade and liberty. The organization is as such dedicated to promoting free trade and transparency in law. Cambodia applied for accession to the WTO in October 1994 and after a number of talks it finally accepted the terms and conditions of the WTO and joined on formally joined the WTO on October 13 2004 (Chea & Sok).

The WTO is itself an interesting organization in that it largely encapsulates the concept of hegemony. Created as an organization dedicated to furthering the ideals of the market liberal ideal the organization has it as its very agenda to open up the markets of its member states to global trade. The fact that its member states willfully join the organization on terms set down by the WTO is a testament to the strength of the neo-liberal hegemony in that member states must abide by a number of rules if they wish to be a part pf the organization.

The WTO holds within it implicit and explicit views on how the world is and should be. These view are those that form the ideas that guide not only the actions that the WTO take in the world, but also the very structure of the organization.

The principles and ideas that the WTO embodies are those of transparency and predictability, nondiscrimination, trade liberalization and market opening and special and differential treatment for developing nations(Siphana, 2005).

When the WTO talks about transparency it refers to the ideal that government decision making and public administration should be handled in a way that is open to not only the public, but also to the fellow member countries. This ideal is paramount to the concept of a neo-liberal society as it gives companies greater access to a society as well as furthering the democratic ideals in the society. Consequently all members of the WTO are required to publish their trade regulations, establish and maintain institutions that oversee changes to trade regulations and report these to the other member states. The WTO supplements these transparency requirements with a secretariat which follows these trade regulations and prepares periodic country reports and distributes them to the member countries.

Non Discrimination means that the member country is not allowed to discriminate against goods and services from one member country in favor of other similar goods and services from another member state. Thus tariffs placed on one specific type of product from one member state this same tariff must also apply to all similar products from all other member states this principle is called the MFN principle. National treatment means that once a product has passed all border measures they must be treated neither better nor worse than other products of the same kind no matter if those products have been produced domestically or from a friendly country. This principle serves the purpose of ensuring free and fair competition between member states.

Trade liberalization also fall under the neo-liberal hegemonic ideal, in addition to the above mentioned transparency ideal it reflects the society one finds in a western capitalistic society. The principle of trade liberalization does however not mean immediate trade liberalization, merely that the member state pledges to a gradual progressive liberalization through successive rounds of multilateral trade negotiations.

The fourth principle simply states that less developed countries are granted more lenient conditions at WTO trade rounds. This can mean that less developed countries are exempt from certain provisions in the final agreements that developed countries are expected to abide by. The thing to note here is that the WTO provides more lenient conditions for less developed countries which allow for these states to join the WTO when more developed countries would have to live up to much stricter demands. Thus the WTO is able to attract less developed countries to the organization that would otherwise not have applied for accession to the organization. This basically means that the organization doesn't need the power of force to apply its ideals, countries themselves accept the ideals that it represents. In other words: the power of the WTO lies not in use of force, but in how the countries that it aims its attention at accept the influence that it is

dedicated to spreading.

These compose the collective image of world order that form the ideas that the WTO is dedicated to furthering. Thus these are the ideals that compose the world view that this organization is based on. So when the WTO engages in work with the RGC these form the issues that the organization will focus on primarily.

All in all these are good examples of the neo-liberal hegemonic system that currently dominates the international scene. The main purpose here is to preserve and propagate the ideas of free trade and market liberalism within the neo-liberal hegemonic system. The WTO does however not operate directly in the country, it does not have the mandate to do so. Instead the WTO's mandate is to engage the countries in negotiations. As mentioned above the organization offers beneficial terms to LDC's, these serve to make it more attractive for these countries to seek accession into the organization. Thus the strength of the organization is such that the countries wish to become members without the need for any sort of direct force. This is a considerable fact to note about the organization: there is no need for the core countries to force their ideals upon the periphery countries, they already wish to become a part of the system created by the core.

### **Partial conclusion: Ideas**

After analyzing the ideas of the chosen organizations we can see that they each are complimentary and that each of the ideas fall under each their part of the neo-liberal hegemony.

With the UNDP we can note that the organization is dedicated to the implementation of the ideal of democratization, decentralization and empowerment of Cambodia. This falls under the concept of good governance and is a central element of the neo-liberal hegemony and thus a part of the hegemonic system.

With the WTO we see an organization dedicated to the propagation of the ideals of free trade and transparency. Thus this organization is dedicated to not only spreading the ideals of good governance, but also to the propagation of neo-liberal economic ideals.

The OHCHR is as an organization dedicated to overseeing the human rights situation in

Cambodia. As it is simply an office of the larger human rights commission it is not a dedicated organization that is meant to directly influence the state of Cambodia. The ideals of Human Rights are however an integral part of the neo-liberal hegemonic system.

These three organizations are therefore dedicated to propagating the hegemonic ideal of the USA and are thus staged in Cambodia with the intent to influence the Cambodian national institutions closer towards the ideals of the hegemonic core.

### ***Material Capabilities:***

I will in this section analyze the means that the selected organizations have at their disposal to put their ideas into effect in other words the material capabilities of said organizations. What this means in terms of analysis is that I will be focusing on the capacities for implementation of the ideas that the chosen organizations represent. For the purpose of this analysis the relevant material capabilities that I will be focusing on the economic and organizational capabilities of the relevant UN organizations.

## **UNDP**

The UNDP in Cambodia operates its budget based on contributions from donor contributions, national development agencies as well as major NGO's, in addition to budgeted resources from the greater UN system. The total of donations from non UN organizations in 2009 was \$27,379,385.53, the core funding from UNDP was \$9,202,788.63 and \$982,105.53 from the Global Environment Facility. All in all the UNDP had \$37,564,279.69 in programme funding for 2009 (UNDP2). By comparison the total revenue of the RGC was roughly \$1,316,000,000.00 (UN 1: p. 13) Thus the UNDP has a considerable budget compared to the RGC as the Cambodian government has only just over 4 times the budget of the UNDP.

In addition to possessing considerable monetary power the UNDP is also a part of the greater UN family. Given that the UN is made up of a greater worldwide network of institutions each with their own specialized purpose it has a large pool of experts to draw from.

As such the UNDP wields a considerable influence in Cambodia not only because they can

finance a considerable amount of projects in the country, but also because they employ a large number of experienced professionals who can provide the UNDP and thus by extension the RGC with valuable insight and ideas into the solving of the numerous problems that the nation has to deal with.

The strongest card that the UNDP, or any UN organization in Cambodia holds is however arguably the fact that the UN has is the organization that is responsible for the current democratic state that currently exists in Cambodia. The fact that the UN transitional authority is was responsible for shaping the Cambodian state that we see today means that the UN organizations have great knowledge of the inner workings of the Cambodian state, but it also means that arguably they have a longstanding working relationship with the Cambodian government.

## **OHCHR**

The OHCHR is fairly small compared to the other organizations that I analyze in this chapter. The primary strength of the OHCHR lies its organization capacity and the fact that it has access to a large amount of expertise that the member country could require. But also in that it is the office that has the responsibility of overseeing that the UN member states oversee that the states in the UN respect the basic human rights that they are obliged to uphold.

Another strength that the OHCHR is it's considerable connections to NGO's operating in Cambodia with similar issues. This effectively strengthens the capacity of both the NGO' s in question as well as the OHCHR to influence the Human Rights situation in Cambodia towards their desired goal. Thus this organization does not so much affect the hegemonic influence itself so much as it serves as a hub for like minded NGO's striving for the implementation and recognition of human rights in Cambodia. (OHCHR1)

## **WTO**

The WTO has many means at it's disposal that allows it to affect its member states. The primary strength of the WTO in Gramscian terms lie in the fact that the organization The organization itself serves as a forum for debate of liberalization (Siphana, 2005), thus it embodies the principle known in Gramscian theory as transformismo in that the developing nations are able to voice their discontent within the framework of the organization itself. It also provides a means for

resolving disagreements between member countries effectively allows them to settle issues that might in other circumstances lead to armed confrontations between the parties peacefully within the framework of the WTO. This gives the WTO a considerable power since it gives the member states in this way have much larger incentives to settle into the framework that this organization provides.

Thus the strength of the WTO lies in its ability to allow disputes to be settled within the confines of its structure as well as in its strength to attract nations to its organization. In other words the power of the WTO lies in its ability to make the periphery states accept the ideals that it is dedicated to spreading and not in any sort of strength of force. While the WTO does have a power to impose sanctions on member states, I would argue that such a power is of less relevance than that of making member states join the organization.

### **Partial Conclusion: Material Capabilities**

The organizations operating within Cambodia are as such operating with different levels of capacity. Where the UNDP is supported by a considerable economic foundation so it can engage in direct development work in Cambodia the two other organizations, OHCHR and the WTO, have to play a more indirect role in development work.

The OHCHR works primarily through other organizations, NGO's and the like, and by advising the government. The OHCHR is as such an organization operating not through direct influence in the affairs of Cambodia, but through indirect influence by other organizations and acceptance of the ideals that the organization is dedicated to spreading.

The WTO has a slightly different method of operating. While this organization is dedicated to spreading the ideals of free market liberalism it does not operate directly in Cambodia. In this way the WTO has a lot in common with the OHCHR. The strength of the WTO lies in the fact

At the end of the day it is the UNDP that has the greatest amount hard resources at its disposal in the form of a large budget. The OHCHR and the WTO on the other hand rely on softer forms of power to imprint their ideas on Cambodia. Thus the three organizations have an uneven



level of material capabilities. I will return to touch upon this point in the final conclusion.

### ***Institutions:***

I will now discuss how the UN organizations have through their aid and the ideas that they bring to the country affected the Cambodian national institutions. Since institutions play the role of reinforcing the hegemonic structure in the world system it is necessary to discuss how they affect the individual states that make up the world system. I will go through the chosen organizations in the same order as previously.

## **UNDP**

Given that the UNDP is itself an institution formed by the American hegemonic ideas and given form by the material capabilities supplied by said state it is more relevant to view how the the Cambodian national institutions are affected by the ideas that the UNDP incarnate since the UN agencies do not seek necessarily to create new institutions, but rather affect the structures that already exist.

One of the more significant projects that the UNDP oversaw the implementation of in Cambodia is the **Decentralization and Decontraction** (D&D) strategy. The goal of this strategy is to increase the capacity of the lower echelons of the government bureaucracy thus enhancing the overall strength and capabilities of the entire bureaucracy and increase citizen participation. Thus the plan targets the three levels of government bureaucracy: Provincial/municipal level, district/khan level and commune/sangkat<sup>1</sup> level (RGC1). What this means is that the lower echelons of state authority have their communicative capacity enhanced and be given a greater amount of authority.

The Cambodian government in cooperation with the UNDP formulated the National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP) 2006-2010 to meet this plan, the D&D strategy falls under this plan (UNDP, 2007: p. 1). The NSDP is Cambodia's version of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper and builds in the previous successes of poverty reduction in Cambodia.

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<sup>1</sup> A commune is the lowest level of public administration in the Cambodian bureaucracy. The average size of a commune is around 7500 inhabitants though the smallest commune holds only 205 inhabitants and the largest holds 79,406.

Laws meant to strengthen the local governance in Cambodia have been passed for some time in Cambodia. The UN in Cambodia recognize three such laws that have been passed and one that is still being drafted. In 2002 the Cambodian government passed the "*Law on Administration and Management of Commune/Sangkhat*" which effectively establishes Communes/Sangkats as an administrative level as well as stipulating the powers and responsibilities that the Communes have (RGC 2002). This law was drafted and passed with the aid of UNDP legal advisers and serves as a significant first step in the decentralization of power in Cambodia's.

In 2005 the RGC outlined the "*Strategic Framework for Decentralization and Concentration*". This policy statement has the intention of stating the RGC's long term goals for further decentralization of the power. This document serves to cement the RGC's commitment to the decentralization of power (RGC, 2005: p,3).

In 2008 the RGC passed the The "*Law on Administration and Management of the Capital, Province, Municipality, District and Khan*" or simply the "Organic Law". Again this law seeks to strengthen the lower echelons of the Cambodian bureaucracy.

The interesting thing to note in the case of these cases is that it is often the Cambodian government itself that asks the UN organizations for aid. While this is not surprising given the history of UN in Cambodia, the UN having largely built the country it does however represent an interesting point: the UN, as a representative for the neo-liberal hegemonic system, is actually invited by the periphery country to affect their influence. This means that the transference of hegemonic ideals happens not only voluntarily, on the part of the periphery country, but Cambodia actually invites the influence of the hegemonic ideas of the core countries.

The goal of these projects is to strengthen the local administrations by strengthening the commune councils both in terms of administrative strength, but also in terms of communication. The NCDD project is thus dedicated to ensure that the local government is capable of seeing to the day to day administration of it's responsibilities. The idea that in order to govern legitimately and fairly it is necessary has clearly been ingrained in the Cambodian political culture to the point where it is taken a matter of course by the political establishment. I would argue that prior to UN involvement in the early 90ies this was not the case. The establishment of Communes marks a significant move in Cambodian social structure as it means that more decisions will be taken closer to the citizens as opposed to the more centralized decision making that otherwise marked

the country previously.

One of the major problems with the work to decentralize the country is material: the country lacks the necessary infrastructure to ensure horizontal communication between the communes.

The fact that the UNDP works and has worked with almost an empty slate in Cambodia means that the majority of the ideas that the organization is dedicated to spreading have been adopted by Cambodia. The sheer strength of of the UNDP's material capabilities also means that the organization is capable of causing considerable influence within the Cambodian state. Thus the Cambodian nation and state is under considerable influence from the UNDP with the aid that has been provided.

## **OHCHR**

Within Cambodia the OHCHR is focused on the propagation of Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The Cambodian government has already signed this document and is therefore obliged to following the charter. There is however still a way to go for the OHCHR in this country when it comes to the human rights condition.

Cambodia has a fairly tarnished track record when it comes to respecting the human rights of its citizens. One of the most commonly cited examples is the land evictions which have gone on for some time in Cambodia.

The examples of people being evicted from their homes go back as far as the 1980ies and is still a subject of controversy in Cambodia. According to the most recent assessment of the role and achievements of the OHCHR as many as 150.000 people were evicted from their homes in recent years and as many people face evictions in the coming years (OHCHR, 2009: p. 13).

These evictions primarily hit the weaker population groups and almost always hit people living in rural areas or slum dwellers in the larger cities where the land is sold off to private enterprises. The root of this problem lies in the fact that the law has been inefficiently implemented and that the slowness of the implementation means that the people who live in these areas don't have the sufficient documentation for the fact that the land is in fact theirs and they are therefore vulnerable to this form of exploitation (ibid).

Within city zones it is often companies that wish to build luxury apartments or stores that take over the land after the residents are evicted or as in one recent case a riverside park (PPP, 2010). while it in the countryside can be for a number of reasons though mostly to clear up room for new farming. In recent years people have been evicted to make room for new sugar cane plantations (RadioAustralia 2010).

In general the problem lies with lack education and inefficient implementation of land rights laws leading to a poor understanding of the human rights charter among the lower echelons of Cambodian administration. Thus one can conclude that the hegemonic ideas of private property rights have not yet fully taken root in Cambodian society as a self evident ideal. In other words the local elite in Cambodia has yet to adopt this particular portion of the neo-liberal hegemonic ideals.

In terms of the general respect of human rights in general the UNHCR has, in cooperation with other NGO's including ASEAN, lobbied for the Cambodian government to create an institution dedicated to overseeing the condition of human rights in Cambodia. This National Human Rights Institution (NHRI) would operate independently of the government would thus be solely dedicated to overseeing the human rights situation within the nation (ASEAN1).

The purpose such an institution seems self evident. In that an institution existing independently of the government and thus it wouldn't be subject to shifting government constellations in would be able to give a picture of the national human rights condition that is less skewed by government interests. I would argue that the existence of such an institution would serve to nudge the government towards greater respect for human rights since the government is more likely to take criticism from fellow countrymen than it is to take it from foreigners from an international institution, no matter if said institution played a part in the creation of the very country that they rule. The institution has however yet to be formed and thus has yet to play a role in the country, but the Cambodian government does appear to be positive to the idea of forming it (OHCHR1, p: 7).

Also when it comes to the prevention of torture Cambodia falls short of the expectations created by the conventions that Cambodia itself has signed. In 2007 Cambodia signed the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture which, among other things, binds Cambodia to establish an independent institution to oversee that Cambodia adheres to the rules stipulated in the agreement . Under this agreement this institution must be in place by 29<sup>th</sup> April 2008 (OHCHR2: P,

2). The RGC has however not adhered to this agreement in full and the draft that the RGC has created fails to fulfill the obligations as stipulated in the protocol (OHCHR1, p: 7). By this we can see that the RGC, while it has agreed to the obligations of the anti torture protocols it the government has yet to actually implement these institutions that these agreements say that they must implement.

Thus we can note that the hegemonic ideals of human rights in Cambodia still has considerable shortcomings. While the Cambodian government has certainly dedicated itself to respecting the human rights in writing human rights violations still appear to be, if not widespread, then certainly not altogether uncommon. So while the RGC has agreed to implement the ideals that the OHCHR is dedicated to promulgate one can hardly say that the overall effect of OHCHR has been major.

All in all the OHCHR has not met the objectives in Cambodia that it's stated principles sets for the organization. The RGC has signed all the relevant treaties and has agreed to abide by the rules of the Human Rights Convention and subsequent Human Rights agreements, but in the end the RGC has done scant little to actually carry them out in policy. Thus the hegemonic influence of the neo-liberal establishment has not been capable of making policy of ideals in Cambodia.

## **WTO**

The WTO has mostly affected Cambodia in the sense that it has ensured that Cambodia would open it's borders and market for foreign investments. In this sense the WTO has been quite successful.

The fact that Cambodia even joined the WTO itself can be seen as a major step for a former communist country with an isolationist past as extreme as the Cambodian. For such a country accession to an organization as unabashedly liberalist marks a major turning point away from the communism of the past. While the Khmer Rouge were defeated and disarmed some time ago and Cambodia transformed into a democracy some time ago I would still argue that the fact that the country entered the WTO represents a significant event where Cambodia has truly left the counter hegemonic position that the country held earlier and now falls under the current manifestation of the Pax Americana hegemonic system.

Already when Cambodia negotiated to join the WTO it agreed to certain constraints on how it would regulate the market regarding number of areas. Four points can be noted as the main points that the applicant country must agree to. The applicant must:

- 1) negotiate with members a set of “bindings” or maximum levels of tariffs that it will apply on 1 its imports of goods;
- 2) negotiate with members conditions for access by foreign service suppliers to its services market;
- 3) agree to limitations on those forms of support to agriculture that have an effect on international trade
- 4) bring its laws and regulations governing international trade into conformity with WTO rules before it joins WTO. (Siphana, 2005)

Cambodia agreed to all of these and the economic benefits to the country have been considerable.

As a result of WTO negotiations Cambodia has agreed to lower tariffs as well as cut significantly back on agricultural and adopt their legal system to Anglo-Saxon and French standards. Here we see that the WTO, through negotiations affect the Cambodian court system, one of the most central elements of the Cambodian state.

Cambodia has seen an economic growth over the past years and has one of the fastest growing garment industries in the world (World bank). Thus the impact of the economic liberalizations have been largely positive on Cambodia's economic development in the shape of foreign investments into the production sector of Cambodia. Since 1992 the Cambodian economy has grown considerably fueled mostly by the garment industry which as of 2008 accounts for 65% of Cambodias total export (UN: p. 23).

The reason for Cambodia joining the WTO was that this organization would actually strengthen Cambodia's relative position to other countries in that they through the framework of the WTO actually have a set of rules that put them equal to that of a relatively stronger country(Chea & Sok). This is an example of the Neo-Liberal Hegemony providing benefits to the countries that join it, fostering acceptance of the international status-quo rather than aggression towards the over power.

The WTO policy to give LDC's favorable policies, mentioned in the ideas section, can be

noted in 2009 as Cambodia gained access to tier 1 of the Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF). In doing so the WTO and Cambodia have negotiated an agreement that allows for Cambodia to enact trade laws that benefit the poor and vulnerable population (WTO 2). The ideal of the EIF is that a state through trade gains access to technology and resources that allow it to further develop its economy (WTO 3). Through this agreement Cambodia agrees to open its market to international trade in a way that still allows for Cambodia to "enhance its national capacity to formulate, implement, manage and monitor a pro-poor trade policy that is consistent with, and supportive of, the country's National Development Plan and its Millennium Development Goals." (WTO 2).

This approach means that the WTO strengthens its influence in LDC's by allowing for the poorer countries to develop on their own terms. This falls under the gramscian term of passive revolution in that it serves as an implementation of hegemonic ideals without threatening the current order in the country. By implementing free market structures in Cambodia without upsetting the existing social order the WTO effectively gives the existing political class greater incentive to adapt to the neo-liberal hegemony because it gives them stronger international relations, by operating within the framework of the WTO thus showing their willingness to follow the lead of stronger nations. Since the EIF encourages the implementation of Poverty Reduction Strategies it also strengthens the political order of Cambodia since the strengthened economy means that the Cambodian people have better standards of living. In that a stronger economy means more jobs which in turn means more money for the average Cambodian citizen.

These EIF's are an integrated portion of the development strategy of the WTO, the World Bank, the IMF and the UNDP. Thus the EIF can be considered to be an integral portion of the hegemonic system. This function allows the LDC's to enter the hegemonic institutions and the free trade system that comes with it in a way that allows them to protect their home markets. This means that Cambodia is opening their markets to the international system on terms that they negotiate with the WTO themselves. While this means that the LDC's won't be adhering as strictly to the hegemonic ideals it does however mean that LDC's are more likely to join the WTO, thus giving LDC's further incentive to align themselves with the neo-liberal hegemony.

All in all the WTO serves as a proponent of the free trade aspect of the neo-liberal hegemonic system. In Cambodia it has served this purpose quite well. While the WTO doesn't have a direct an continuous affect on Cambodia's national institutions the WTO still has had a significant influence on Cambodia. The strength of the WTO in Cambodia lies, not in direct

involvement in Cambodia's internal affairs, but in its ability to attract the countries to its organization and the ideals it espouses. To this end it has served its purpose admirably to the extent that it attracted Cambodia and induced in the state a wish to join the organization so strong that they, in the WTO's own words went on the "fast track" to accession into the WTO (WTO 3).

### **Partial Conclusion: Institutions**

The institutional affect of the organizations that I have analyzed has been uneven. The UNDP has been quite successful in getting its ideals implemented in Cambodia's national institutions. The fact that the Cambodian government itself asks for the UNDP's aid when the RGC seeks to implement reforms on the national level goes to show that the government sees the UNDP's ideals as good ideas for political leadership. Or in coxian terms: as self-evident ideals for political leadership of a nation. In the end the UNDP has been quite successful in implementing the ideals of the organization.

The OHCHR has been less successful in getting its ideals implemented as the RGC has yet to properly implement the institutions that it has agreed to create. Furthermore the country still has many problems when it comes to property rights as many people are still getting evicted from their homes. All in all the OHCHR has fallen short of causing the RGC to adapt to the Human Rights objectives that it is dedicated to spreading to Cambodia. While the RGC does appear to be positive to concept of an institution dedicated to observing the Human Rights situation in the country, actual moves towards establishing such an institution have not been forthcoming. Generally it is difficult to see any progress aside from statements of intention to abide by the ideals of the OHCHR. When all is said and done the OHCHR has failed to make it's ideals self-evident to the RGC.

The WTO has been quite successful in influencing the the government. WTO influence has successfully caused the RGC to lower the tariffs in the country, lower agricultural aid, and enact greater transparency in trade policy as well as publishing it's trade policy so the WTO it can be included in the regular report. The fact that the RGC has agreed to adhere to these policies and thus effectively prohibit itself from enacting protectionist reforms is, I would argue a fairly major step towards the Free Market liberalism inherent to the hegemonic system. It is difficult to say whether these ideals have become self-evident to the the Cambodian institutional system, but the



nation did implement the reforms at a faster pace than most other countries and was one of the first LDC's to become a member of the WTO.

Given that these three organizations are each dedicated to to a different aspect of the hegemonic system it is difficult to compare them directly to one another. However it is difficult not to note how the OHCHR has been less successful in influencing the the Cambodian national institutions towards its ideals.

## **Conclusion**

I will in this section conclude on the findings of the study by wrapping up the salient points that have been made during the analysis and the partial conclusion.

This project sought to find how the international institutions, representing the neo-liberal hegemony, have affected the Cambodian national institutions. All in all after the analysis I can conclude that Cambodia a mixed relationship with the American hegemony. It seems that the Cambodian government primarily focuses on the hegemonic institutions that benefit the country in the short term, which arguably makes sense: Why should the government agree to make reforms that do not provide immediate or at least foreseeable benefits.

The UNDP and the WTO are perhaps the two international institutions that have been the most successful in influencing the Cambodian state. We have in the analysis seen that the UNDP has accomplished some considerable influence in the realm of law. Here we have seen that the RGC has implemented considerable legislative reformations that would mean that Cambodian bureaucracy has seen significant de-jure decentralization. The two laws, the organic law and the *Law on Administration and Management of Commune/Sangkhat* have both effectively decentralized the state administration and the UNDP has been highly involved in the implementation of these as well as the *Strategic Framework for Decentralization and Concentration* which are all considerable movements towards administrative decentralization. The ideals of democratization and decentralization are thus taking roots in Cambodian society with UNDP as an institutional midwife.

The WTO has taken a considerably different approach to influencing the Cambodian state. Where the UNDP engaged directly in influencing the Cambodian state the WTO uses a more hands off approach to institutional influence. However while the WTO is not as directly involved in the internal affairs of Cambodia the sway that the WTO has over Cambodian trade policy must not be underestimated. In the brief time that the WTO has been engaged with Cambodia we can note that the RGC has adjusted considerably in the WTO's areas of interest. Between the lowered tariffs, the adjustments to the legal system and the lowered agricultural support the WTO has

been quite successful in its influence on Cambodia.

The OHCHR has been less successful in its efforts to affect the national institutions in the country. Cambodia continues to have an unfortunate track record with regards to human rights. As has been found in the analysis the OHCHR is keeping up its effort to bring the RGC to form institutions that will, independently of the government, monitor the human rights in Cambodia. The RGC however still hasn't implemented these institutions in spite of the fact that it has not only made statements to the fact that it intends to do so. The end result of this is that the OHCHR has been unable to fully affect the Cambodian political system to the extent that it is dedicated to doing. The reasons for this inability to affect political reform in Cambodia could have numerous reasons. The OHCHR itself lays the reason for this relative failure primarily in with a general lack of education among those dedicated to implementing these institutions and a lack of political will.

Since the three organizations I selected have had a different affect on the country an interesting question is: why is this? This question can have several answers:

One explanation could be that it is a question of the method employed by the organizations. The three organizations certainly employ different approaches to meeting their individual mandated areas. The UNDP seeks a more hands-on approach to development aid, indeed their organization is the only dedicated aid organization, where WTO is a forum for trade liberalization and the OHCHR is simply the local office for the high commissioner for human rights of the UN. The OHCHR relies more on cooperation with other organizations than with direct involvement in the country. The WTO however operates on a considerably more voluntary basis where it based on negotiations with the relevant country. A difference in aid giving methodology could be an interesting explanation, however I do not consider this to be a sufficient explanation.

Another explanation I refer to in the analysis is that the government simply sees greater advantage in economic and decentralization reforms than it sees in expanding the rights of its citizens. By this logic the government would actually be selecting the reforms that it sees most benefit from implementing. This would mean that the hegemonic system is not quite as effective at promulgating the ideals of of the core country.

The reason could also lie in the difference in material capabilities. Where the UNDP has been quite successful in implementing its goals for decentralization it is also the only one of the three organizations to have a major budget to back up its efforts. The WTO on the other hand has the promise of investments from companies in to tempt the RGC to adapt to the ideals of the WTO. The OHCHR on the other hand has no major budget to back up its efforts to affect the Cambodian national institutions. Thus, given the fact that it is dependent on cooperation with NGO's and other international organizations to get its ideals implemented with the Cambodian state. By this explanation it is not only the fact that the ideals are backed by the core hegemonic country that causes the LDC's to adapt to them. They also need to be pushed by an organization with the material capabilities to back them. Therefore the OHCHR is falling short of being able to influence the Cambodian institutions, not for lack of trying, but because the organization lacks the material capabilities and therefore is forced to rely on other organizations for its work.

All in all the fact that the ideals that the RGC shows the least will to implement are those that relate to respect for the property and rights of the most vulnerable populations is noteworthy. The Government does show an interest in becoming a more active part of the international economic and political system and has taken considerable steps to this effect. The fact that Cambodia has joined the WTO with all that it entails, the fact that the Government has made a genuine effort to democratize its form of governance means that it has taken some considerable efforts towards the western countries, thus Cambodia has moved closer towards the form of governance found in the core countries.

On the other hand while the country has taken significant steps towards a form of governance more in line with that of the core hegemonic states the RGC has also as has been noted to be less willing to adapt to other portions of the hegemonic ideals. It is interesting to note in spite of the fact that the RGC was historically formed with the aid of international organizations and officially invited others into their country that they still find themselves in a position where they actually still, to some extent, affect how much those outside agencies affect the country.

At the end of the day it seems most likely that the explanation for the lack of strength of the OHCHR compared to the other organizations lies in the fact that it is the organization that has the least material capacity. Given that the OHCHR has neither a forum to negotiate disputes like the WTO has nor the sheer monetary strength to finance the development aid that they endorse it is

difficult to apply weight behind their arguments and thus it is easier for the RGC to put the interest of stronger organizations before those of the OHCHR.

The problem formulation that this project was dedicated to answering was: *How has the aid organizations affected the structure of Cambodian institutions?* And at the end of the day it is difficult to give an accurate account of the full influence that Cambodia has received. The Cambodian historic bloc has certainly been affected by international influence however and a change can be noted. The passive revolution that the nation has undergone has primarily affected the economic structure of the country. The country has certainly been the recipient of some considerable influence from outside agencies though the government appears be somewhat selective when it comes how far and at which pace it will implement the reforms.

The relative weakness of the OHCHR notwithstanding Cambodia has undergone a significant passive revolution as a result of the influence of international organizations. They have liberalized their trade policy and made it more transparent. They have decentralized their administrative system and democratized their political system. The overall effect of the aid provided by the organizations has been quite significant.

## **Future Avenues of Study**

This project has been dealing with how the current hegemonic system has affected Cambodian institutions. The concept of institutional influence is necessarily a multifaceted concept. Given that different theories have different views on what an institution is it would be relevant to analyze the influence of international institutions on national institutions utilizing a different theoretical approach.

A good area to study could be to research the process behind how the decision making in the government that goes into deciding how the political and administrative reforms are implemented. Such a study would be very interesting and be a good extension of this project. It would provide a valuable insight into just how the government has reacted to the influence of international organizations on a political level. Additionally such a study would help to assess how hegemonic influence works on a national level, or rather how a government reacts to the influence of outside agencies. Such a project would therefore provide a microscopic aspect to the macroscopic theory of Coxian hegemony.

A different angle to Cambodian development could be a specific study of how the Cambodian economy has been affected by Cambodia's accession to the WTO. Such a study could be dedicated to analyzing the economic structures before and after the accession. Given that the accession process has meant that Cambodia has accepted a considerable amount of opening of the national economy, albeit less changes than more developed countries, means that there has inevitably occurred some changes in the structure of the economic makeup of the country. A study dedicated to an analysis of this process and the economic consequences would be quite useful to shine a light on how LDC's respond to the impact of economic development in the context of institutional and economic change.

Given that this country receives aid from more sources than just western countries and organizations another good angle of analysis would focus on this fact. One angle could analyze the relative impact of how Chinese aid affects the country in relation to that of Western countries and organizations. Such a project could be useful in assessing the relative strength of western countries as compared to Chinese. Such a project would be relevant in assessing the balance of

power in Cambodia as well as in South East Asia in general. Another angle for such a project could be in analyzing how the power of China has grown over the time. Such a study would be useful in analyzing how the American hegemonic system has developed in relation to other countries such as China that is seeing a growth in their economic power compared to the USA.

Studying reverse hegemonic influence from peripheral countries to core countries would likewise provide an interesting view as it would allow for a view of the reverse side of the dialectic system in process. Given that the periphery countries, as a result of the development work that is done in the countries, are being raised out of poverty it stands to reason that their relative strength compared to core countries will increase likewise. Thus it would stand to reason that the relative strength of core country hegemony would be weakened and while the international institutions are based on the culture and ideals of the strongest core country, currently the USA, it stands to reason that rising countries would wish to expand their own ideals and culture as well.

Given that the any study dedicated to analyzing the strength of one country over another will inevitably be limited by the definition of power, another study could be carried out utilizing the theory of soft power presented by Joseph Nye. Such a study would inevitably take a different approach to how Cambodia has been affected by western powers and would as such be able to analyze different aspects of American hegemony. A study based on such a theoretical perspective would go well in addition to this project as it would give a different angle to international political influence.

Finally the situation in Cambodia has some interesting repercussions in terms of development of the state. While development simply means to help the country and its people out of poverty so it might be able to define its own future independently of the assistance of foreign nations. This means more than capacity building of national institutions. Another interesting angle could therefore be how development assistance has affected the civil society in Cambodia. Such a study would benefit the knowledge of development assistance by informing how the assistance affects the political culture of Cambodia and the people of the country interact with the state.

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