

Royal University of Phnom Penh & Hiroshima University
Collaborative Online International Learning

Post Incidents Recovery
A Comparative Report on Cambodia and Japan's Cases
After the Fall of Khmer Rouge and

By: RUPP and HU students

Pheak Sreypich (RUPP)

Phall Maneth (RUPP)

Va Phavan (RUPP)

Wajjwalku Pornphan (HU)

Suenaga Riko (HU)

Supervised By:

Prof. Nagai Atsushi

23rd March 2021

Introduction

This report is the final research of the Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) between the Royal University of Phnom Penh and Hiroshima University. The report paper was written by the students from both countries focused on development after the incidents happened. There will be a compare and contrast section, reflection, and conclusion at the end of the paper. The goal is to study the means to get back on the feet again after the incidents took place while making sure not to let the incidents repeat themselves.

CAMBODIA'S CASE:

After the fall of the Khmer Rouge, Cambodia became an officially failed state. Both the country and its people sought peace throughout the years; however, violence happened everywhere because the Khmer Rouge army had yet to retreat nor dissolve. Cambodia's development had led to a roller-coaster existence given such international tutelage requirements. This experience has sharpened Cambodians' mindset as well as involving recovery development of the country itself.

I. Social Changes

1. People

When the Khmer Rouge regime fell apart in 1979, Cambodia did not immediately start to recover since the conflict was still plaguing it and other surrounding countries. People were able to return to their homeland to reunite with family and friends, but despite that, most of the survivors were widows, orphans, or elders. Even though they were free of the previous communist rule, families still had to rely on others to grow food; thus, solidarity groups were formed so that everyone could have enough to eat. In 1983, the government divided the land into family assets.

2. Education

In the name of their ideology, the Khmer Rouge murdered many intellectuals; therefore, after Cambodia's liberation, the priority was to have anyone with knowledge spread it to others. Because most of the human resources available in Cambodia had been lost under the Khmer Rouge regime, the economy was in shambles and wages were low; nonetheless, civil servants, especially the teachers, did their best to ignore their own poor living conditions and worked hard to rebuild human resources. Undeterred by political unrest and insecurity, the education sector was booming. In the 1980s, a number of measures were taken to combat illiteracy throughout the country, such as providing basic strategies and policies to rebuild education and encourage children to study at least grade 9.

II. Economic Recovery

From 1979 to 1993, the Cambodian economy went through three stages: the initial phase, the transition phase, and the in-depth reform phase.

1. The Initial Phase

The goal was to rebuild the economy based on the principle of integration; unfortunately, it was not achieved because most of the people who came to their hometowns were widows, orphans, and elders, all of them which were unfit for hard labor in the fields. Moreover, there was a shortage of tools and machines needed, such as carts and plows, to grow crops with any degree of efficiency. Thus, solidarity volunteer groups were formed; 10 or more [???] joined together to plow, transport food and other products to increase productivity and efficiency to a level where enough food was produced for everyone in the group, including those who

could not work in the fields. The 5th Party Congress set three measures for food production: expanding agricultural land, increasing the growing season, and intensifying it.

2. The Second Phase

The second phase lasted for four years (1985 - 1989). The government was focused on the mixed economic system (command and market economy); however, this system did not serve the need as we were overshadowed by the foreign forces.

3. The In-Depth Reform Phase

The end of the Cold War and the withdrawal of Vietnamese troops marked the beginning of a new political and economic era. In April 1989, the National Assembly convened to review the Constitution, among other things. Private ownership replaced community groups, and laws were made to protect private property. Free markets were established soon after.

III. Political Recovery

The Khmer Rouge regime came to an end on January 7th, 1979 when Vietnam invaded Phnom Penh. However, Khmer Rouge forces were still present near the borders and were receiving support from the US and other Western countries. They also held onto their seat at the United Nations General Assembly and were acknowledged as the legitimate representative of Cambodia from 1979 to 1990.

Paris Peace Accord was signed on 23rd October 1991 between Cambodia and Vietnam to extinguish the two countries' cold war. This agreement has led to entrust state security to UNTAC in the peace mission and organizing the election.

At the beginning of 1993, the U.N. Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) was a great help in the resettlement program and national election. Before the election on March 1st, UNTAC issued a report on pre-election violence; most of the 200 deaths, 338 injuries, and 144 abductions were attributed to the Khmer Rouges as they took the chance to oppose the election campaign, (Finlay, 1990). These intimidation and undemocratic actions took place in remote areas beyond UNTAC's reach. Eventually, the Democratic Kampuchea ended up being a coalition between King Sihanouk and Khmer Rouge until 1989, when Cambodia was retitled as the State of Cambodia. Despite that, the coalition government still controlled 6% of the country. In 1993, the coalition government of Democratic Kampuchea was dismissed, but the Khmer Rouge forces were still present until they were finally dissolved on June 22nd, 1998 because of Hun Sen's Win-Win Policy. The UNTAC election on 8th May 1993 was a great success as it compromised and allowed the people of Cambodia to hold a relatively free, fair, and democratic election. A new era had begun as Cambodia now had a constitution and a proper government under the name of the Kingdom of Cambodia.

JAPAN'S CASE

Background of the Post-war Japan: Casualties and Devastations

On August the 6th, 1945, the world was introduced to the first atomic weaponry, the atomic bomb, dropped on Hiroshima city. 80,000 people were killed immediately¹, those who had survived then suffered from the severe radiation injury, while buildings within a 2.5 km of the bombs' radius were knocked over (BBC, 2020). Following that was another release of the atomic bomb over Nagasaki city, which instantaneously killed at least 74,000 people. Resulting from such devastations, on August the 15th, 1945, Japan eventually declared its defeat, which put an end to the war.

¹ The total casualties were around 140,000 of Hiroshima's 350,000 total population (BBC News, 2020).

Besides the devastation brought about by the bombs, Japan was also smashed with both physical damages and structural destruction from the war itself. The total number of casualties was overwhelmed, not to mention the injured survivors who were left in the stage of poverty, commodity shortage, and starvation. Countless physical assets were ruined, and the collapse in the production capacity and output rates was set off. Economical loss was dramatic, and, eventually, the country fell into the stage of hyper-price rises.

The recovery of post-war Japan, rather than an intermittent reform, was a continuous process that has lasted over decades. This paper will bring up only the recovery courses from the year 1945 to the year 1964 when the Tokyo Olympics Game was held, as implying from such an event was the country's political stability and economic triumph, which had influenced several social changes, and vice versa. Within such period, it is possible to categorize the reforms into two main phases; the Allied Occupation of Japan which lasted until 1952, and the Independent Japan, or the stage after the end of the Allied Powers' authority.

Occupation of Japan: the GHQ and SCAP

After its surrender, the defeated Japan entered the phase of the Occupation under the Allied Power, operated particularly by the General Headquarters (GHQ), Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (SCAP) led by the United States. The reconstruction and rehabilitation of Japan under the GHQ/SCAP began with the fundamental reform of the Japanese government and society, including the punishment of the war crimes and the past militarism. Following that, in the so-called second period, the emphasis was shifted to the economic recoveries, as triggered by the economic crisis in which the country had faced since the end of the war. The last chapter of the occupation focused on the prospect of Japan and the peace treaty (United States Department of State, n.d.). Although being rather an indirect authority in some sense, taking into account the fact that the Japanese government itself was still present, the outcomes of the occupation laid behind the development and recovery of post-war Japan in all social, political, and economical aspects.

I. Social Changes:

1. Land Reform

Being considered among the most successful agricultural land reforms, Japanese post-war agrarian reform, in which the practical implementation started in 1946 and completed in 1950 as proposed by the SCAP's policy, has brought the impacts not only in the agricultural sectors, but also in the more fundamental scope, particularly the social structure (Ouchi, 1966). Prior to the reform, Japan had applied the landlord-tenant farmers' system where the owners of the land were the absentees, and those who farmed were the tenants with the obligation to give the landlords a high proportion of the crops in exchange. Such system of landlordism, even regarded by the SCAP as the "...multitudinous evils." (Kawagoe, 1999), formed a great gap between the two parties, brought up the unequal distribution of property rights, and limited the incentives of the farm laborers.

Under the reform policy, with the limitation in the amount of possessive land for one household and dictations for the landlords to sell their lands to the government, the land tenancy was abolished, along with the absentee landlords themselves, and the independent owner-farmers system was introduced. Such reform kicked off the democratization of the rural society, as the assets were fairly distributed to the rural societies. Plus, with the total possession of their own farmlands and agricultural products that formed the greater incentives for the farmers, the income distribution was more equalized, resulted in the knocking down of the former class structure based on the landholding status, and the better standard of living for the rural people.

2. Labour reform

The basic rights of labours and workers were also stimulated under legislations established during the Occupation period, such as the Trade Union Law (1945), the Labor Standards Law (1947), and the Labor Relations Adjustment Law (1947) (Hamada & Kasuya, 1992). Among those laws laid the principles in which the minimum workers' rights were guaranteed, and negotiation, as well as bargaining, were regarded as the desired methods for resolving any labour disputes. In addition, the right of workers to form trade or labors unions was also promoted, resulted in a rapid increase in the number of unions.

3. Family structures reform

According to several laws enacted through the influence of the Occupation authorities, the legal conditions of the Japanese family system were modified, along with the Japanese people's value system towards the concept of family. To put it simply, the pre-war concept of a patriarchal family system was replaced by the more modernized system constructed based on the more democratic ideology. The *Katoku*² was demolished, therefore the equal inheritance and the responsibility towards the aged parents would, legally, fall to all children. In terms of marriage, the principle which allowed free choice of spouse and encouraged mutual-agreement based marriage was implemented (Matsubara, 1969), and these features signalled the promotion of equal rights, particularly in terms of sexes.

4. Education reform

Education reform was another critical change introduced during the Occupation period, with the outcome laid in the expansion of compulsory education from six years to nine years. The pre-war multi-tracks system³ of education after the primary level was also replaced by the single education track, comprised of 6-3-3-4 patterns⁴, which still remains until present days. Opportunities for girls in higher education were more provided, with one practical factor supporting that was the co education system that was introduced as the options for the traditional gender-isolated education. The government's control over the education was also restricted, resulting in the abolishment of the authorized and centralized textbooks, with more freedom provided to the teachers. Correspondingly, the contents and styles of the class, which used to be rather teacher- or textbook-centered, were shifted to the approaches with more creativity and individuality (Shimbori, 1960). The result of such reform was the production of highly-skilled Japanese workers with discipline and positive attitude towards cooperation (Hamada & Kasuya, 1992).

II. Economical Recovery:

During World War II, the US conducted "Sea lane blockade". Due to this, all Japanese military and commercial ships were sunk, and Japan lost the means to transport energy and materials between the mainland and the colonies or occupied areas. Therefore, the production came to a halt without in-puts and this was the main reason for the collapse of Japan's war economy. Also, strategic bombing by the US virtually also contributed to the collapse. After WWII, Japan immediately suffered from shortages and inflation. In 1946, Japan experienced the lowest shortage rate and living standard rate. In order to stop the inflation, the

² The system in which the main successor of the family, and the one who would be in charge of taking care of the aged parents, would be the eldest son, according to the former legal system.

³ Prior to the educational reform, students were divided into several tracks of schooling, one may be sent to five-year middle school, three-year high school, and three-year university course, while others may fall into other routes.

⁴ Six-year of elementary school, three-year of junior high school, three-year of high school, and four-year of university. The former two schoolings are compulsory, while the latter two are not.

government imposed price controls and provided production subsidies for private sectors. Also, financial fund loans were designated for priority industries such as the coal industry. However, in 1949, “the Dodge Line stabilization” was produced by Dodge who was president of Detroit Bank to terminate inflation. In his measures, he stopped the loan systems, abolished the subsidies and added some measures. As a result, inflation stopped, commodity prices became stable and the basement of economic independence was established. However, due to the reduction of demands, tight credit and appreciation of the yen, many companies went bankrupt in 1949.

Although Japan faced depression, the economy of Japan entered into a high growth period after the recovery of 1945-49 and the Korean War from 1950 to 1953. Also, they faced depression several times in the 1950s, but they could succeed to recover the economy rapidly. From the middle of 1950s to the early 1970s, the average of real growth was almost 10 percent. Also, thanks to the Olympic games in Tokyo in 1964, Japan experienced an Olympic boom. In the Economic White Paper which was published in 1956, the economic growth of Japan at that time was described as “No longer after the war” because the economy of Japan rapidly grew in a short period. (DYNIC CORP, 2003)

III. Political Recovery:

In 1945 on July 26th, the Potsdam declaration was issued by the UK, the US and China. Japan accepted this declaration on August 14th and World War II ended. Then, Japan was under the occupation of the US until 1951. Through this declaration, the US requested Japan to demilitarize because the US wanted to cripple the Japanese economy so that it would never be able to make military goods again. For example, no heavy industry was to be allowed, remaining machines were to be removed and shipped to the rest of Asia as the restitutions. Also, SCAP introduced democracy because lack of democracy such as business monopolies like Zaibatsu, lack of workers’ rights and exploited peasants, was considered to be behind Japan’s military expansion. Therefore, SCAP executed three demographic reforms: Zaibatsu breakup, Land reform, and New labor laws. Zaibatsu were big business monopoly groups at that time, and they supported militarism during WWII. These groups were broken up into separate entities. In land reform, all farmlands were confiscated and sold to actual tillers. In new labor laws, all workers’ rights were guaranteed on organizing labor unions, collective bargaining and basic working conditions.

In addition, a new constitution was drafted and implemented under the pressure from the SCAP in 1947. This new constitution is called the Constitution of Japan. Before this constitution was implemented, the Constitution of the Great Empire of Japan dominated Japan. In this constitution, the emperor had the authority to govern Japan and the government organized the nation. However, in a new constitution, five features are mainly amended and added: sovereignty rests with people, the emperor is a symbol of Japan without political function, renunciation of war and non-possession of military forces, guarantee of basic human rights and separation of power among legislative, administrative and judicial branches. However, around 1947, US occupation policy shifted suddenly due to the start of the Cold War, (Ohno, 2006).

Similarities:

Even though Cambodia and Japan suffered from different causes of incidents, both countries share some surprising similarities and consequences after what happened. Some might say that there is nothing alike just because of distinguishing in regimes. On the contrary, they share more similarities than you can think.

First and foremost is the cause of both incidents; America. The influential country played a crucial role in international stage security. While America was just a part that forced the

Khmer Rouge to happen, they were the sole decision-maker in dropping the bombs on Japan. Consequently, both resulted in millions of innocent deaths.

Another similarity is the political reform after the incidents. After 1993, Cambodia switched to become a constitutional monarchy country like Japan's political constitutions. Royalty is not involved in politics rather the symbol of the country. The government also focused on the separation of power that was divided into three branches: legislative, administrative, and judiciary.

Differences:

Comparing the post-incidents recovery of Cambodia's Khmer Rouge and Japan's lost in World War II, indeed **two main differences** lied beneath any differences that occurred in the recovery process; one was the fact that *the incidents were incompatible* (one was the political regime, and another was the war), and another was how both *events happened at different time period*; therefore, the historical contexts were inconsistent. Resulted from the incompatible scale of the incidents themselves was the different size of the damages, and consequently the dissimilar recovery procedures.

As for the social recovery, unlike Cambodia's case that the process was the educational *recovery*, Japan's educational recovery was more of an educational *reform*. In other words, the educational system of Japan in the post-war period did not severely collapse, thus the process was more to change the formerly existing system. In Cambodia's case; however, the educational system fell apart as numerous academics were killed, therefore the mission was to rebuild the whole organism. In addition, in the recovery period of Cambodia, several conflicts which afflicted the recovery process still occurred while that was not the case for Japan, where the armed battle that would trouble the revitalisation did not arise.

In the process of economic recovery, Japan experienced a huge inflation. However, they got the ideas which were called "Dodge-line" from the US to stop its inflation and succeeded to terminate inflation in short-time. Also, Japan got benefits from not only domestic development but also from foreign countries such as Korean War and the Olympic games. On the other hand, Cambodian economic recovery measures were proposed by the Cambodian government and these measures sometimes did not work because of the foreign countries' intervention.

Reflections from RUPP students

Research on post-war rehabilitation in Japan and Cambodia, which Japan suffered because of the US bombing, and Cambodia plunged into a genocide dominion; both countries suffered severe damage. In particular, the loss of millions of lives. Both countries have gone through a complicated history to the point of falling to zero. Research shows that a country without peace will face hunger and constraint in all areas. Thus, each community is indispensable, peace like Cambodia and Japan have gone through a bitter and brutal history, but both countries can still find peace, build society as a whole, and will not let history repeat itself.

Reflections from HU students

Through researching the Japanese post-war recovery from World War II, and comparing it with Cambodia's case of the Khmer Rouge Regime, we were able to look back at the cruelty when peace was absent. In either case, millions of innocent people's lives were

taken away, and the left scars brought us deep reflective thoughts towards our peaceful present. It also reminds us, once again, of the importance of peace, and that it is our responsibility to work hard to achieve peace, continue those spirits, and not to let those incidents be repeated.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this paper focused on the recovery process that followed the unpeaceful incidents which arose in Cambodia as the Khmer Rouge Regime, and in Japan as a defeated state from World War II. Throughout the work, several differences in the recovery process were uncovered, as both incidents involved dissimilar backgrounds. Nevertheless, what the two cases shared was the fact that the recovery action, regardless of the unshared measures, was essential. It may be a demanding process, yet it is worth the demands.

References

- 40 Years After Khmer Rouge Rule, Cambodia Grapples With Legacy. (2021). Retrieved 19 March 2021, from <https://time.com/5486460/pol-pot-cambodia-1979/>
- BBC. (2020, August 9). 75 years since atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in Japan. Retrieved March 19, 2021, from BBC: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/33733410#comments>
- BBC News. (2020, August 9). Hiroshima and Nagasaki: 75th anniversary of atomic bombings. Retrieved March 19, 2021, from BBC News: <https://www.bbc.com/news/in-pictures-53648572>
- Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea — Young Pioneer Tours. (2021). Retrieved 19 March 2021, from <https://www.youngpioneertours.com/coalition-democratic-kampuchea/>
- Deab, S., (2012). *Cambodia History*. Phnom Penh: Vanda Institution. Retrieved March 16, 2021
- DYNIC CORP. (2003). From recovery to growth. Retrieved from <https://www.dynic.co.jp/company/80/chno4/ch04-1.html>
- Findlay, T., (1994). *Cambodia the legacy and lessons of UNTAC* (Research report). Stockholm International Peace Research Institute. Retrieved March 18, 2021
- Hamada, K., & Kasuya, M. (1992). The Reconstruction and Stabilization of the Postwar Japanese Economy: Possible Lessons for Eastern Europe? Yale University Economic Growth Center. New Heaven: Center Discussion Paper. Retrieved March 19, 2021
- Japan Broadcasting Corporation. (2021, 3 21). NHK for School. Retrieved from Establishment of the Constitution of Japan: https://www2.nhk.or.jp/school/movie/clip.cgi?das_id=D0005403094_00000
- Kawagoe, T. (1999). AGRICULTURAL LAND REFORM IN POSTWAR JAPAN: EXPERIENCES AND ISSUES*. Washington: The World Bank and Seikei University. Retrieved March 19, 2021
- Matsubara, H. (1969). THE FAMILY AND JAPANESE SOCIETY AFTER WORLD WAR II. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1746-1049.1969.tb00538.x>
- Ohno, K. (2006). The Economic Development of Japan: The Path Traveled by Japan as a Developing Country. Roppongi: GRIPS Development Forum. Retrieved from https://www.grips.ac.jp/vietnam/KOarchives/doc/EB03_EDJ/1EB03_Cover-Chap01.pdf
- Ouchi, T. (1966). THE JAPANESE LAND REFORM: ITS EFFICACY AND LIMITATIONS. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1746-1049.1966.tb00776.x>
- Shimbori, M. (1960). The Fate of Postwar Educational Reform in Japan. *The School Review*, 68(2), 228-241. Retrieved March 19, 2021, from <https://www.jstor.org/stable/1083588>
- Toek, M., (n.d.), [Cambodia's Economy during 1970 - 1993]., Phnom Penh: Royal University of Phnom Penh., Retrieved March 17, 2021

United States Department of State. (n.d.). Occupation and Reconstruction of Japan, 1945–52.
Retrieved March 20, 2021, from Office of The Historian:
<https://history.state.gov/milestones/1945-1952/japan-reconstruction>

Vong. S, & Nob. S., (2018), *Khmer History.*, Phnom Penh: Royal University of Phnom Penh.
Retrieved March 17, 2021