

CHAPTER III

CAMBODIAN POLITICS AND THE USE OF ANTI-VIETNAMESE PROPAGANDA AFTER 1993

After 1993, Cambodian politics changed from absolutism to multi-party democracy. In this new era, a lot of political parties emerged to compete for the leadership of the government through free and fair elections. However, only two or three major parties played important roles in the competition. These included the Front Uni National pour un Cambodge Independent, Neutre, Pacifique et Cooperatif (FUNCINPEC), the Buddhist Liberal Democratic Party (BLDP), and the Sam Rainsy Party, which came later. These parties had to try very hard to challenge with their strong competitor, the Cambodian People's Party (CPP).

For their political campaigns, these political actors, except the CPP, enjoy using Anti-Vietnamese propaganda of various types as a tool to gain popularity. Anti-Vietnamese propaganda refers to any type of propaganda used to foster negative images of the Vietnamese. They were used during the 1980s by Cambodian resistant groups against the Vietnamese occupation and the PRK administration. It is interesting to find that anti-Vietnamese propaganda is still been popular in present-day Cambodian politics.

This chapter argues that anti-Vietnamese propaganda has commonly been used by major Cambodian political parties nowadays in order to bring down the popularity of CPP, which is their strong political competitor. Anti-Vietnamese propaganda was chosen for many reasons. Firstly, the CPP owed their origin to the Vietnamese since the period of struggle for independence from French colonization. In addition, the historical and current

relation between Cambodia and Vietnam could be easily used to provoke anti-Vietnamese sentiment among the people, since it could bring fear and suspicion toward Vietnam in the hearts of the Khmer people. It could also foster in people the fear of losing Cambodia to Vietnam as the CPP is backed by the Vietnamese. Secondly, the weak implementation of policy of the CPP government toward problems such as border issues, illegal Vietnamese immigration, corruption and poverty could be used by those parties to link the CPP more closely to the Vietnamese. The use of anti-Vietnamese propaganda by the main political parties is more about internal political competition rather than the reflection of Cambodia and Vietnam's effort to solve existing problems.

Anti-Vietnamese propaganda has been used differently according to different background of the various political parties. It has been used not only to hurl at the CPP but also to bring up their own good image. In order to explain the arguments, this chapter is divided into four main parts. The first part explains the origin and the development of the major Cambodian political parties. The second part deals with the political situation in Cambodia after 1993. Problems concerning the Vietnamese and Vietnam in present-day Cambodia, namely border issues and Vietnamese settlement as well as some reflections on government policy to solve those problems, are examined in the third part. The last part discusses the use of anti-Vietnamese propaganda by various political parties. This will show that anti-Vietnamese propaganda has been used in order to gain political benefits, rather than to solve actual problems.

1. Origin of the CPP, FUNCINPEC, BLDP and Sam Rainsy Party

Among the major parties of Cambodia, only the CPP owes its origin to the Vietnamese and only the CPP has maintained a very close alliance with the Vietnamese communist party since the creation of the party in 1951 until recently. FUNCINPEC was founded later in the 1980s by Prince Sihanouk as a bulwark against Vietnamese occupation and the PRK (CPP). The origin of the BLDP is similar to that of FUNCINPEC. The Sam

Rainsy Party was established in 1994 after the first national election but later became a strong and popular opposition party.

The Origin of the CPP

The CPP traces its origin back to the Khmer People's Revolution Party (KPRP) by celebrating commemoration days every year among party members. KPRP was established in 1951 under the domination and support of the Vietnamese Communist Party. It was led by a monk named Acha Mean or Son Ngoc Minh, who was a Cambodian from southern Vietnam. The KPRP had as its purpose the joining of hands with the Vietnamese to fight against the French for independence. The KPRP did not receive recognition for their effort in the war with the French since Prince Sihanouk declared himself as the "Father of Independence" and claimed that Cambodia gained victory over the French because of his "crusade for independence". However, the KPRP still existed in Cambodia after independence and still had a connection with the Vietnamese Communist Party. In 1954, a thousand of the members of KPRP, including Pen Sovan and Chea Sim, were sent to be trained in Vietnam.

Shortly after its establishment, the KPRP welcomed a new group of intellectual communists. Some of them such as Pol Pot, Ieng Sary and many others had just come back from France. They had become interested in communist ideology while they were studying there. Pol Pot joined the KPRP in 1953 while Ieng Sary joined the party probably a few years later.¹ After Cambodia gained independence and in the 1960s, the KPRP was unknown and was recognized as a weak communist party. However, the party still received support from Vietnam and was under the domination of the Vietnamese communist party.

After Sihanouk was overthrown by Lon Nol, the KPRP, which was known later as the Communist Party of Kampuchea, (CPK or the Khmer Rouge) became famous as a

¹ David Chandler, Brother Number One: A Political Biography of Pol Pot, (Chiang Mai: Silkworm Books, 1999), p. 41

communist group who supported Sihanouk in the struggle against the Lon Nol government. The Khmer Rouge was encouraged by its allies, China and North Vietnam, to help Sihanouk to regain power. Sihanouk also called upon the people to enter the jungle in order to form a resistance group to attack the Lon Nol regime. In those days, Hun Sen, Heng Samrin and a number of important current CPP members followed the Prince, escaping to the jungle and joining hands with Khmer Rouge troops to overthrow Lon Nol and the U.S. They became Khmer Rouge cadres.

However, in the late 1960s, the relationship between the Cambodian and Vietnamese communists started to become fragile. Pol Pot was not satisfied with his North Vietnamese ally for not providing support and not taking care of the CPK which strongly faced the hostility of the Cambodian government. The unsatisfied feeling was still kept quietly in Pol Pot's mind and his suspicion toward Vietnam grew. Pol Pot wanted to separate the party to make it an independent communist party. In 1973, there was an indication of the break of CPK into two groups, the Khmer Rouge and the old members of the KPRP who returned from Vietnam to work with Khmer Rouge. The later would like to keep the alliance and cooperation with Vietnam and would like to modify Pol Pot's policy. This led Pol Pot to attack those members secretly and put the blame on the enemy instead.²

After the Khmer Rouge came to power in 1975, the same year that Vietnam won the war, Pol Pot had a policy to eliminate the Vietnamese who lived in Cambodia. The policy was also issued to eliminate some Khmer Rouge cadres who were suspected of having a relationship with Vietnam. The Khmer Rouge also started attacks along the border in an attempt to take back Cambodian territory in the southern part of Vietnam.

The Khmer Rouge policy of suspecting, torturing and starving their own people caused dissatisfaction among many people. Those who already knew that they would face death ran to Vietnam with many others. These people included Chea Sim who was an old

² Pen Sovann, ជីវប្រវត្តិសង្ខេប និងបុព្វហេតុជាតិមាតុភូមិកម្ពុជា (Bibliography and the Causes of Serving the Nation), (Seattle: Khmer Vision Publishing, 2002), p. 124

KPRP member and Hun Sen and Heng Samrin who were new Khmer Rouge cadres. They joined with some old KPRP members in Vietnam and formed a resistance movement called the Kampuchean National United Front for National Salvation (KNUFNS) in 1978.

Vietnam agreed to help the Front in fighting the Khmer Rouge after many Khmer Rouge attacks were launched along the border since late 1977 with an aim to take back the area called Kampuchea Krom, former Cambodian territory in the southern part of Vietnam.³ Vietnam joined hands with the KNUFNS to fight the Khmer Rouge by providing them all the support they needed. After its success in 1979, Vietnam selected members of KNUFNS to be in the new Cambodian government, the People's Republic of Kampuchea (PRK) they had installed; Pen Sovann became the Prime Minister, Hun Sen was appointed the Foreign Minister; Heng Samrin was the head of state and Chea Sim became the Minister of Interior.

Gaining victory over the Khmer Rouge meant the PRK gained popularity and support from the people who survived the genocidal regime. Pen Sovan recalled that after KNUFNS troops gained victory over the Khmer Rouge in some parts of the country, a number of Cambodian people volunteered to be soldiers in order to eradicate the rest of the Khmer Rouge.⁴ Cambodian people's support of the Vietnamese and the PRK was also mentioned by Ben Kiernan who did interviews with many Cambodians in 1981. The Cambodian people were likely welcome the Vietnamese troops to stay longer in Cambodia because of the fear of the Khmer Rouge returning.⁵ During that period, the PRK gained popularity and legitimacy from the Cambodian people by the claim that they freed the people from great sufferings. The friendship between Cambodia and Vietnam was raised while China and the western block were blamed for supporting the Khmer Rouge regime during the confrontations. The PRK had therefore been accused of being a "Vietnamese Puppet Government" by the resistance group.

³ Ibid, p. 140

⁴ Ibid, p.153

⁵ Ben Kiernan and Boua Chanthou, (ed.), Peasants and Politics in Kampuchea 1942-1981, (London: Zed Press), p.376

After the withdrawal of the Vietnamese troops, the PRK became the State of Cambodia (SOC) between 1991 and 1993 with Hun Sen as its Prime Minister; Chea Sim as Chairman of the National Assembly and Heng Samrin as the Head of State. Later, the KPRP developed into the Cambodian People Party (CPP) in order to join in the national election prepared by the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) in 1993. Thus, the origin of the CPP since the establishment of the Communist party until recently had been closely connected with the Vietnamese.

The Origin of FUNCINPEC

After being overthrown by Lon Nol, Prince Sihanouk started to make a strong alliance with the communist bloc. Later, he was also supported by the Khmer Rouge. The Prince was appointed as the head of state after the Khmer Rouge came to power in 1975. A year later he resigned and was put under house arrest. He was released in 1979 when the Vietnamese invaded Cambodia.

Sihanouk fled the country and spent his years in exile to convince the international communities of Vietnamese aggressive acts toward Cambodia. He later founded the National United Front for an Independent, Peaceful, Neutral, and Cooperative Cambodia (FUNCINPEC) in 1981 to struggle against and oust the Vietnamese troops from Cambodia. Later, FUNCINPEC joined with other two resistance groups, the Khmer Rouge and the Khmer People's National Liberation Front (KPNLF), to form the Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea (CGDK) with Prince Sihanouk as its Head, Son Sann from KPNLF and Khieu Samphan from the Democratic Kampuchea as the deputy.

For around 10 years, Sihanouk led this government to confront the PRK and the Vietnamese occupation. After the Paris Peace agreement in 1991, Sihanouk became the head of the Supreme National Council, which was a legitimate authority body in the period between the Paris Peace Agreement and the national election in 1993. FUNCINPEC still kept the chairmanship which was changed from Sihanouk to his son, Prince Norodom

Rannaridh, in 1992. Rannaridh has been the president of FUNCINPEC until the present day since Sihanouk returned to be the King of Cambodian King between 1993 and 2005.

The Origin of the BLDP

BLDP was developed from the KPNLF which was founded in 1979. Its leader, Son Sann, was a former minister of finance and national economy from 1961-62. After the Vietnamese invaded Cambodia in 1979, he set up a resistance group to force the Vietnamese troop out of Cambodia. This group joined with the Khmer Rouge and FUNCINPEC in 1982 in a coalition government legitimized by international community. KPNLF changed its name to be the Buddhist Liberal Democratic Party (BLDP) in order to join the national election in 1993.

The Origin of the Sam Rainsy Party

Sam Rainsy Party was established after the 1993 national election. It was led by Sam Rainsy who was the former FUNCINPEC minister of economy and finance. He left FUNCINPEC in 1994 because of a disagreement with Rannaridh. Sam Rainsy set up a political party called the Khmer Nation Party (KNP). The party's name was later changed to the Sam Rainsy Party.

Sam Rainsy was very popular when he was minister under FUNCINPEC. He began to centralize the tax revenue and strongly criticized corruption in both the CPP and FUNCINPEC and criticism has lasted until the present day.⁶

As observed by Penny Edwards, these political parties, except the CPP, used a lot of anti-Vietnamese propaganda during the 1993 election campaign. The anti-Vietnamese propaganda was aimed to foster nationalist sentiment as it came out of the differentiation of

⁶ David W. Robert, Political Transition in Cambodia 1991-99: Power, Elitism and Democracy. (Surrey: Curzon, 2001), p.156

ethnic groups, mostly toward the Vietnamese. These parties could gain their popularity from the people who have negative feelings toward the Vietnamese and the CPP, which used to have connected with Vietnam.

As for the Khmer Rouge, even though they denied joining the election, they made many attacks to shake the stability in the country during and after the election. Thus, anti-Vietnamese propaganda was used in order to foster nationalist sentiments among the soldiers to view the Khmer (SOC) and UNTAC in-country as being on the Vietnamese side.⁷ The propaganda was to create the fear of racial and cultural extinction which would come from Vietnam. The Vietnamese and the SOC were related to the threat of the disappearance of Cambodia. To keep Cambodia in existence, the Cambodians must be ready to crush the heads of both male and female "Yvon".⁸

The negative image of the Vietnamese was also formed by the propaganda of BLDP, but in an attempt to persuade the people to vote for them. Anti-Vietnamese propaganda was linked with many other issues which were weaknesses of CPP, such as corruption. The Vietnamese were the exploiters of the Khmer people by secretly occupying the land, making problems for the Khmer such as prostitution and robbery in Cambodia.⁹ All these problems have been linked with each other with the Vietnamese as the root cause.

These kinds of anti-Vietnamese propaganda have continually been used until recent political competitions. Different political parties use it with their own, individual styles. However, all had the purpose of competing with and bringing down the popularity of the CPP. The anti-Vietnamese propaganda has therefore been developed and used according to various political contexts.

⁷ Penny Edwards, "Imaging the Other in Cambodian Nationalist Discourse before and during the UNTAC Period", Propaganda, Politics, and Violence in Cambodia: Democratic Transition under United Nations Peace-Keeping, edited by Steven Heder and Judy Ledgerwood, (London: M.E Sharpe, 1996), p.66

⁸ Ibid, p.65

⁹ Ibid, p. 67-68

2. The Cambodian political situation after 1993

The national election in 1993 was the turning point of Cambodian politics from absolutism¹⁰ to the multiple parties of liberal democracy. Many political parties including major parties mentioned above joined in the election. FUNCINPEC won the majority of votes with 58 seats in the parliament. The CPP gained 51 seats while BLDP gained 10 seats and 1 seat was for another party.¹¹ No single party could form a government alone due to the lack of two third of seats in the national assembly. The coalition government formula was formed by FUNCINPEC and CPP.

After the two parties agreed to share power, Cambodia then had an experience in having two Prime Ministers, Prince Rannaridh from FUNCINPEC and Hun Sen from CPP. In the body of the government, the equal sharing of power was also practiced.¹²

The formation of the first coalition government could not create stability in the country. The factions in the coalition government did not trust each other and they still kept their own military forces. The fragility of the government became clearer after the two parties worked together for a few years. It was about the unbalance in power-sharing and competition for the political hegemony in the future election.

Prince Rannaridh had shown his unhappiness with power sharing and claimed that his alliance did not give him greater power in the grass roots level even though he was the winner of the election. He defined this problem as a blockage.¹³ Then, the Prince made an alliance with other political parties such as the BLDP, Khmer Neutral Party of Buor Hell and the Khmer Nation Party of Sam Rainsy. They formed the National United Front

¹⁰ Since receiving independence from France, Cambodia politic has been dominated by a single party, Sihanouk, Lon Nol, Khmer Rouge, and the People republic of Kampuchea period. So, multi-pluralism was new for Cambodia.

¹¹ Sorpong Peou, *Intervention and Change in Cambodia: Towards democracy?* (Singapore: institute of Southeast Asian studies, 2000), p.173

¹² Ibid, p. 175

¹³ Mehta C., Harish, *Warrior Prince: Norodom Ranariddh, Son of King Sihanouk of Cambodia.* (Graham Brash: Singapore, 2001), p.172

(NUF). The creation of this Front was explained by Nhek Bun Chhay, the senior official of FUNCINPEC, as an alliance to seek common objectives and strategies for the 1998 election. The Front had nothing to do with gathering the military force against the coalition government.¹⁴ However, the Prince later threatened to leave the coalition government. This action was interpreted by CPP as the reason to break the relationship of the coalition government.

Another problem was that of seeking an alliance with the Khmer Rouge faction. The two Prime Ministers agreed to set up a committee to handle the Khmer Rouge problem. However, FUNCINPEC seemed to be ahead in the negotiations with the Khmer Rouge. The tension became stronger when Prince Rannaridh, through his senior FUNCINPEC general Nhek Bun Chhay, embarked on a highly dangerous secret discussion with the Anlong Veng faction nominally led by Khieu Samphan, although the real leader was its military commander Ta Mok.¹⁵ The first Prime Ministers then agreed to nominate the Khmer Rouge leader, Khieu Samphan, to join the NUF.¹⁶

If NUF's main objective was really to seek the common goals and strategies for the next national election, as mentioned by Nheck Bun Chhay, this front probably could gain more popularity in the next election. The failure of CPP in the 1993 election had indicated to some extent the shaky legitimacy of the CPP. The activities of FUNCINPEC seemed to fulfill its promise in the 1993 campaign to bring peace to Cambodia and create national reconciliation by assimilating the Khmer Rouge. This could make FUNCINPEC gain more votes. Moreover, the alliance sought to strengthen its military power to challenge the powerful force of CPP.

¹⁴ Nheck Bun Chhay, *A Luck in a Thousand Dangers*, 1998, p.11

¹⁵ Abdulgaffar Peang-Meth, "Understanding Cambodia's Political Developments.", *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, Vol.19, No.3, 1997, p.298

¹⁶ Sorpong Peou. "Hun Sen's Pre-Emptive Coup: Causes and Consequences." *Southeast Asian Affairs* (ISEAS: Singapore, 1998), p.88

It could be said that the CPP was in fear of this alliance as it would affect the future of the party. The conflict between FUNCINPEC and CPP brought Cambodia again into the realm of military confrontation in July 1997. Hun Sen charged the Prince with making a coup d'état to oust him from the power by using Khmer Rouge troops while the Prince, who went into exile, claimed that it was a coup d'état to oust *him* from the power.

Political conflicts in Cambodia after the formation of the first coalition government were about the unbalance of power-sharing as well as competition for political hegemony for the future election. The conflicts continued until the 1998 elections.

The Prince, who escaped abroad in 1997 had been assured of a safe return by the CPP in order to join the elections in 1998.¹⁷ This time the election was also joined by the Sam Rainsy Party. CPP won 59 seats, FUNCINPEC 44 seats and Sam Rainsy 18 seats. BLDP could not win any seats and later the name disappeared from Cambodian politics.¹⁸

The political instability continued after the election because FUNCINPEC and Sam Rainsy Party rejected the results and claimed that it was not a free and fair election.¹⁹ Moreover, FUNCINPEC refused to join the government with CPP.²⁰

During this political deadlock, Sam Rainsy led many huge demonstrations in Phnom Penh city to reject the election results and to oust Hun Sen from power. Behind the scenes, the three parties were discussing possible coalition trade-offs.²¹

The political tension was released when an agreement of power sharing between CPP and FUNCINPEC had been accomplished under the initiative of King Sihanouk. The

¹⁷Since Prince Rannaridh could claim for his legitimacy internationally, the aids to Cambodia were cut down and it will be provided again in an exchange with the return and the involvement of the Prince in the Cambodian politics again.

¹⁸Sue Downie, "Cambodia's 1998 Election: Understanding Why It Was not a 'Miracle on the Mekong'", *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, Vol.54, No.2, 2000, p. 53

¹⁹Ibid, p.53

²⁰Ibid, p.54

²¹Ibid, 53-54

new coalition government was established with Hun Sen as the Prime Minister and Rannaridh the chair of the National Assembly. In order to save the face of Chea Sim who used to be President of the National Assembly, the Senate Office was created for him and Nheck Bun Chhay as his deputy.

Since then the popularity of FUNCINPEC seemed to be decrease gradually. In the commune election in 2002, FUNCINPEC gained only 2, 213 seats while CPP got 7,698 commune seats and Sam Rainsy Party 1,340 seats²². In the National election a year later, CPP could gain a majority of vote with 73 seats out of 123 while FUNCINPEC secured only 26 seats and the rest 24 were given to Sam Rainsy Party.²³

Cambodia after this election was faced with another deadlock in the formation of a coalition government. CPP still could not form a government alone because of the lack of another 6 seats. Neither FUNCINPEC nor Sam Rainsy party agreed to join the coalition unless CPP agreed with the demand that Hun Sen step down from the premiership.

Hun Sen strongly rejected the demands of the Prince and Sam Rainsy by declaring his desire to be the Prime Minister of Cambodia for 10 years more.²⁴ FUNCINPEC and Sam Rainsy later joined the Alliance Democrats (AD) in order to put pressure on CPP. This deadlock lasted around one year.

One solution was initiated by King Sihanouk in the form of a tripartite government of CPP, FUNCINPEC and Sam Rainsy.²⁵ But, it failed. In the end, a government with two coalition parties, CPP and FUNCINPEC, was formed whilst the Sam Rainsy Party was left outside.

²² Milton Osborne, "Cambodia: Hun Sen Firmly in Control.", *Southeast Asian Affairs*. (Singapore: ISEAS, 2003), p. 84

²³ Tin Maung Maung Than, "Cambodia: Strongman, Terrible man, Invisible Man, and Politics of Power Sharing.", *Southeast Asian Affairs*. (Singapore: ISEAS, 2004), p.75

²⁴ Ibid, p. 77

²⁵ Ibid, p. 78

Since the transition in 1993, Cambodian politics have been faced with many problems, especially competition for power among the political parties and the problem of power sharing. In order to earn their hegemony, the Cambodian political parties could even use violence such as in the case of the 1997 events. However, for the parties which didn't have strong military forces, the possibility to survive or to gain hegemony was through the result of elections. That was the reason why the parties used several techniques to earn their popularity in competing with CPP. Among them, there was the use of anti-Vietnamese propaganda. Therefore, anti-Vietnamese propaganda is just a tool to gain political benefits and does not really reflect the actual relationship between Cambodia and Vietnam, a situation which both governments have tried to improve by addressing border issues and illegal Vietnamese immigration.

3. Problems concerning the Vietnamese and Vietnam after 1993

The role of Vietnam in Cambodian political affairs ended in 1991 after the Paris agreement was signed by 19 countries including Vietnam in order to end foreign interference in Cambodia. After 1993, Vietnam started to show respect for Cambodian independence by refusing to provide military assistance to fight with the Khmer Rouge as requested by the Cambodian government in 1994.²⁶ The Vietnamese government also rejected any blame on its involvement in Cambodian internal affairs by declaring that it always respected the independence and sovereignty of Cambodia and that this has been the Vietnamese' consistent stance²⁷. Later, Vietnam was known as a country which actively helped Cambodia to join Asean.

Apart from ending interference in internal political affairs, Vietnam has maintained good relations with Cambodia as seen through diplomatic exchanges, economic

²⁶ Cambodia Daily, 13/06/1994, p.5

²⁷ After the fighting between CPP and FUNCINPEC in 1997, Prince Rannaridh charged Hun Sen of being supported by Vietnam military force to oust the Prince from the power. Response to this, the Vietnamese Foreign Ministry said that the allegations were irresponsible and groundless. Cambodia Daily, 25/08/1997, p.9

cooperation as well as problem solving. The first visit of the Vietnamese head of government happened in 1994 in order to speed up friendship between the two countries and to discuss economics, trade, education and training.²⁸ It was followed by the visit of many high-ranking Vietnamese officials to Cambodia in exchange of the visit of the head of Cambodian government to Vietnam to discuss many issues.²⁹ The negotiations and discussions of the existing problems between Cambodia and Vietnam, namely border disputes and Vietnamese settlement took place peacefully instead of by the use of force which used to explode in the past.

The problem of Vietnamese settlement

Before the overthrow of Prince Sihanouk in 1970, it was estimated that at least 450,000 Vietnamese lived in Cambodia.³⁰ During the Lon Nol period, both Vietnamese soldiers and civilians were killed by government military forces. Later, there was intervention from the state to stop those activities and there were some Vietnamese left in Cambodia. However, during the Khmer Rouge era, almost no Vietnamese existed in Cambodia as the Khmer Rouge seemed to have a policy of eliminating this race.

After the fall of the Khmer Rouge, the Vietnamese flowed back into Cambodia again as the PRK regime set up a policy to recognize the return of the Vietnamese who had lived in Cambodia before the Khmer Rouge era. However, the flow was followed by an uncontrollable amount of Vietnamese illegal immigrants.

The reason for the large population flow from Vietnam was the economic crisis in the country. After Vietnam won the war with the US, the country was terribly destroyed. The Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia led to economic sanctions which put pressure on

²⁸ Cambodia Daily 01/04/1994, p.5

²⁹ Ibid, 01/04/1994, p.5; 16/01/1995, p. 7; 07/08/1995, p. 7; 24/08/1995, p. 5; 20/03/1996, p.8

³⁰ Marie Alexanderine Martin, Cambodia: A shattered Society, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), translated from French into English by Mark W. McLeod, p.138

the lives of the people who had just recovered from the war. The sufferings lasted for many years until the 1990s.

In the late 1980s, the reform policy "Doi Moi" was introduced with an aim to lead the country to a market economy, but the success was still a long way off. In the first half of 1989, Vietnam had about 6 million unemployed or marginally employed.³¹ In addition to the growth of unemployment, Vietnam had faced with the growth of the population.³² Therefore, it caused an imbalance between the rate of economic growth and the rate of population growth.

The interviews done by the Phnom Penh Post with some Vietnamese immigrants showed that most of the Vietnamese came to Cambodia because of poor economic conditions in Vietnam as well as the economic boom in Cambodia during the 1990s, in which they believed they could easily earn money.³³ The Vietnamese came to stay in Cambodia and worked as factory workers or worked in low level jobs, such as fishing, engaged in small trading, crafts and small repair work.³⁴ According to Gottesman, Vietnamese officials gave the figure of 600,000 Vietnamese who flowed into Cambodia after 1979.³⁵ The Cambodian resistance groups estimated that there were about 700,000 Vietnamese living in Cambodia in the middle of the 1980s.³⁶ From the estimation of the opposition party, the number of Vietnamese currently living in Cambodia is about one million.³⁷ Another estimation made by a student showed that about two million Vietnamese are currently living in Cambodia.³⁸ However, no exact figure about the Vietnamese has

³¹ Yuangrat Wedel, *Current Vietnamese Economy*. (Institute of Asian Studies, Chulalongkorn University, 1989), p.2

³² Ibid, p. 4

³³ "Vietnam: The View from Cambodia, Vietnamese in Cambodia: Their Story", <http://www.phnompenhpost.com>, 4-17 February 2000

³⁴ Evan Gottesman, *Cambodia after the Khmer Rouge: Inside the Politics of Nation Building*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), p. 163

³⁵ Ibid

³⁶ Ibid

³⁷ "Approval Granted for Expansion of Vietnamese Support Group.", <http://www.phnompenhpost.com>, 21 Nov-4 Dec 2003

³⁸ Ibid

been surveyed, and this is still a source of debate and suspicion among the Cambodian people.

Because of the uncontrollable flow of Vietnamese illegal immigration to Cambodia, a policy to control it had been discussed several times. During the PRK period, Pen Sovan, the former PRK Prime Minister in 1979-1981, proposed to make a statistical survey of the Vietnamese in Cambodia and an acceptable solution for the illegal Vietnamese immigrants in order to prevent a large flow of Vietnamese into Cambodia. The problem had been raised again by the PRK in 1984 when the Cambodian Minister of Interior asked the Vietnamese Ministry of the interior to help to exchange experience to strengthen the people's police forces from the ministry down to the localities, to expand and guide systems with expertise in espionage and counterespionage, and to establish systems for managing border crossings and foreigners and for issuing border-crossing letters to cadre and people.³⁹

After the election in 1993, the new coalition government passed a law on immigration in 1994.⁴⁰ Although it was known as a law for foreigners in general in the country, the adaptation of this law seemed to reply to the need to control Vietnamese immigration, since the Vietnamese formed the largest foreign population in Cambodia.⁴¹ Seven sections of 41 articles of the law were directed strictly at the foreigners who lived in Cambodia. In the last article of the law, the minister of interior was the one who should oust any person who violated Cambodian immigration law, including illegal immigrants.⁴² The law also mentioned the important role of the local authorities at provincial or municipal levels, who closely work with the immigrants and make recommendations to the Ministry of Interior for the permission to admit or deport immigrants⁴³. Thus, the

³⁹ Evan Gottesman, Cambodia after the Khmer Rouge: inside the politics of Nation building. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), p. 163

⁴⁰ Cambodian Law on immigration, passed in 26/08/1994

⁴¹ Cambodia Daily, 24/08/1994, p. 7

⁴² Section 35 and 37 article 6 of the law on immigration.

⁴³ Section 3, article 16 of the law on immigration, the decision of the ministry of interior is dependent on the proposal of the provincial and municipal court.

effectiveness of the law to control the illegal immigration was much dependent on local authority and the bottom-up working structures.

Since, the immigration law has been passed, the strengthening of it in the local level have become a problem. The law must be more loosely practiced if there is a loosely working structure in the local level. As mentioned by some Cambodians, the Vietnamese could come easily into Cambodia by just giving bribes to the local authorities.⁴⁴ However, there was no academic or working evidence to clarify this problem. More importantly, no declaration has been issued by the Cambodian government.

Vietnamese illegal immigrants continued to flow into Cambodia. Although there was no official figure of the Vietnamese given by the government of Cambodia, the Cambodian people could easily recognize the presence of a huge number of Vietnamese in Cambodia mainly through their language. One of the informants described:

"I see Vietnamese everywhere in the country, in Phnom Penh, in the markets. Now, they move to Pailin, Siem Reap and Poi Pet working for small craft factories..... If I kick out one Vietnamese, probably five Vietnamese are coming in."⁴⁵

Border problems

Vietnam and Cambodia share the border of around 1137 km. The border was inherited from the French. The unclear demarcation of the border in some points in the French period resulted in many border conflicts between the two countries. The common knowledge of border conflicts is over sea territory which each country claims.

The negotiation of border disputes has been done many times since the two countries gained independence. During the 1960s, Prince Sihanouk requested an

⁴⁴ Conversation with a taxi driver along the Cambodian-Vietnamese border, April-May 2005

⁴⁵ Interview with informant no. 25

international conference to handle the problem peacefully. However, no such agreement was ever made. Later, in the Lon Nol and Khmer Rouge regimes, peaceful means were never adopted and violations were always used to claim the overlapping territory by the regimes, especially the sea territory. In 1975, Cambodia and Vietnam started to accuse each other over the territory via an island in the sea. Vietnam claimed that Cambodia attacked the Vietnamese-held island of Phu Quoc and took more than 500 Vietnamese prisoners.⁴⁶ Vietnam also attacked Kampuchea-held Vai Island and took around 600 Cambodian military prisoners.⁴⁷ All these problems had been brought to negotiations many times but never with good results⁴⁸.

After Vietnam launched the war against the Khmer Rouge and occupied Cambodia for 10 years, three border supplementary treaties were reached between the Vietnamese government and the PRK in 1979, 1983 and 1985. The supplementary treaty in 1979 mainly mentioned the willingness to negotiate to come to the signing of a border planning agreement on the basis of the existing border line and determined to work together to build a border line of long- lasting peace and friendship"⁴⁹. The later supplementary treaty was signed in 1983, which mainly mentioned the technical used of the map scale to define the border between the two countries. They agreed to use the 1/100,000 scale map of the Indochina Geography Department before 1954. Moreover, the agreement set out for the future negotiations of the unclear points which were not mentioned on the map in the spirit of equality and mutual respect for the interest of the Vietnam-Cambodia special relations and in line with international law and practice.⁵⁰ In the following treaty of 1985, Cambodia and Vietnam agreed to use the Universal Transverse Mercator map (UTM map) of 1/50,000 scale in order to support the demarcation and planting of the border stone. The 72 border markers were planted among the 322 planned border markers before the political situation in Cambodia changed.

⁴⁶ Thu Houg and Nguyen Vo, Khmer-Viet Relations and the Third Indochina Conflict. (North Carolina: Mcfarland, 1992), p.78

⁴⁷ Ibid, p.79

⁴⁸ Ibid, p.80

⁴⁹ http://www.nhandan.com.vn/english/news/081205/domestic_new.htm

⁵⁰ Ibid

After the Paris agreement in 1991, any agreements between the PRK and the Vietnamese government made during the 1980s had to be halted since the Cambodian regime was not internationally accepted as the legal government of Cambodia. The three supplementary treaties were therefore annulled.

After the formation of the new coalition government in 1993, the border problem was raised again. King Sihanouk suddenly alleged that Vietnam had moved the border markers deeper into Cambodian territory and created a new border line. He continually mentioned: "Digging the canals has been an old tactic....but now the border markers are walking. They are walking to the west."⁵¹ No reason was given why the King issued such a statement, but he issued this after the Vietnamese denied to give military support to fight with the Khmer Rouge.

The unclear border markers were really a problem for the people who lived along the border. Some Cambodians complained that they have lost their land ownership to Vietnam, even though the land belonged to them. The Vietnamese claimed that the land belonged to them and if the Cambodians would like to use it, they had to ask for their permission.⁵² There is a need to end all these conflicts.

Later, the problem was raised again. Many negotiations took place between Vietnam and Cambodia in the visits of high ranking officials, such as Prince Sirivudh in 1994 and Prince Rannaridh and Hun Sen in 1998. As a result both countries aimed to end the border disputes by the year 2000 and it was followed by negotiation at the technical level to define and plant border markers.⁵³ Until the year 2005, both governments successfully ended their negotiations and agreed to use the 1985 treaty as the base for border negotiation and border plantation. The signing of the supplementary treaty was held in 2006. The CPP government assured that they will protect the 181,035 square kilometers

⁵¹ Cambodia Daily, 12/05/94, p. 5

⁵² <http://www.phnompenhpost.com>, July 17 - 23, 1998

⁵³ Cambodia Daily, 11/01/2000, p. 7

of Cambodian territory and the end of the border problem will bring peace and development to the Cambodian people.

To sum up, the relationship between Vietnam and Cambodia was quite good in terms of diplomatic exchanges and economic cooperation. The existing problems, immigration issues and border problems now seemed to be technical problems and real practices. However, because of political competition, CPP, FUNCINPEC, and other opposition parties have tried to deal with these issues in different ways in order to serve their political goals.

4. The use of Anti-Vietnamese Propaganda

Political rivalries after 1993 were among the main political parties, FUNCINPEC, BLDP and Sam Rainsy Party to compete with the CPP. In every election campaign or significant event, the parties always used political propaganda against each other. A study conducted by Penny Edwards showed that the propaganda was used by the major parties in the election campaign during the UNTAC period. However, anti-Vietnamese propaganda has been continually used until the recent political competition.

Mostly, anti- Vietnamese propaganda aimed to convince the people in three aspects. Firstly, the Vietnamese have been portrayed as a hostile invader. Moreover, the political parties claimed that the invading purpose has still continued up until the present day by linking present issues with history. Secondly, the Vietnamese are also viewed as having a role in Cambodian politics as Vietnam still has influence on the CPP. Thirdly, the political parties used the issue of Vietnamese immigration to claim the loss of economic benefits to the Vietnamese. Anti-Vietnamese propaganda was not used alone. It was accompanied by many others propaganda to blame the Vietnamese and CPP and to raise the good image of one's own political party in order to gain popularity.

Vietnam as a past and present invader

The main important propaganda for FUNCINPEC to gain popularity from the people is to invoke the perception of the past glory of King Sihanouk's golden era and associate itself with that.⁵⁴ Sihanouk was very well-known as the father of independence, integrity and sovereignty of the nation. Moreover, it is a Khmer custom that the King is referred to as a god who garners a lot of respect from the common people. After the struggle for independence from France, he brought prosperity to the Cambodian people for about 15 years.

"Follow the Samdech Eav (Father King)" propaganda can be used by FUNCINPEC since the party was founded by Sihanouk, and Rannaridh himself has royal blood. To link with the glorious past is to use the same context of recent Cambodian history in which FUNCINPEC participated. Vietnam, like the French, was an imperialist, who invaded and occupied Cambodia in the 1980s. To liberate Cambodia from Vietnam was the duty to protect Cambodia sovereignty and integrity like the activities of Samdech Eav. Thus, FUNCINPEC used this to link itself with a glorious time in the past as well as portraying itself as the country's protector against foreign invasion.

The above was clearly shown in the 1998 election, when Rannaridh claimed: "I served Samdech Euv (Prince Sihanouk) to liberate Cambodia from Vietnam in the past".⁵⁵ He referred to the Vietnamese occupation in the 1980s. Sihanouk was obviously against the Vietnamese occupation. Without any choice, he decided to join with the Khmer Rouge and other groups to resist against Vietnamese aggression and the PRK. Sihanouk mentioned about himself in that situation: "I have faced with two tigers, a Vietnamese Tiger and a Khmer Rouge Tiger; I would like to feed the Khmer Rouge Tiger because at least it is

⁵⁴ Penny Edwards, "*Imaging the other in Cambodian Nationalist Discourse before and during the UNTAC Period*", *Propaganda, Politics, and Violence in Cambodia: Democratic Transition under United Nations Peace-Keeping*. Edited by Steven Heder and Judy Ledgerwood, (London: M.E Sharpe, 1996), p.59

⁵⁵ Cambodia Daily 21/07/1998, p. 11

Khmer"⁵⁶. Although this word was just an excuse for himself, he had already differentiated the Khmers. Khmers who had a connection with Khmers were Khmer, the Khmer who had a connection with the Vietnamese were not Khmer.

Moreover, FUNCINPEC demanded to change National Independence day from 7 January, which was set up by the CPP and had been celebrated since the fall of the Khmer Rouge, to 9 October which is the date that Cambodia received independence from the French under the struggle of King Sihanouk.⁵⁷ FUNCINPEC mentioned that 7 January was the date of the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia despite the fact that Khmers could otherwise not survive the Khmer Rouge and it was therefore not possible to keep this date as Independence Day.⁵⁸ Without an agreement from CPP, both national festivals were celebrated. The Vietnamese in the past were considered as an invader of Cambodian territory. CPP worked with the invaders. FUNCINPEC was the protector of Cambodian territory and sovereignty. The concepts were still mentioned and used by FUNCINPEC until recently by exploiting current problems, border issues between Cambodia and Vietnam.

Prince Rannariddh recalled the past success of the struggle and linked it with his attention toward current border issues in which he again claimed that it was an act of Vietnamese invasion. FUNCINPEC was the one who tried to handle it, protecting the territory in the past as well as in the present day. "When I served Samdech Euv (Prince Sihanouk) to liberate Cambodia from Vietnam in the past and when I protested against the recent Vietnamese invasion of villages in Svay Reang.....did any Excellency assist me in demanding territorial protection?"⁵⁹The Prince then persuaded the people in his public campaign in 1998 "A vote for FUNCINPEC is a vote to settle territory," He added "If we

⁵⁶ Norodom Sihanouk, Prisonnier des Khmers Rouges, translated from French into Khmer by Ti Kheay, p.464

⁵⁷ Nhek Bun Chhay, A Luck in Thousand Dangers, p. 62

⁵⁸ Ibid

⁵⁹ Cambodia Daily, 21/07/1998, p. 11

vote for the right party, the yuon will leave; if we choose the wrong party, the yuon will come in greater numbers".⁶⁰

These border issues were strongly raised again and again when Election Day approached in 1998. The Prince started to mention the border talks with Vietnam of which the CPP officials used the 1980s Cambodian-Vietnam border treaty as the base, and he claimed that treaty would make Cambodian lose territory to Vietnam. Even though there was a strong statement from the officials that Cambodia could maintain the size of their territory and the negotiation aimed to end border tension with Vietnam, the Princes still insisted that Cambodia lost territory to Vietnam by using this treaty.⁶¹

Thus, FUNCINPEC used the history of Vietnamese invasion into Cambodia in the 1980s in order to arouse nationalist spirit. They were the protectors of Cambodia and ousted the Vietnamese from Cambodia. At the same time, FUNCINPEC used the current border issues to claim that the purpose of the invading Cambodia has still continued until the present day. Vietnam invaded and wanted Cambodian territory. CPP allowed the Vietnamese to gain territory from Cambodia. FUNCINPEC was the one who could solve this problem.

The same sentiment was provoked by the Sam Rainsy party when the 1998 election approached. Similar to Rannaridh, Sam Rainsy started to condemn border negotiations with Vietnam in which the CPP used the border treaty in 1980s as the base. He claimed that in using this treaty, Cambodia would lose Cambodian benefits to the Vietnamese, even though there was a strong statement to claim that Cambodian territory and sovereignty could be maintained by CPP technical staff.

The same style of propaganda was used again in the 2003 national election. According to a Phnom Penh Post report, Sam Rainsy's propaganda mainly focused on

⁶⁰ <http://www.phnompenhpost.com>, July 17 - 23, 1998

⁶¹ *Ibid*

corruption, illegal Vietnamese immigration and border issues.⁶² Obviously, Sam Rainsy was later known as the one who strongly opposed the government against the current signing of the supplementary of the border treaty with Vietnam in late 2005. Even though there was a strong claim from CPP that Cambodia did not lose territory and still maintained 181,035 squares Km, the opposition party said "The negotiation is not equal since Cambodia is weaker than Vietnam".⁶³ Sam Rainsy used the border issue against CPP by imposing the image of Vietnamese attempting to invade or to take Cambodian territory. CPP allowed Vietnam to do this by signing the agreement with Vietnam.

BLDP propaganda aimed to provoke the same anti-Vietnamese sentiments. However, BLDP used the issue of illegal Vietnamese immigration as a tool to condemn Vietnam of continuing the purpose of invading Cambodia in the present day and in the future by sending a large amount of Vietnamese people to live in Cambodia. Anti-Vietnamese slogans which created the fear of the disappearance of Cambodia had been spread to hundreds of listeners along the street. "The Hanoi government has sent its people to Cambodia. If you don't want the Yuon to swallow Cambodia, you should vote for another party".⁶⁴ BLDP claimed that the Vietnamese settlement in Cambodia was a tool of the Vietnamese government to take control over Cambodia. In order to keep Cambodia on the map, the party persuaded the people to vote for any other party except the CPP.

The concept of Vietnamese invading or controlling Cambodia was used by the main political parties. They mainly exploited the current border issues and illegal Vietnamese immigration to remind the Cambodians of the past history of Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia. They provoked the fear of losing Cambodia and convinced the people not to vote for the CPP, but rather for their party, in order to protect Cambodia.

⁶² Ibid, July 4 - 17, 2003

⁶³ www.evetv.gov.com.kh, 12/11/05

⁶⁴ Announced to the public march by Secretary General of BLDP during the 1998 election campaign, Cambodia Daily, 23/07/98, p. 9

The Vietnamese role in Cambodian politics

Other kinds of FUNCINPEC propaganda was about the existing Vietnamese role in Cambodian politics. The Vietnamese still had a dominant role in the CPP. This propaganda has been used during political tension in the country and the decrease of FUNCINPEC's popularity. FUNCINPEC charged the CPP of having connection with Vietnam in provoking the 1997 fighting event to oust Rannaridh from power.⁶⁵ This was a response to CPP having condemned Rannaridh for bringing in the Khmer Rouge to stage a coup d'état.

Not only the Prince but also low level FUNCINPEC members have used this propaganda. During the election campaign, they strongly attacked the CPP for having connections with Vietnam. One FUNCINPEC member said: "Cambodia is fighting a battle against the Vietnamese. And you know the CPP is backed by Vietnam. Their parents are Cambodian but their hearts and their brains are Vietnamese".⁶⁶ It became even stronger during the election campaign in 2003 when FUNCINPEC again blasted the CPP with accusations of being tied to the Vietnamese and once again emphasizing the border and Vietnamese illegal immigration issues in Cambodia. FUNCINPEC officials accused the CPP of being controlled by Vietnam while Prince Rannaridh vowed to establish a Ministry of Immigration to control illegal Vietnamese immigrants if he won the election.⁶⁷

The propaganda obviously showed that FUNCINPEC reminded people of the background of the CPP, which owed its origin to the Vietnamese and had later been under the Vietnamese domination for a long time. Everyone knows that the CPP was significantly very close to the Vietnamese in the 1980s in the war with the Khmer Rouge. Many CPP high ranking officials were appointed by the Vietnamese and they still have important roles in the Cambodian government today. With this weakness, FUNCINPEC could claim very easily that CPP has still been under Vietnamese domination until the present. Moreover,

⁶⁵ Cambodia Daily, 25/08/1997, p. 9

⁶⁶ Caroline Hughes, " *Khmer Land, Khmer Soul: Sam Rainsy, Populism and the Problem of Seeing Cambodia.*", *Southeast Asia Research*, Vol. 9, No.1, (London: SAOS, 2001) ,p.57

⁶⁷ <http://www.phnompenhpost.com> , July 4 - 17, 2003

existing problems led FUNCINPEC to claim more easily that there is the Vietnamese influence over the CPP. This concept has also been used by other political parties.

BLDP also claimed that Vietnam still had control over CPP. The party used the word "yuon puppets" to refer to the CPP. This word was commonly used to refer to the PRK during the Vietnamese occupation of Cambodia in the 1980s. BLDP extended the role of Vietnam in the CPP from 1980s until the present time. BLDP added: "You should try Son Sann's party (BLDP), a soup served without MSG. It is probably more delicious than Yuon MSG."⁶⁸ The idea of the disappearance of Cambodia was put under the responsibility of the CPP who was a Vietnamese ally in the past. Moreover, the weak points of the coalition government such as Vietnamese illegal immigration and corruption were raised to form the visible pictures of that threatening propaganda.

Similar to FUNCINPEC or BLDP, Sam Rainsy exploited the concept of the Vietnamese role in Cambodian politics, especially CPP. In the 1998 election campaign, the issue of Vietnamese illegal immigration was raised. Sam Rainsy promised the return of the Vietnamese in Cambodia to their country if he won the election. "If I win this election, I will send the Yuon immigrants back. If Sam Rainsy wins there will be no more Yuon Puppets."⁶⁹ He continued to blame the CPP: "The government work for yuon, the government cheats the people of their money to give to foreigners."⁷⁰ CPP was given the image of being under foreign domination. Moreover, Sam Rainsy aimed to oust Hun Sen from power by using anti-Communist propaganda which used to be the background of the CPP. "First we have to show the reality to the world, the will of the people who voted for a new leader and a new regime, a democratic regime and liberal regime not a communist regime."⁷¹ This statement again reminded people of the background of the CPP with Vietnamese communists. Rainsy insisted that the CPP is a communist party dominated by the Vietnamese.

⁶⁸ Cambodia Daily, 23/ 07/ 98, p. 9

⁶⁹ Talking to the crowds during the campaign, see Cambodia Daily, 21/07/98, p. 11

⁷⁰ Ibid

⁷¹ Sam Rainsy gave the speech to the protestors in 1998, extracted from Carolin Hughes, p. 63

The concept of the role of the Vietnamese in current Cambodian politics or the role of the Vietnamese in the CPP was presented through the propaganda of the major opposition parties. It was used to remind everyone of the past origin of the CPP, founded and supported by the Vietnamese for a long time. The political parties used the currently visible issues, the weakness of the government in handling border issues and Vietnamese immigrants to link with those past images. CPP became a party which continued to serve the foreign country who used to be its boss in the past.

The exploitation of the Cambodian economy and resources through the CPP

Since the major political parties claimed that Vietnamese still had control over the CPP, they also reminded the Cambodian people that Vietnam could exploit the Cambodian economy and gain other benefits by using its puppet CPP. For example, the Vietnamese could gain Cambodian territory by signing a border treaty with the CPP government, then the Vietnamese government could send Vietnamese illegal immigrants to Cambodia in order to exploit the economic resources of the Cambodians.

Sam Rainsy, during the drafting of the immigration law, pointed out: "Many of the immigrants were farmers. The new immigration law should deny them to run businesses that threaten environmental and national resources such as mining and logging."⁷² He explained about how much the Cambodians have lost to immigrants, especially to the Vietnamese. During the 1998 election campaign, the issue of Vietnamese illegal immigration was raised many times. Sam Rainsy claimed that CPP did not handle the problems of poverty, corruption, social injustice and illegal Vietnamese immigration. The party let the Vietnamese exploit Cambodia. Sam Rainsy added: "People who have power and money can violate other people's rights and the courts will let them win the case, turning black into white and white into black. The authorities see only money and power. They cannot allow people to see the light of justice and peace."⁷³

⁷² Cambodia Daily, 24/08/94, p.7

⁷³ Ibid

Anti-Vietnamese propaganda has been linked with many problems to insult the CPP. The Sam Rainsy Party brought a lot of problems to the party's political agendas, including trying to solve the issue of Vietnamese illegal immigration in Cambodia, to reduce poverty, to fight against corruption, to promote a liberal market and bring democracy to the country. All the problems the CPP would not be able to handle as long as they allowed the Vietnamese to continue to exploit Cambodia.

To sum up, anti-Vietnamese propaganda was a very tasty soup for the main opposition parties to use against CPP in order to gain political benefits. It has been used until the present day in Cambodian politics. The images of Vietnam and the Vietnamese in the propaganda were that of past invaders who continued to attempt to invade Cambodia. Vietnam still maintains this role over the CPP and is involved in Cambodian internal politics in order to exploit the Cambodian resources. The Vietnamese were portrayed as an enemy of the Cambodians. This claim could be made by linking the history of invasion of Cambodia and the relationship between the CPP and Vietnam with existing problems such as the large flow of Vietnamese illegal immigration and border issues. Then, the image of the CPP is pushed closely to the Cambodian enemy, Vietnam. Since the CPP government allowed the Vietnamese to accomplish these goals, the CPP is also hostile toward the Khmer. The political parties later persuaded the people not to vote for the Vietnamese puppets and to try other political parties which can keep Cambodia from foreign hands and can handle all the country's problems with a nationalist spirit.

Anti-Vietnamese propaganda has been used in political competition and confrontation. Seeking power in a liberal-democratic country like Cambodia, the politicians use it as the tool to hurl against their competitors. CPP is known to owe its origin to Vietnamese support in the struggle with the Khmer Rouge and has been under Vietnamese occupation for ten years. This is a weakness that the party cannot deny and was always raised by her rivals.

Anti-Vietnamese propaganda differentiates between "the Khmers" and the "Yuong". And the "Yuong" has an image of those who exploit or take advantage of the Khmers. This propaganda has been accompanied by other visible problems such as poverty, corruption and illegal immigration. Therefore, it becomes more believable.

Certainly, anti-Vietnamese propaganda has been used by Cambodian politicians in order to gain popularity from the people by changing the people's attitude in voting and choosing leaders. Looking from the other side, putting the blame toward the Vietnamese has reflected the anxiety of the Cambodian political elite themselves about the development of the Cambodian state, which has been in decline since the fall of Angkor. Modern politics in the country have been very strong while the state has been weak, but most Cambodian leaders did not really accept their weakness. They always put the blame toward outsiders instead in order to build a good image of their responsibilities. Moreover, current economic problems show that it was very difficult for Cambodia to stand on its own legs. The fact that the country must rely mostly on foreign aid reinforced the anxiety of the political elite and their historical enemies, especially the Vietnamese, who become the ready scapegoat for them to put the blame on.

To sum up, propaganda can help to foster hostile feelings among the people of Cambodia and Vietnam. Thus, the next two chapters will explore to what extent the political campaign affects the attitudes of the young Cambodian people and in what ways.