

The Paris Peace Agreement at 50: The U.S. Bombardment of Cambodia (March 18, 1969 —August 15,1973) and the Vietnam War Reconsidered

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The Nixon Administration conducted secret aerial bombardment of Cambodia between March 1969 and August 1973, which has not been paid enough attention in the study of the Vietnam War. Some works, though limited, suggest that the U.S. bombing paved the way for the emergence of the Pol Pot regime in April 1975, and that the bombardment caused enormous killings of civilians (up to 150,000 civilian deaths). The aim of this article is to reconsider the historical meaning of the Vietnam War through taking an overview of the background and the outcome of the American bombardment of Cambodia.

This article reveals that the bombing in Cambodia could be considered in the larger context of the “Vietnam Wars” since the bombardment of Cambodia was a part of the U.S. bombing in the “Indochina” theater, including South & North Vietnam and Laos. The bombing in Cambodia followed both “shock and awe” and “strategic bombing” strategy conducted since the first half of the Twentieth Century. The author also suggests that the failure of the bombardment was due to the overestimation of the U.S. coercive strategy and the underestimation of the “enemy.” In this process, American leaders tended to make the human toll of civilians in Cambodia invisible to the public.

Finally, this article points out that remembering the U.S. bombing in Cambodia and its human consequences gives us an historical understanding of its war legacies in Cambodia (also in Vietnam and Laos) as well as of the limits of air power in the age of “perpetual war” (as was seen in Afghanistan and Iraq after 9.11). Cambodia still suffers from the unexploded ordinance resulted from cluster bombs used during the bombing.

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50 Years Since the Chilean Coup d'état: From “the Chilean Road to Socialism” to the Shock Doctrine and the “Mature Neoliberalism”

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50 years have passed since the military coup of 1973. Why did “the Chilean Road to Socialism” turn into a catastrophe? A decisive factor was the intervention of the Nixon administration, which feared Chile’s socialization. No only the failure to understand Allende’s philosophy of “a democratic socialism” by member parties of the Unidad Popular.

Historically in Chile, the left has not surpassed the limit of a third of votes in the presidential elections and has been forced to form an alliance with centrist parties to take power. The more the reforms progress, the more likely centrists defect from the government. Allende envisioned the gradual change, by remediating the already-existing systems and policies, and institutionalizing the participation of the people in the decision making. However the Unidad Popular ignored his proposal.

El neoliberalism continued under the Concertación governments, with high economic growth and the reduction of the poverty ratio, as a result the country has been admired internationally as “the Mature Neoliberalism”. However, Chile is a considerable disparity society with a large number of deprived people, resulting in the spread of the political apathy in the lower strata of the society. Consequently, the government of president Boric, which was established in the heated atmosphere of the so-called “social explosion” of 2019 (the development of the civil movements), is a minority group in the congress and the draft of the new constitution has been refused in the plebiscite.

This indicates that the social change is not realized only with the development of the civil movements.

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Environmental Impact Assessment Procedures and Chinese Overseas Hydropower Projects in Cambodia: A Case Study of Stung Tatay Hydroelectric Project

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Since the 2000s, Cambodia has spurred economic growth by harnessing its rich hydropower resources, primarily through significant participation of China in both funding and building projects. Given Cambodia's dominant advocacy for energy development and the government's pervasive political influence, the legitimacy of project decision-making process warrants examination. This article examines how the procedural justice in Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) in a Chinese project within Cambodia is adversely influenced by the project entity's objectives, the Cambodian government's agenda and its hydropower governance, taking Stung Tatay Hydroelectric Project as a case study. Two major EIA procedural flaws are identified: the Cambodian government permitted the project in the absence of a reviewed EIA; the Chinese developer commenced construction without receiving EIA approval. The factors underlie the Chinese company's neglect of environmental management responsibilities, coupled with its tendency to expedite the construction. Furthermore, the project was initiated and pushed by the Cambodian government. Despite the existing legal framework, the practical enforcement of regulations to prevent the flaws or halt the project activities was virtually non-existent. This article reveals that the objectives of EIA - serving as a precaution and a decision-making instrument - were compromised, reducing the process to a mere formality. The EIA process was used solely to qualify the project for the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) registry.

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