

# Transitional Justice and Political Reconciliation in Cambodia

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## **Abstract**

Transitional justice provides inconclusive accounts of the relationship between its many mechanisms, including trials, truth commissions, amnesty and traditional practices, and reconciliation. If the goal of justice is to bring peace and democracy, then political reconciliation should be the main focus along with the tribunal process. Using Cambodia as a case study, this paper examines the attempt to deal with the country's past atrocities and argues that whether it is in the form of tribunals or compromises, little has been contributing to building political reconciliation among the Cambodian political factions. Guided by Murphy's theoretical framework and the auto ethnographic approach, this study reveals that the political identity with which each political group has labeled each other has undermined social and moral conditions, threatening the rule of law, political trust, and relational capabilities that are necessary for peace and democracy. This paper also uses current surveys of Cambodia's younger generation to reveal the prioritized process along with the tribunal that the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia is processing.

**Keywords:** Cambodia; Khmer factions; Political reconciliation; Prioritized policies; Transitional justice