CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Tonle Sap Lake is ranked the fourth largest source of freshwater fish in the world after lakes in India, Bangladesh and China, with an estimated fish catch of 230,000 tons per annum - more than 50% of Cambodia's total of inland fisheries production (ADB 2002). Tonle Sap Lake, which is a sub-basin of the Mekong Basin, is located in a central plain in Cambodia and is surrounded by six bordering provinces[1]. In the dry season (December to April), it is 160 km long and 35 km wide and has a depth of one to two meters, covering 2,500 to 3,000 km^2 (ADB 2006). In the wet season (May to November), the lake is 250 km long and 100 km wide and has a depth of eight to eleven meters. At this time its area increases to as much as 15,000 km^2 (ADB 2005), almost five times the dry season area.

Tonle Sap Lake is at the heart of Cambodia and has long been a key element of the national economy - sustaining state revenues and providing social welfare among Cambodian people. The richness of its resources has been well-documented; the lake accounts for 60 percent of total inland fisheries production in Cambodia (ADB 2005) and sustains the livelihoods and food security requirements of an estimated 1.7 million people living on the lake and across its floodplain (Keskinen *et al.* 2011, cited in Keskinen and Varis 2012: 51). The lake is bordered by highways 5 and 6, and roughly 300,000 people live in the 170 villages located within the annually inundated areas (out of a total of 1.2 million people living in the area) (SEI 2008, unpublished document). The lake also contributes to local income generation activities, with incomes estimated at 470 US dollars per household per year, most of which are based on predominantly family-scale fishing or subsistence activities (Navy *et al*. 2006). In 2011, the fishing sector constituted 5.5 percent of national GDP,

[1] Pursat, Battambang, Siem Reap, Kampong Thom, Kampong Chhnang, and Banteay Meanchey province

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equivalent to approximately 1,500 million US Dollars and based on three types of fishing operation: small-, medium- and large-scale fishing operations[2]. The fisheries taxes collected from the 37 commercial freshwater fishing lots around the Tonle Sap provide an estimated two million US dollars per year[3]. Fisheries are therefore the source of, not only economic value, but also cultural meaning among individual Cambodians, and Cambodians consume on average 37.5 kg of fish per year. For people living in and around Tonle Sap Lake and along the Mekong River, this number rises to 67 kg per year (FiA 2006). Also, up to 80 percent of the total animal protein consumption for individuals in Cambodia is derived from fish and other aquatic animals (Hortle 2007, cited in Keskinen and Varis 2012:51). As a consequence, the importance of fish resources in the lake is indisputable, given that these resources support the economy, culture, food security requirements and incomes of local people. Fish resources are regarded as essential to the Cambodian nation as a whole.

Nonetheless, those living around the lake also suffer from high rates of poverty; between 40 to 60 percent of households live below the official poverty line (ADB 2006), a number linked to a deterioration in natural resource levels, rapid population growth, and an ineffective and inefficient governance and management system around the Tonle Sap (Keskinen 2006, cited in SEI 2008).

Cambodia has undergone several political reforms, a thirty-year civil war and has struggled to achieve political stability over the last few decades, though over the past ten years the country has experienced steady growth. Thus, any political analysis of Cambodia is likely to take a pessimistic viewpoint. Likewise, Tonle Sap Lake has experienced changing management systems, and has evolved from a pre-modern to a modern society over the same period, joining the free market economy in 1993. Historically, under the three key time periods in the country, the pre-Angkorean, within Angkorean and post-Angkorean periods, fishing practices operated on a traditional free-access basis among locals and in the absence of state structures (FiA 2006). It should be noted that under the French colonial administration (1863 to 1953), the richness of the country's fishing resources was identified and helped

[2] Prime Minister, Hun Sen officially endorsed this classification on 8th March 2012

[3] In total, 35 lots on the Tonle Sap Lake border six provinces: Pursat, Battambang, Siem Reap, Kampong Thom and Kampong Chhnang, while two lots border Banteay Meanchey Province

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support the national economy in the form of tax revenues. The colonial state first offered exclusive rights to the private sector for fishing activities and controlled the designated fishing boundaries. Indeed, privatization of the fishing lots was formalized for the first time through a royal ordinance (no. 35) issued on 22nd May 1908, and was signed by King Sisovath (FiA 2006). Unfortunately, during the turbulent civil war Khmer Rouge years (1975 to 1979), the management of fisheries and human resources was completely abolished, and all forms of access to the lake's resources were banned, except when organized and controlled by cadres in the regime. During this period, fish resources ended up in a good condition due to the limitations on access. In post-war Cambodia (1979), the new Cambodian state rebuilt from scratch, and at this time management of the fisheries system was laid down, based mainly on existing documents and laws. Under the centrally planned economy (1979 to 1989), privatization of the fishing lot system also resumed - maintaining the same locations, sizes and policies as before (FiA 2006), while later on lots started expanding their areas. At that time, fishing solidarity groups (*krom samakki*) performed integrated types of collective fishing, though these groups ceased to function in late 1989. The early 1990s was a major transition period, involving the reconstruction and development of the country and providing both challenges and hope; a time seen as providing a shift in direction from war to peace; from a command economy (1989) to a free economy, and from communism to an electoral democracy under a UN-sponsored ceasefire agreement and with national elections held in 1991. However, it is important to note that since that time, resource degradation has become a major problem based on extensive extraction activities, particularly among the key forestry and fishery resources (Le Billon 2000; Hughes 2003). This transition has opened-up space for corruption to develop based on personal patronage networks, with a lack of state capacity to centrally control lower level state officials. Informal social networks have been formed as a means to extract resources and also maintain loyalty, using the power of the state apparatus to give protection to 'rent seeking opportunities', those exploiting the poor (Hughes 2003). These informal patronage networks also provide an active link between the state and the ruling party, which functions well at the local

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level. As Hughes (2003) has highlighted, this network exists through "political allegiance, kinship, friendship [and] patron-client relations".

In the fisheries sector, the lower-level state officials minimize direct interventions and ignore illegal fishing activities because they depend mainly on the rent provided by such activities for their own personal benefit, or perhaps to maintain state power and the state hierarchy. This situation has encouraged private sector actors, who have played an increasing role in terms of resources exploitation. For example, fishing lot owners usually develop their own management framework and operate exclusive rights in a given area, leading to a lack of state control over the fishing grounds in term of controlling encroachment on to public fishing areas, the use of destructive fishing practices, corruption and restricting access to local people and denying them their resource rights. Importantly, in 1999 such an unequal distribution of access rights gave rise to conflicts of interest between small-scale fishers and fishing lot owners, and as a result, the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) was forced to de-territorialize commercial fishing areas in order to settle disputes. Indeed, the first stages of fisheries reform in 2000 involved a 56 percent reduction in total inland fishing lot areas – as they were transformed into public fishing grounds. However, critics have stated that such reforms were introduced too hastily and that the same problems as before were repeated due to poor management and implementation at the local level, rather than issues being resolved up-front (Ballard 2007). Since early 2011, the RGC has placed more emphasis on the fisheries sector and has publicly pronounced on corruption, temporarily closing fishing lots and sacking each head of fisheries in the five provinces bordering the Tonle Sap in order to investigate offences. By the middle of 2012, all commercial fishing lots had been closed and turned into public fishing grounds and/or fish sanctuaries. The impact of this change has however, been ineffectual and far from that envisaged by the original, pragmatic idea. Indeed, illegal fishing activities are now increasing, as a form of defiance against the government on the one hand and on the other, because this state intervention is an intermittent and short-lived attempt to clean–up illegal practices, although the state itself recognizes the negative impacts of the low level state officials' corrupt activities. Perhaps this is because the state understands the difficulties involved in

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dealing with such staff - for they are underpaid and face budget constraints - and that such activities subvert the power of state institutions and state bureaucracy. In marked contrast, the power of the local officials remains strong, and their practices depend on extracting illegal fishing fees in support of basic administration costs and to supplement low salaries, which sometimes sit at below–subsistence levels.

There is no doubt that the concept of "the tragedy of the commons" (Hardin, 1968) is applicable to the Tonle Sap, due to the inability of local institutions to enforce the law and; therefore, helping to promote self-interest. It is not surprising that fishing resources have long been perceived for their economic value, and over the decades such a dominant view has been attractive to a multiplicity of state institutions, which have allocated their resources to the management and control of the fisheries sector, in part because of the increased value of such resources. It is evident from the work of Sithirith and Grundy-Warr (2009) that the dynamic notions of space around the Tonle Sap Lake area have been territorialized into commercial space, conservation space and public space. All of these spaces they call "representations and contestations of space", those which produce spatial divisions of labor, social differentiation and differing spatial functions, and these reveal, not only conflicts related to benefits sharing among local people, but also among the different layers of stakeholders involved in fisheries management. The number of overlapping roles and responsibilities comes into being in order to apply full control over the resources, rather than to do so in a sustainable manner with equitable sharing of resources among poorer fishers. The presence of these concerned stakeholders around Tonle Sap Lake is seen as an inconvenience, and is usually perceived by local people as leading to greater levels of exploitation rather than local security.

Fishing is an indicator of the well-being of a large number of local people, most notably the poor and vulnerable Khmer, Vietnamese and Muslim Cham households. However, most of the studies regarding Tonle Sap Lake often pay little attention to social differentiation among ethnic groups. Vietnamese floating communities, in which a high proportion of the population dwells on the water itself, have long resided on the lake for extended periods; however, researchers have shown relatively little interest in the Vietnamese community, perhaps because of their

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perceived unimportance and relative lack of visibility in Cambodian society, or because their plight is a rather sensitive issue. However, they are key resource users whose role should not be understated or ignored within the fishing communities.

Ehrentraut (2008) describes the typology of Cambodia, which has both ethnic groups and national minorities. The ethnic Vietnamese and Chinese are classified as immigrant groups, while the highlanders are indigenous people, and this reflects the distinct traits and different rights claimed, as well as the different degrees of acceptance among the Khmer majority. However, the Chinese have been fully accepted into Khmer society and are well integrated, while the Vietnamese have found it hard to become accepted among the Khmers, with historical implications. In addition, Ehrentraut (2011) makes a distinction between national minority and immigrant groups and between citizenship and residency in Cambodian society. According to him, being immigrants, the Vietnamese wish to seek a legal status on a par with the Cambodians - not claim a distinct society and be self-governing. He also suggests that when considering the exclusive policies and practices of the state and the Khmer majority towards them, it is necessary to trace back the historical background.

Derks (2009) has pointed out that it is hard to generalize on ethnic inter-relations between the Cambodians and Vietnamese, finding there to be a diverse pattern of relations on the ground. As a result, it is necessary to consider the length of stay of the Vietnamese and the different waves of Vietnamese migration. She concludes that the presence of the Vietnamese has been perceived and seen among Cambodians as a political, economic and geographical threat to Cambodia. First, the Vietnamese come to compete for economic resources, and second, where there are a large number of Vietnamese located around Khmer settlements, the Khmers find it difficult to approach social, territorial, economic and political issues. Third, she focuses on the way the newcomers have tried to retain their identity and not assimilate into Khmer culture; plus that they do not usually speak Khmer very well. This group is on the receiving end of racial hatred; thus, its members' right to claim acceptance is compromised, being as it is the most hated group in Cambodian society, even compared to other ethnic groups such as the Cham, Chinese or ethnic highlanders, and

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this is mainly due to historical reasons. However, on the ground, social interactions with the Khmers rarely generate conflicts and the Vietnamese have become rather well- integrated, and so have received some level of acceptance, particularly those who migrated to Cambodia in the early 1980s, after the Khmer Rouge regime had fallen in 1979.

Ethnic issues in relation to the Vietnamese are often raised by a small group of government opponents; the reality is less of a problem. The extent of discrimination against the Vietnamese depends mainly on their length of stay, their immigration status and the sector they work in. It is also the result of the changing political and current socio-economic situation in Cambodia. Chou Meng Tarr (1992) points out that racist ideology is less strong and common in the everyday lives of local people now, when compared to the 1960s and 1970s. This is because Cambodian society is now changing and complex, and issues often go beyond internal influences.

These Vietnamese communities are geographically scattered and hold a strong position in particular around Tonle Sap Lake (AMC 2005). They are believed to have migrated to the area by boat relatively recently, due to war, economic changes and state policies, and over many decades during the nineteenth century predominantly settled around fishing grounds (Bertrand 2009). The French also encouraged them to migrate to Cambodia in order to supplement the labor force, as can be seen in rubber plantations, and from the introduction and use of extensive fishing gear such as the 'bag net' or *dai* in the fisheries sector. The Vietnamese have been in Cambodia for a long time; however, in terms of 'residency rights' they are not recognized as a 'nationality' but as an immigrant group (Ehrentraut 2008). The Cambodian government has not given any priority to the ethnic Vietnamese, and has avoided this issue within immigration law, meaning that the Vietnamese situation has become a source of tension and is sensitive. If Tonle Sap Lake today has been created by the state's local manipulation of power and been transformed into an informal economy, in the sense that state rules are rarely enforced and instead illegal fishing activities thrive, it will be a challenge to explore how Vietnamese fishers, lacking citizenship, are able to survive. In such a situation, the Vietnamese struggle in different ways to

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deal with a multiplicity of agents and utilize different survival tactics in order to sustain their livelihoods, particularly since they are poor and landless.

The purpose of this study is to investigate how local officials restrict access to fishing resources using powers of exclusion in the context of an informal economy. It is important to examine the level of access to fishery resources and the survival strategies of the Vietnamese fishers - who are subject to both manipulation at the hands of local power structures as well as intense resource competition, and who lack full Cambodian citizenship, surviving within a context in which the state's rules are rarely enforced.

1.2 Research Questions

- Within the context of an informal or shadow economy, how are powers of exclusion operationalized and enforced by local officials?
- How do Vietnamese fishers survive in light of manipulation by the local power structure, as well intensive resource competition?
- How do the Vietnamese fishers manipulate relationships as part of their survival strategies?

1.3 Research Objectives

1. To examine the fisheries policy management structure and the territorialized zones in place in the study area, as well as their implications for the Vietnamese households' economies and livelihoods.
2. To gain an insight into the livelihood realities of Cambodia's ethnic Vietnamese, those that shape their level of access to resources within a competitive resource environment, and in particular, to understand how the process of exclusion from access to such resources is constructed by the local authorities
3. To understand fishing conflicts in the study area and analyze the local negotiations that takes place with regard to access rights.

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1.4 Review of Concepts and Theories, and Relevant Studies

This section focuses on two essential elements of the key literature and concepts, those which played a key role in informing my contextual analysis. There are three objectives to this chapter. As this study is grounded in the politics of resource management, the political ecology approach forms the background of my analysis; however, it is not my intention to examine in detail the origins and development of the political ecology framework, but rather to explore briefly the contributions political ecology and the existing literature make towards understanding the politics of fisheries. Second, the concepts that have most influenced my studies and accord well with the context of fisheries around Tonle Sap Lake include state power, local power manipulation, and territorialization on the one hand, and social networks on the other. Undoubtedly, these concepts have their roots in political ecology research, but here I will examine them in the specific context of my study site. Finally, I will outline my conceptual framework, which helped me to set-out my explanations in the following chapters, at the empirical level.

1.4.1 Political Ecology Approach

Political ecology research has been reviewed extensively elsewhere based on the emergence of a variety of fieldwork studies. It is also well-known that any core analysis of environmental change cannot be carried out in isolation from the political and economic process. According to Blaikie and Brookfield (1987), political ecology is an interdisciplinary field concerned with the ecological and broadly political economy, and is based on the neo-Marxist idea that any analysis of environmental change should not only focus on materialist analysis, such as of the means of production process, control over labor and the wage labor of peasants following Marx's notions, but should also look at the broader political and economic contexts, including how these factors shape the decision-making of local people and change power relations at the local level. For example, Guha and Martinez-Alier (1997) use two terms: "population pressure on resources" and "production pressure on resources" to broaden linkages beyond local-based problems. However, the analysis of ecology took a further step by shifting from neo-Marxism in the late 1970s and early 1980s, to

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a post-Marxist mixture of social movement theory (e.g. Scott's "weapons of the weak"), neo-Weberianism (focusing mainly on state actors) and household or feminist studies (Bryant 1999). Finally, the concepts of post-structuralism and discourse theory have had a significant influence on recent political ecology research (Escobar 1996), as informed by the notion of what Michel Foucault terms 'discourse'. In summary, the political ecology framework approach is cross-disciplinary and broad, working across space, scales and social groups and politics in the globalization era. This explanation moves us to look, not only "upward" from local people towards the social and economic system, but also "backward" in time, to develop an historic perspective linked to the contemporary period through a changing environment and altering property regimes.

Moore (1993) criticizes the political ecology approach, saying that it focuses too much on political and economic processes to define the ways in which access levels among local people are exploited. The shift of emphasis in his theoretical debate is to integrate cultural interpretations and political economy, looking at both ' micro-politics' at the village level, and cultural struggles over access and resources as supplied by a Gramscian perspective. He highlights the importance of "micropolitics" and "symbolic contestation" - stressing the historical competing claims and social differentiations in terms of contestation over resource struggles.

There are a number of proposed approaches to political ecology, as summarized by Bryant and Bailey (1997). One of these approaches is the 'actor-oriented approach', which can be used to explain environmental degradation and conflicts regarding power relations among different actors. This approach stresses that 'politics' is a core idea for analyzing problems associated with power relations; however, it doesn't deny the effects of the broader globalization process. This approach would seem to be particularly pertinent based on my research questions and purpose, as well as the context of my chosen research field. It is now important to review the existing literature related to fisheries, that which sheds light on and closely aligns with my context.

Lowe (2000) examines the causes of environmental degradation in the Togean Islands of Sulawesi, Indonesia. The poor fishermen there, and in particular the ethnic

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people of Sama village, attribute reef destruction and fish declines to the conservation politics of the Indonesian government, since they use illegal fishing gear to supply the live fish market. His analysis pays close attention to the broader issues, using political economy to understand the forces that drive local community practices, rather than those directly victimizing the poor fishermen. He finds that the advent of the live fish trade in the village, backed by the Indonesian government, has induced poor fishermen into following destructive fishing practices, as supported by local fish traders.

Dorairajoo (2002) examines the various strategies used by Thai-Malay small-scale fishermen, who have employed ranging from ethnicity, nationality, cuisine, gender and proper Islamic behavior, to the ways in which they can claim benefits for themselves plus continue their everyday life practices without dire consequences, plus deal with the current fishing crisis. He finds that despite their lower class position, the small-scale fishermen do not often openly or covertly resist the hegemony of the commercial fishermen, but rather actively adopt cultural, social and economic tactics for their survival. Instead of studying the tactics described by James Scott in 'Weapons of the Weak' – referred to as "everyday forms of resistance", the "full transcript" (borrowed from James Scott, 1985) is more useful than resistance or compliance alone.

1.4.2 State Power and Local Power Manipulation

Fundamental theorists define the concept of power in different ways and, of course, its meaning has been changed depending on the context and; thus, has also shifted in content. Max Weber describes 'power over' as an "…ability to enforce one's own will on others' behaviors". Weber's classic view was advocated by Marxist scholarship, including "structural power", to look at the division of labor, the legislative system and other forms of structural power in society (Weber, cited in Eriksen 2001:158). However, its meaning has been changed over time within the theoretical literature, and there are many scholars who have debated and criticized such a view. On the other hand, Michel Foucault's approach to 'power' differs considerably from the classic Weber view, saying that power is linked to the discourse

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its meaning exercises, and has been a massive influence in the development of post-structuralism and discourse theory in contemporary society. According to Foucault, the world is dominated by discourse and; thus, there is nothing that has any meaning outside of discourses and objects that gain meaning and become objects of knowledge. He describes a "power-knowledge regime", which has also been promoted by well-known scholars such as Escobar in relation to post-development thinking. However, with there being more than one way of interpreting the concept of "power", I shall review and discuss it, as it accords well with the context to be found at my research site.

Lukes (2005) unpacks the concept of power across three dimensions. By following '*A* wields power over *B'*, power is exercised during the "decision-making process" on specific issues, when there is actual, observable conflict. Such conflict may be seen as a policy preference and; thus, participation in concrete decisions is central to the measurement of the exercise of power. In this respect, there is no divide between different levels of power, influence or authority, and they can be used interchangeably and lie behind the concept of power. Also, *specific issue*s are selected rather than *potential issues*, for which power is assumed to be outside of the political system. Power is also exercised in the absence of decision-making; the so-called "non decision making", which results in '*A* preventing or thwarting *B'*. However, such an approach can be seen to add to the first dimension by agreeing that 'the power' is all forms in which *A* has successful control over *B*; and in particular "*A* secures *B*'s compliance through the threat of sanctions". Thus, different levels of power embrace "coercion, influence, authority, force and manipulation". Last and most importantly, Lukes' third form of power opposes the first two views, which he claims are narrow and follow Weber's ideas. Opposing the individualistic point of view, he claims that the choices chosen by people are shaped, not only by "bias of [the] system", but also socially and culturally patterned behaviors of individuals, and opposing the systemic perspective stresses that despite the fact people make their own choices, these choices are made within the context of a political system. More specifically, the power is not always exercised in the presence of conflicts; indeed, "manipulation and authority" may not involve conflict but rather receive no complaints. In this way, the power can

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be achieved by *A* controlling *B* through thoughts and desires. In addition, although there may be no complaints among local people with regard to non decision-making, it doesn't mean that consensus exists; people may accept something because of a particular perception. According to Lukes, there are many ways which *potential issues* can be kept out of politics, whether through social forces and institutional practices or through individuals' decisions.

Many scholars have stated that the role of the state in pre-modern society has shifted in focus, away from the small and poor to the strong and powerful, and to control over people and local resources in modern society. More importantly, many question what new role the state is playing in a situation of strengthening market forces, in which there is a free flow of people, money, ideas, goods and services. Across different disciplines, it is generally believed that many powers of the state have been diminished, and dominate less the lives of people, instead being replaced by multinational capital (e.g. Bryant and Bailey 1997). By arguing against the common belief of a decline in the state, saying it is subject to the different political system of a given country, Pasuk (1999) provides an excellent account of Thailand, by agreeing that the incorporation and shift of power from the Thai state to political elites – who are playing a growing role in the global economy era - is inevitable. However, the existence of a new role for the state, as "an instrument of social control", has to be treated with caution. She says that the Thai state retains its grip on power by using tactics and strategies that shrink the power of opposition groups, compromising them through forms of corruption and through connivances. She describes two Thai words: "*amnat* which means power and authority" - as representing the official and formal power base at the national level, and "*ithiphon* which means influence" - as representing the unofficial and legal power base at the local level. Both types of power have played a crucial role in fighting against one another in order to reach pure democracy in Thai society; however, recently the function of such powers has been narrowed and they now play a lesser role, as they have been compromised and actually have developed a close relationship. So, she further suggests that the role of Thai civil society has been transformed and has grown, having "civilized the Thai state" through the ideas of local movements and

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local access rights to resources. Thus, there has been an increase in the political space, which has the potential to break-up both kinds of power.

As I have shown above, "power" has been interpreted in different ways, shifting from Weber to Foucault, but the concept is a key to understanding the unequal power relations that exist between different actors in relation to political ecology resources (Bryant, 1999). Bryant and Bailey (1997) propose the use of an actor-oriented approach in order to examine power relations and who control access to resources. This was following Moore's study (1993), which stresses that local politics is important, though one cannot deny the influence of the global economy. They conclude that there are various ways and forms in which power is exercised and its relations manifested when discussing Third World political ecology. First, power reflects the ways in which state actors expand power over local people, controlling access by holding a monopoly overvalued resources through policy instruments. Such a strategy is carried out to secure economic benefits as well as exploit resources and its clearest instance is of colonial states. Secondly, power can also be exerted over powerful actors, in so far as powerless groups are able to claim and compensate for environmental damage at the individual or global level, gaining rights to livelihoods and/or rights to remedy the pollution caused by industrial countries. Lastly, power can also operate through the discursive interaction of actors, and such power is not about control over material practices, but rather about powerful actors having the arguments in place to justify their real agenda, such as local people's bad practices and the state's good practices in relation to natural resource management.

Exclusion can be contextualized by the four powers of exclusion outlined by Hall, Hirsch and Li (2011), these being "regulation, the market, force and legitimation". The separation of these powers of exclusion is not clear-cut in practice, and they stress that exclusion is an inevitable part of resource management and use, and highlight that the object of analysis should not be a dichotomy between inclusion and exclusion, but rather how exclusion and rights to resources use are managed. This is based on the concept of access, adopting the idea of access from Jesse Ribot and Nancy Peluso (2003). By focusing on the process of exclusion, the central focus is on

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the processes by which local people are prevented from gaining access and therefore, from benefiting from local resources.

1.4.3 Territorialization as Contested Space

The influential thinking about Tonle Sap Lake today is primarily framed by development discourse under the banner of conservation, livelihoods improvement, income generation and poverty alleviation. This can be seen widely, and especially within the development agenda and projects initiated by the Cambodian state (Fishery Administration, or FiA) and transnational development agencies such as the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the Mekong River Commission (MRC), the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) - under the Ministry of Environment (MoE), and other regional institutes and a multiplicity of local non-government organizations. These organizations are all concerned with resource management, but they don't necessarily share the same mandate and political interests, hence the formation of the notion of collaborative management. Looking from this perspective, it is critical to study the notion of territory in the context of Tonle Sap Lake, where mapping has been applied forcefully in relation to fishing lots, fishing communities and conservation spaces, resulting in an exclusion of access to resources. More importantly, water territory is rather complicated when compared to land territory. In this section, I will discuss how the state agencies use knowledge and technology to territorialize space based on the different functions it serves.

The term territory has been defined as the constellation of "space-power-meaning" (Delaney 2005), and this description gives some sense of the complexity of even the simplest form of territory, as it signifies a space that inscribes a certain type of meaning onto defined segments of the material world. What it gives is the specific terms of difference, limit, access, exclusion and consequences. For Delaney, the term "territoriality" refers to activities, social relationships and social phenomena in a bounded space; therefore, it cannot be considered separate from two fundamental aspects of human social being: meaning, and powers and relationships.

It is important to understand the term "territoriality", which is fundamental to understanding the process of territorialization. Sack (1983) defines "territoriality" as

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the control of people and things through the control of an area with geographic boundaries, rather than natural resources. Vandergeest (1995) tried to extend and modify Sack's work using the example of forest territorialization in Thailand, a clear response to contemporary environmental politics and discourse. Starting from an understanding of environmental politics at both the regional and local levels within the process of territorialization might lead to more effective solutions to environmental degradation problems. Vandergeest and Peluso (1995) also focus on the territorialization of forest land as part of the establishment of the Thai nation-state. The state attempts to ignore people's claims over forests and their resources by increasing its own power over people's actions and resource use within fixed boundaries. Spatial rationalization through mapping and forest conservation, in line with western institutional thinking, has been a prevalent trend as part of the government's lack of consideration of local control over natural resource management. Vandergeest (1995) gives an example in Thailand, in which the state has territorialized forest resources in order to enhance state control. In his article on the "territorialization of forest rights in Thailand", he argues that states in the third world, and in the post-colonial era, have attempted to subvert or take over local resource management regimes. The Thai state has territorialized forest areas throughout Thailand over three stages. First it declared all territories not claimed by permanent cultivators or other government agencies as coming under the jurisdiction of the Royal Forestry Department, then it demarcated forest areas into reserved and protected forest areas. Thirdly, the Thai government mapped all the forest land, as well as non-forest land, according to land use classifications, which became the basis of policies used to control, occupation and use. This exercise has created tension between the Thai government and local villages (Vandergeest and Peluso, 1995; Vandergeest, 1995), and Vandergeest and Peluso call this form of territoriality (on a map) "abstract space", which is homogenous. Local people; however, do not experience space as abstract. They compare abstract space to "lived space", and the imbalance of these two concepts contributes to the instability of territorial strategies for the modern state. Under such conditions, people often refuse to acknowledge the territorial claims of the state over parks and protected production forest. In fact, the

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state often relies on the open coercion of people to implement territorial control; therefore, the notion of territorialization represents more than just reality and has an influence on people's livelihood strategies, as well as the changing relationships among local conceptions and global discourses on natural resource utilization and development.

Peluso (1995) highlights the fact that state forest maps stand in sharp contrast to the forms of counter-mapping produced and used by local people and NGOs, for state mapping completely fails to acknowledge local knowledge and customary practices. The counter-mapping agencies scrutinize the significance of the customary rights of local people and their claims over resource territories, even within state maps. In this regard, locally produced maps can be used as alternatives or as tools by local people, allowing them to reclaim and redefine their resource territories by reducing the amount of territory under state control when compared to their own maps.

This also corresponds to St. Martin's work (2001), which shows how the dominant form of mapping, through scientific knowledge, has been used to territorialize, regardless of the presence of community-based mapping, leading to a failure of community fisheries management or a "tragedy of the commons", pushing fishermen into the established territories of other groups.

As mentioned above, the concept of space is closely related to the concept of territorialization, which is the application of the representations of space. In anthropology, little attention has been paid to the conceptualization of "place" and "space", though Kuper (1972) interprets the meaning of sites as representing more than fixed, physical features. A site is comprised of symbolic meaning, values and spirits that are articulated through social relations and events; it operates symbolic functions, as given by different people on different levels and at different times through social practices and events. Thus, sites and places are closely related to space; that is, social space.

Elden (2010) provides historical linkages and analysis to describe the tripartite terms: *land, terrain and territory*. Thinking of territory as land gives "a political-economic relation" regarding property relations, while territory as terrain

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renders “a political-strategic relation” in terms of power relations. He stresses that both approaches remain limited, though they are an essential part of any analysis of territory. According to Elden, territory must be more than the analyses of land and terrain, approaching it based on the concept of space, and drawing upon Lefebvre’s work.

According to Lefebvre (1991:38), “representations of space” relate to “conceptualized space, the space of scientists, planners, urbanists, technocratic sub-dividers and social engineers”, and various state and other institutions with the ability and knowledge to ‘represent’ space in particular ways for specific purposes. He shows how space is conceived by different organizations in their various representations of space, and the ways in which space is actually perceived in the ‘lived space’ of ‘users’, residents and ordinary people. He also creates the idea of “representational spaces” or “space as directly lived through its associated images and symbols and hence the space of ‘inhabitants’ and ‘users’” (Lefebvre, 1991: 39).Thus, the concept of space has been used to understand social interactions, just as Lefebvre tries to understand “physical or perceived space”, “mental or conceived space” and social space or “lived space” in particular, in the urbanized context. However, the emergent spaces separate, but constantly interact with and influence each other. Drawing attention to the fisheries context, conflicts over fishing space often happen when local people do not subscribe to the representations of space as generally conceived. As a result, this space becomes “contested space”.

Vandergeest (2003) argues that even though the concept of territorialization itself describes the inclusion or exclusion of people who wish to access natural resources, Thai state territorialization has tended to exclude or include people based on perceptions based on ethnic classification and racial functions. He refers to the “production of racialized space”, which operates based on ethnic differences through mapping based on ethnic and racial inequalities, and stereotypes people through discriminatory practices and as a result of spatial categorizations such as protected areas, those where ethnic groups reside.

With respect to the floating-fishing communities of the Tonle Sap, these ethnic-based conflicts seldom happen; rather the conflicts are class-based. Limitations

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in terms of access to fisheries resources have thus become prevalent as a result of territorial representations. Dominant mapping processes are highly likely to be based on productive space (Sithirith & Grundy-Warr 2009), rather than based on ethnic and racial inequality as in the case of forest politics in Thailand (Vandergeest 2003). However, racial functions may operate through social practices to some degree at the community level, and this approach may be applicable, since it can be applied to many kinds of social practice to some degree; those that can have a racial meaning. Unlike the hill tribes of Thailand in various respects, ranging from the politics of identity to environmental discourse, the ethnic dimension is not central to my study here; however, the Vietnamese in Cambodia cannot be described as having a stable and harmonious lifestyle, and the extent to which they struggle to make a living in Cambodia means that the opposition political party often raises the issue of the Vietnamese living in Cambodia as a key agenda item.

1.4.4 Social Networks as a Tactic to Access Resources

In contemporary debates about the power the state wields over local people within a given territory, as discussed above, debate goes beyond the relations between the state and local communities in a way that demands the study of powerless groups whose rights of access to resources have been restricted. Many scholars oppose the concept of false consciousness; saying that local people have never been pure victims but rather have tended to sustain their livelihoods (using what James C Scott has called the "weapons of the weak, or for other reasons. For instance, in an article entitled 'Power: a Radical View' Lukes (2005) cites Charles Tilly (1991: 594) - who provides key ideas for the analysis of the perceptions of powerless groups, using different interpretations. These interpretations can be summarized as follows:

- "The premise is incorrect: subordinates are actually rebelling continuously, but in covert ways."
- "Subordinates actually get something in return for their subordination, something that is sufficient to make them acquiesce most of the time."
- "Through the pursuit of other valued ends such as esteem or identity, subordinates become implicated in systems that exploit or oppress them. (In some versions, no.3 becomes identical to no.2)"

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- "As a result of mystification, repression, or the sheer unavailability of alternative ideological frames, subordinates remain unaware of their true interests."
- "Force and inertia hold subordinates in place"
- "Resistance and rebellion are costly; most subordinates lack the necessary means", and
- "All of the above."

In this section, I shall review social networks as social practice. Social networks focus on both vertical and horizontal relations; involving unequal hierarchies and power distributions, as well as similar socio-economic statuses and equivalent power (based on Coleman and Putnan's definition), such as patron-client relations, reciprocity, resource exchange relationships and so forth (Shields *et al.* 1996; Bourdieu 2002; Field 2003). However, social networks are ambiguous and quite contradictory. Field describes the different ideas on social capital proposed by Bourdieu, Coleman and Putnan, and according to him, all of these different interpretations refer to a network of connections that enable people to pursue their goals, shared values, reciprocity and norms, as applied to a wide range of actions.

Bourdieu (2002) describes the idea of capital as a product of "accumulated labor", as differentiated from economic ideas which involve "an accumulated sum of money". He states that social capital is a mere disguise for economic capital, which is at the root of both cultural and social capital; all inseparable in an understanding of the social world. According to him, social capital does not exist in a given nature or society; it is a social formation and the product of endless efforts to maintain connections among members of groups who gain benefits and share common values in material or symbolic exchanges (pp.286-287). Bourdieu's concept of social capital is the remaining gap and has been criticized by some scholars since his ideas are much influenced by Marxist notions of social class and networks of connections used as a space for elite networks to operate, and that these create the social inequality of access to resources. Field concludes that Bourdieu's work limits the existence of social networks; to give more room to the powerful group to gain benefits. Coleman and Putnan's work tends to oppose this view and open-up a wider debate based on the norms and mutual trust found among members of a community, as a positive aspect. However, Bourdieu's emphasis is useful in terms of understanding the characteristics of social networks, and emphasizes the importance of power inequalities in society.

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Perhaps, a turning point was to go beyond the class-based analysis, for Coleman and Putnan's work places greater emphasis on the importance of horizontal linkages.

Shields *et al.* (1996) are concerned with breaking-down the idea of social capital into various livelihood activities, those affected by the competitive market economy. They show that far-reaching market involvement contributes to a shift in traditional relations from horizontal, to vertical and to market-based relations, and the varying livelihood strategies of local people tend to involve natural resource destruction. According to them, the benefits of social networks do not necessarily to generalizations with respect to positive impacts on people and natural resource sustainability. There are some exceptions, under certain circumstances, that disrupt social networks and mean people make use of them to destroy natural resources. For example, the transition to market capitalism is an obvious case in point. Shifting to the fisheries context, this analysis sheds light on the causes of environmental problems closely associated with broader issues and certain actors.

Social capital is "an investment in social relations with expected returns in the marketplace and for Lin, should be defined as resources embedded in a social structure that are accessed and/or mobilized in purposive actions" (Lin 2001:19 & 29). For Lin, resources as material or symbolic goods are at the core of all capital theories, and he proposes that social capital can be investigated using three model types: 1) investment in social relations, 2) access to and mobilization of social capital, and 3) expected returns on two types of social action: instrumental actions for gaining valued resources and expressive actions for maintaining valued resources, with the former effective for vertical linkages and the latter effective for horizontal linkages. However, a mixture of the two types of action can exist as well.

Scott (1985) explores forms of "everyday resistance" in a Malaysian rice-farming village, by comparing shifts in paddy production relations before and after the green revolution. The consequences mark out clearly the dividing lines between the rich and poor, or winners and losers, and have an enormous impact on basic structural changes such as land tenure systems, income, social relations in general and social obligations and ties in particular, traditional charity and feasts, and people's way of life. He concludes that the reversal of such changes sets conditions in such a

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way that the emergence of diverse forms of routine peasant resistance act to which they persist the local economic power of larger farmers in an informal manner. For him, the distinction between acts of resistance and non-resistance is legitimized by the sharing of a set of beliefs among class members themselves. He argues that intentions behind peasant acts involve a combination of self-interest and what may be seen as resistance, and in this way, peasants act cannot separate the material from the ideological struggle; one that justifies and rationalizes their claims. However, nowadays, peasant resistances tend to be directed towards livelihood survival rather than direct changes to the domination system.

Furthermore, Scott (1990) discusses the interaction between the subordinate and the dominant with respect to informal power relations, or the so-called "public and hidden transcript", in terms of everyday life issues. He states that the dominant group never controls the stage completely, as the subordinate discourse takes place "offstage", beyond its direct observation. His analysis is useful, suggesting one should not accept that the powerful control the poor, without first paying more attention to a deeper understanding of the meaning and actions that lead the poor to challenge and reinterpret their situation through everyday interactions and in the form of the submission, without open rebelling against those in power.

The above discussion makes clear a link to the concept of livelihood strategies as a direct and local response to the issue of survival. Chambers and Conway (1991) refer to a livelihood as the "capabilities, assets (both material of stores and resources and non-material of claims and access) and activities required for a mean of living. Livelihoods are sustainable when they are able to cope with stress and shocks."

de Haan (2000) places the emphasis on levels of scale, as embedded in the five vital resources: human, natural, physical, financial and social capital, as compared to the undifferentiated context found in the livelihoods framework. In developing his view of a new livelihoods framework, he stresses the importance of "actor's livelihoods and structure" and "agency" which need to conceptualize in the capitals in relations to livelihood concept. Livelihood strategies cannot be conceived as a closed system completely free of the choices made by people, without paying attention to the "extra-local" level and to the broader globalization context. In this changing context,

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the equilibrium model is no longer adequate in the sense that coping strategies return to normal livelihood strategies; he calls them adaptive strategies, those that stem from coping, and says they exist permanently and become normal livelihood strategies. For him, livelihood strategies are not only multiple, but also increase in terms of a "multi-locality", while actors attain horizontal rather than vertical linkages through which state influence is diminished, particularly in the globalization era.

de Haan and Zoomers (2005) approach the notion of livelihoods as a holistic and dynamic concept, and argue that the study of livelihoods has gone beyond an interchange of the five livelihood capitals to focus more on structure. They suggest the need to conceptualize two forms of access and their relations: the problem of access to livelihood opportunities, and the relationship between access and decision making. First, access is more than the use of capitals; it involves exploiting livelihood opportunities governed by "social relations", "institutions", "organization" and also "power". Access is shaped by those factors which come close to "environmental entitlements" - which enable people to act or challenge and to shape their livelihoods. Second, access in relation to decision making involves both strategic and unintentional behavior and structural factors. For them, the categorization of the concept of such strategies, whether involving intentional or unintentional behavior, is less of a focus; for those structural factors have more of an influence on the different strategies people pursue at different times.

By referring to negotiation as social practice, Juul and Lund (2002) define it as "all sorts of tactical and strategic manoeuvers, besides formalized and ritualized bargaining". They look at processes that range from the application of rules to assertion in terms of situational adjustment, and point out that negotiation is always happening among local people, especially the poor, but often in subtle forms and despite the existence of a seemingly stable situation. The power of state institutions is rarely hegemonic, so people produce rules over time outside state law, in pursuit of their interests.

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1.5 Conceptual Framework

Before I proceed, it is necessary to be more specific about what I mean by informal economy in the context of a fishing community. The informal economy is by its nature definition broadly defined, and even the same economic activity may have different meanings depending on the context. One definition adopted for the study of the "subversive economy" around borderlands refers to "second economies which are intended to cheat [the] national economy or fail to contribute to [it] by tax evasion or siphoning of income outside state or occupying state resources in costly surveillance operations" (Hastings Donnan & Thomas M. Wilson 1999: 88). These authors point out that illegal activities attempt to subvert state institutions but not overthrow the state, since their activities depend on such a condition continuing to exist, to gain personal benefits through compromise and agreement.

Claire and Rossalina (2006) define the informal economy as being socially and economically embedded outside of legislation, encompassing the "black economy" (being monetized and illegal) on the one hand, and the "social economy" and "household economy" (being non- monetized and non-legal) on the other, both of which are a "social safety net" for the poor. Moreover, it also includes both illegal activities that break the law and a-legal activities but is not covered by regulation especially during transitional period such as street trading. Thus, these activities are not necessarily related to tax evasion, smuggling and drug dealing.

In the fishing community context, I define the informal economy in relation to three different meanings. First, fishing household economy (household subsistence activities) as part of survival strategies exists either partially or wholly outside of formal state regulation. Moreover, these activities can undermine accomplishments in terms of subsistence and living standards, as seen with resource competition around Tonle Sap Lake, which can be explained partially by civil war-induced migrations and poverty and what Claire and Rossalina (2006) term as a "social safety net", having regressed to an earlier form of subsistence. Second, economic activity for cash or money through extortion undertaken by state actors is a way of supplementing incomes and increasing wealth, and is not so prevalent among the poor. State law is subverted by state agents within the state apparatus, those interested in "grabbing state

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resources" for their own gain. These activities are regulated by informal and unequally distributed resources, with selection processes favored by market mechanisms. Thirdly, the social economy is developed as patronage relationships or informal exchanges taking place between fishers, fish traders and local authorities, through informal monetary loans and informal access fees

Having defined the term of the informal economy, I will now describe my conceptual framework. Under the umbrella of a political ecology approach, the central concerns of my thesis are territory and access to resources. Tonle Sap has now been claimed at all spatial levels; by UNESCO in 1997, by royal decree in 1995 and non-organization agencies (mainly by the ADB). However, I will confine my discussion to three actors at the operational level: local state actors, the fish traders and the Vietnamese fishers, and will focus mainly on the power relations and dynamics that exist between these three key actors.

It is obvious that throughout recent history (since colonial times), state actors have seen Tonle Sap from an economic point of view; there to generate state revenue and support national economic development. As a result, the state has mapped the Tonle Sap and split it into rigid, zoned areas with three different functions; as fishing lots (though this territory has recently been dismantled), as public fishing areas and as conservation areas. The concept of territoralization, as proposed by Vandergeest and Peluso (1995) is relevant in this context.

Another approach proposed by Hall *et al.* (2011) in a post-agrarian context moves beyond the notion of 'exclusion', as opposed to 'inclusion', in resource use and focuses on but the 'process' employed by the concept of access. They says there is a need to shed more light on the question of how powers of exclusion operate in the context of a informal economy, suggesting that powers of exclusion stem only from state actors and that it is taken for granted that exclusion is unavoidable within the process of resource use and so not an exceptional state of affairs. They move away from the dichotomized thinking involving exclusion and inclusion, seeing the process as a way in which local people are prevented from gaining access. In doing this, they conceptualize how four powers of exclusion (regulation, market, force and legitimation) operate in the post-agrarian context, powers not separated in practice.

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However, this situation may not always be the case, since other powers of exclusion may be under scrutiny and framed, such as extreme environmental degradation - the effect produced by the building of dams (Hirsh and Andrew 2004), while other powers may operate on a more intimate scale.

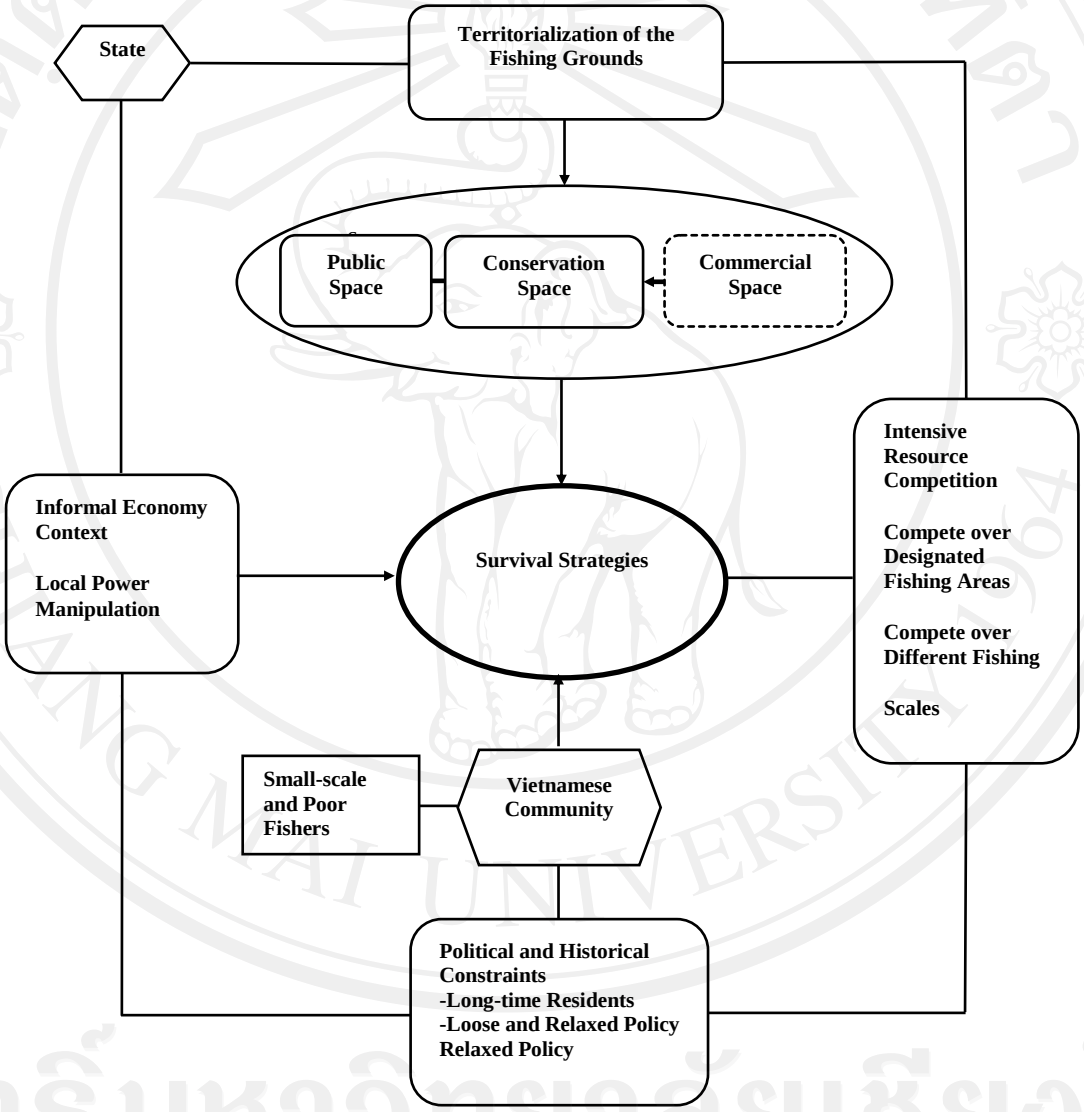

Figure 1.1 Conceptual Framework of the Study

As shown Figure 1.1, all these powers are very much present in the context of Tonle Sap Lake. In short, I wish to understand how a range of powers is brought to

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bear upon the study of fishing communities, since a central aspect of resource use is the politics of fisheries around the Tonle Sap, which involves a highly centralized system of fishing grounds introduced by the state (in this study representing 'regulation') and forming a basis for the concept of territorialization and in the context of an informal economy. I take for granted that the state's territoriality of the fishing grounds is an inevitable process requiring the exclusion of others, but to provide a balanced view and be positive towards the state, will also look at other powers of exclusion.

I will integrate all the approaches mentioned above into my study framework. My first objective is to analyze how powers of exclusion operate and are employed in the context of an informal economy. Second, I examine how the Vietnamese fishers have responded to the given context and manipulate relationships as part of their survival strategies.

1.6 Research Methods

1.6.1 Research Site

There are many Vietnamese floating communities in the six provinces bordering the lake, such as Kampong Loung commune in Pursat Province, Chong Kneas commune in Siem Reap Province and Chhnok Trou commune in Kampong Chhnang Province. Those communities have been officially registered as Vietnamese villages by the Ministry of Interior. In general, these fishing villages are comprised of poor and vulnerable people who face livelihood-related constraints, partly because they depend entirely on fishing for their livelihoods and lack the opportunity to diversify. I was attracted to Phat Sanday community as a research site for several reasons. First, the community is not remote and has good connections to the local market, as it is located around five kilometers from the fish landing site. It is also located near the Stung Sen core zone, a fish sanctuary and former fishing lots. I selected this community primarily because the majority of the Vietnamese are poor and work as small-scale fishers, in contrast to the nearby Vietnamese community of Chhnok Trou commune, where they perform a variety of income-generating activities and some are better-off. Therefore, small-scale fishers are the focus of my study. The

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second reason why I chose this community is that it has experienced conflicts with medium-sized fishing and ex-fishing lot operations.

Based on these reasons, my research was undertaken in the floating community of Phat Sanday in Kampong Thom Province, which is situated along the Stung Sen River, a tributary of Tonle Sap Lake. The collection of floating houses in the community comprised of both Khmer and Vietnamese fishing households, and is surrounded by flooded forest - scattered along both sides of the river, connected to the lake. Koh Ta Pov is one village among five villages located in Phat Sanday. Of the village's 213 households, 149 are Vietnamese and live on floating houses that are moved periodically depending on the flood level.

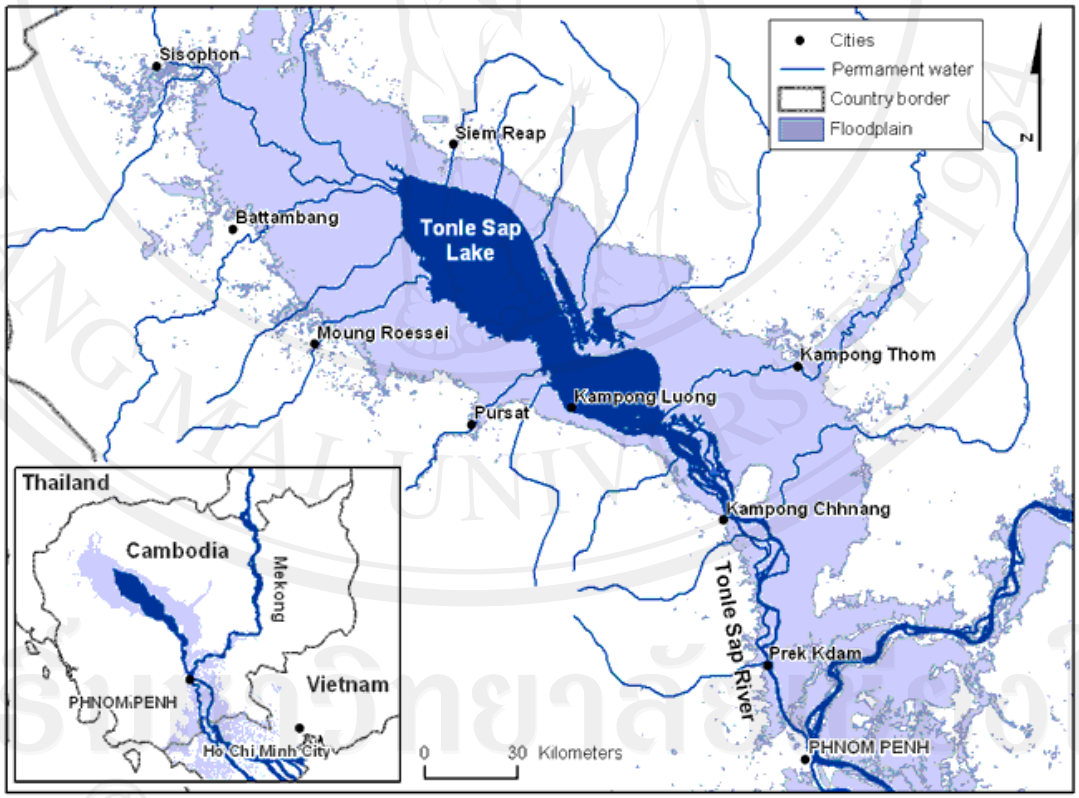

Figure 1.2 Maps of Tonle Sap Lake

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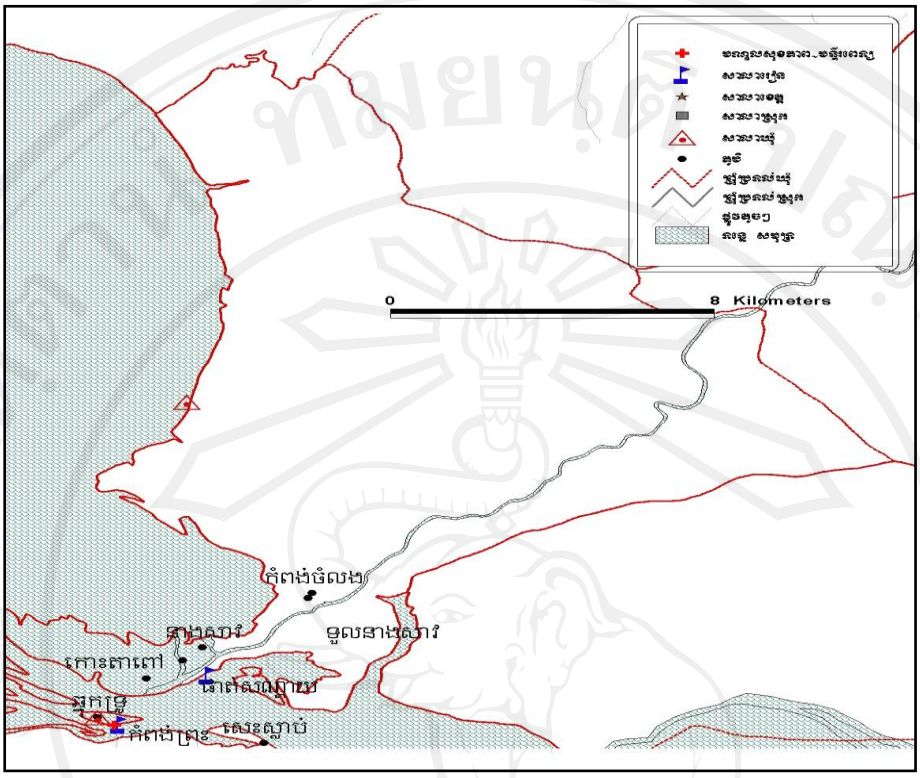

Figure 1.3 Maps of the Study Area

1.6.2 Unit and Levels of Analysis

This study uses the individual Vietnamese fishers as its unit of analysis; however, I wish to achieve an holistic understanding of the whole group, as those selected have important implications for the research findings. I mainly collected life stories from the Vietnamese of their experiences during the Vietnamese war with Cambodia, as these were required in order to support my interpretations. The purpose of my research was to contextualize the fishing problems experienced with regard to the state territorialized zones at the local level while taking into account the local state's practices, and in particular those of the fisheries and environmental officials, plus those of the other concerned stakeholders, many of whom are governed by the notion of manipulating local power in order to maximize personal gain. In this sense, state law is rarely practiced at the local level.

Here, I will first I investigate how the state's territorialized zones have been operationalized by the group on the ground, and the effects of these actions on the livelihoods of local people, plus examine what survival strategies the Vietnamese fishers use within the context of an informal economy.

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1.6.3 Field Data Collection

I had been working for a local non-government organization (NGO) for several years in relation to fisheries and advocacy, leading to my choice of the research site as a target area. However, I had little information about Vietnamese communities, as development projects usually focus on the Khmer. Broadly speaking, the Vietnamese are classified as immigrants in Cambodia, and this limits their contribution to community-based natural resource management (CBNRM) despite being well represented in the community. The Khmer limit the contribution they can make to natural resource-based management activities, and they have to operate outside the legal framework, though some of them have applied for Khmer citizenship. Before entering the study village, I had a rather negative view of the Vietnamese, as portrayed in newspapers, seeing them as 'innovative' fishers around Tonle Sap Lake (through the use of *seine* nets - fine-mesh fishing gear). It would be an exaggeration; though, to call all of the fishers at my research site small-scale fishers.

My stay in the village was arranged through a representative of the Vietnamese community, and I stayed with a Vietnamese family, all of whom were former fishers. The male head of the household, Mr. Thy, is now a volunteer teacher and also a leader of the savings group in the Vietnamese community, and from what I could ascertain, a good communicator and trusted person in the village – with this trust extending vertically, even during the short period of my stay. Mr. Thy had a broad idea of my purpose and gave me a lot of detail, although he went to school (to sixth grade) in Vietnam. The information he gave me was based on his extensive experience (over several decades) of living around Tonle Sap Lake, such as his shift from being very poor to rather better-off and his displacement back and forth during the civil war in Cambodia. He also helped me to translate some words, which helped with my basic level of understanding for when carrying out the interviews. However, in most cases, the interviewees could speak and understand Khmer, though I used very simple and basic language because nearly all of them are illiterate in Khmer.

Since the term 'small-scale' fisher is used frequently in this thesis, there is a need to clarify this term in the context of the informal economy, as it has two

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meanings based on whether using the official definition or the practical one. First, the technical and official definition under the Fishery Law is that a small-scale fishing household is one which fishes for subsistence, not for sale or trade, and can use only prescribed fishing gears under the law. However, in actual practice, the households are managed commercially, so they upgrade their fishing gear to compete with other, more intensive fishing gear used across the lake. The reason they upgrade their gear is because nowadays small-scale, as defined in the Law, does not allow them to meet their families' needs. For this reason, throughout the thesis I attach two meanings to the term 'small-scale': the legal (to comply with the Fisheries Law) and the 'illegal' (the appropriate scale from the local people's perspectives, but officially defined as illegal). Likewise, in terms of the forms of access to the fishing ground, there is informal or formal permission.

My primary focus during the data collection activity was on what is happening to the individual fishers in the study community and what tactics they use to gain greater levels of access to the fisheries. To gather information in the field, I used semi-structured, key informant and focus group interviews, as well as non-participant observation, plus collected individual life stories from the Vietnam-Cambodia war period. Using all these techniques gave me flexibility in relation to the questions to be asked and more room for my respondents to elaborate upon any problems, individual experiences or divergent points of view that might have had. Second, it also enabled me to probe in detail regarding the meanings attached to their descriptions and attitudes.

My inquiries focused on in-depth interviews and explaining the nature of my study with a small number of Vietnamese fishing families, so a small number of household heads were selected purposefully and based primarily on theoretical grounds, as well as certain criteria relevant to my research questions. The chosen number of interviewees was not treated as a random or representative sample of the larger household population within the selected community, and I didn't rush to interview based on the exact number of households I expected to visit, but instead took much of my time to talk to them at informal gatherings and sometimes when I

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encountered them. However, I did arrange a small group of meetings, interviewing them when I met them by chance or was introduced to them by Mr. Thy.

I also complemented my interview data from the research site with secondary data obtained from official reports, the commune report and other available sources of information, both from inside and outside community. Importantly, I collected e-newspaper articles over a long period of time related to fishery issues or government endorsements. This enabled me to capture new information and add it to my analysis.

When processing the captured data, I mainly followed the field methods described by Gery W. Ryan and H. Russell Bernard (2003) in their publication: *Techniques to Identify Themes*. I found this particularly useful during the textual-analysis of my empirical data. My first task was to identify the key themes and sub-themes within my collected data. During my field work, I used a type-recorder when interviewees gave me useful information and when I was allowed to use it. I recorded only a small number of interviewees, because this technique is time consuming in terms of having to transcribe the words later, though this method enabled me to record detailed information from local people regarding their viewpoints, based on listening to their words and feelings.

I took my time to scrutinize the main themes identified in the texts from the interviews, as key themes appeared when captured as verbatim expressions from the Vietnamese fishers in informal gatherings. I found a few words and phrases were used repeatedly by the interviewees; for example, scaling-up fishing activities is carried out to help 'feed the stakeholders' and deal with the unequal distribution of access along social line that exists between the Vietnamese and Khmer. I turned these repeated phrases intro key themes and sub-themes also, those I had already picked up from my pure literature review. In addition, these phrases imply that the local authorities have their own ways of doing things and that there is a lower level state officials' versus national level state paradigm in place, and so this became a sub-theme of my data analysis. Discovering the key themes allowed me to expand upon and build a concrete context and its relations, within the analysis process. In effect, these themes ended up as part of the title and sub-titles of my thesis.

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1.7 Organization of the Thesis

This thesis is divided into six chapters, with each chapter providing a brief summary of what it contains. Here, I will outline the issues of exclusion, access and power relations in terms of resource use, making specific reference to the experiences of Vietnamese fishers, based on fieldwork conducted in Phat Sanday village, one floating community in Cambodia. The general story that emerges from this study, is that the fishers are becoming increasingly dependent on fishing to sustain their livelihoods, though their level of access to fishing grounds is subject to state exclusion and their lives under debt-dependent upon the fish traders.

I started this chapter by giving a wide-ranging background to Tonle Sap Lake and a general introduction to the fishing management framework there, plus provided the research questions and objectives, the study's concepts and conceptual framework, and also described the research methods used. In order to set the frame of this study, one needs to review the concepts and relevant studies upon which it is based, so first, I reviewed the concepts of state power and the power of exclusion. I then looked at the concept of territorialization and finally, the concept of survival strategies and networks, to examine the risk of exclusion among fishers in this study. After that I undertook a theoretical discussion by carrying out a literature review and describing my conceptual framework, where I debated the key three concepts used to operate and guide my empirical data.

Chapter Two takes an historical perspective as its general context, first, by giving an overview of the history of fisheries management in the study area along with the changing political systems in Cambodia as a whole. I will then explores some of the general principles behind fisheries management around the Tonle Sap, particularly with regard to the process of territorialization of the fishing grounds; the commercial fishing areas, conservation zones and public fishing area. Its implications for local people's livelihoods and the local economy will be addressed. More importantly, the deficiency of the fishing scales in terms of providing a realistic livelihood for the local people will be discussed. As a last point, I will clarify and shed some light on how the local economy of Tonle Sap Lake has been transformed into an 'informal economy' – one of the main themes of this study.

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Chapter Three operationalizes my study site Phat Sanday in a community context. First, I set out the history of the Vietnamese in Cambodia in general and in particular around Tonle Sap Lake. I will reveal the obstacles faced and political attacks endured by the Vietnamese while residing in Cambodia, plus provide an understanding of how social relations between the Vietnamese and state agents have informed contemporary reality. Second, I will focus on the changing patterns within the fishing village and on the composition of the population since the war in Cambodian society. Lastly, it draws attentions to need for understanding of local adaptations and seasonal fishing patterns to the ecological setting based on traditional ecological knowledge among local fishers.

Chapter Four outlines the risk of exclusion faced by the study population, as shaped by state regulations and practices, plus fishing occupations. First, I set out the management policies used to allocate fishing areas, fishing rights, gear and seasons, and all the implications of this, those which lie at the heart of problems in the area and have a negative impact on livelihood generation. Second, I examine how the process of exclusion from access is carried out through state regulations and the state's strategic practices in the forms of patronage relations and informal law enforcement. Third, I will describe the nature of fishing employment and how this creates problems and risks.

Chapter Five examines live under a debt-dependent contract and provides detail on how the fishers manage and respond to risk in terms of the incorporation of loans, the intensification of fishing gear use, and the shifting positions of both formal and informal, and official and unofficial classifications of small- and medium-scale fishing gear.

Finally, in chapter Six, I conclude the thesis by describing the key findings of the study in light of the research questions and objectives, after which I draw these findings together into a theoretical discussion, comparing my study with others carried out in this field. This chapter also includes recommendations for further study and also for policy making.

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