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RIVERSIDE

Transnational Escape:  
Migrations of the Khmer and Cham Peoples of Cambodia (1832-2020)

A Thesis submitted in partial satisfaction  
of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

in

Southeast Asian Studies

by

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The Thesis of Ashley Faye Darnell is approved:

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returning to Cambodia in 2021, to conduct more migratory history and to listen to the oral histories of the Khmer and Cham people of the Kingdom of Cambodia. Lee's interest in the history of Cambodia and his own migration outside of South Korea reminded me that the history of migrations within, into, and away from Cambodia is inclusive, rather than exclusive. This was exemplified by Chinese emissary Zhou Daguan's migration to Cambodia from 1296 to 1297; that the Cham people have lived in Cambodia since at least 1456; and the 1866 to 1868 migrations of French explorers Marie Joseph François Garnier, Ernest Marc Louis de Gonzague Doudart de Lagrée, and Louis Delaporte during the Mekong River Expedition, in which they traveled briefly in Cambodia. Thus, Lee's encouragement to me to study the migratory history of Cambodia has been vital to the completion of this thesis, as his talking to me and subtle brainstorming has helped me more than he willingly acknowledges.

## **Dedication**

To the migratory Khmer and Cham people of the Kingdom of Cambodia,  
past, present, and future.

"Men make their own history, but they do not make it as they please; they do not make it under self-selected circumstances, but under circumstances existing already, given and transmitted from the past."<sup>1</sup>

-Karl Marx (May 5, 1818-March 14, 1883)

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<sup>1</sup> Marx, Karl. 1852. *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Napoleon*. Moscow: Progress Publishers, 5.

## ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

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This thesis covers the historiographical migration of both the Khmer and Cham peoples of the Kingdom of Cambodia, from 1832 to 2020. It focuses on how migration shaped the lives of the Khmer and Cham peoples through war, religion, starvation, torture, finding work to support their families, school, overcoming disease and landmine explosions, and traveling to religious events. Using the work of twelve scholars, analog and digitized historical documents, and three oral history interviews, this research explores how people of Khmer and Cham descent migrated, lived, worked, assimilated, conducted religious practices, and were educated in Krong Siem Reap, Kâmpóng Cham, and Kandal Provinces, before, during, and after French colonization, the Khmer Rouge

regime, and after Communism. The information is analyzed thematically through historiography and synthesis, concerning wars over land, ethnocentrism, assimilation, retaining religion and culture, education, and the Khmer and Cham peoples finding work to support to their families. Ultimately, through migration, the location, era, level of education, religion, and occupation of the present-day Khmer and Cham peoples differentiated their experiences from those who lived in the nineteenth nineteenth and twentieth centuries.



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## Preface

First, a bit of background about the Khmer and Cham peoples of Cambodia. In this section, the geography of Cambodia and Vietnam, the origin of Champa, the ethnicities of the Khmer and Cham peoples, the Khmer and Cham languages, and the religions that have been historically followed by the Khmer and Cham peoples is discussed. Then, the groundwork is laid for this thesis, by introducing the works of scholars that will be analyzed throughout. Collectively, this historiography analyzes the migrations of the Khmer and Cham peoples in Cambodia from 1832 to 2020.

## Geography

Preah Réachéanachâkr Kâmpuchea, commonly known as the Kingdom of Cambodia, is a small Southeast Asian country, that is bordered by Thailand to the northwest, Laos to the northeast, Vietnam to the east, and the Gulf of Thailand to the southwest. According to the United Nations, the estimated population of Cambodia is approximately 16,718,965 in 2020,<sup>2</sup> which consists of a majority of people who identify as Khmer at 97.6%, 1.2% Cham, 0.1% Chinese, 0.1% Vietnamese, and 0.9% other races, estimated in 2013 by the United States' Central Intelligence Agency.<sup>3</sup>

Although it is unknown as to where the majority Khmer ethnicity in Cambodia originally came from, the Cham people were originally the inhabitants of the kingdom of Champa, which ruled a group of polities along the coast of what is now Central and Southern Vietnam. However, the Cham also ruled much of what is now Vietnam, between Nghê

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<sup>2</sup> Worldometer. 2020. "Cambodia Population (Live)." Cambodia. Accessed October 5, 2020. <https://www.worldometers.info/world-population/cambodia-population/>.

<sup>3</sup> Central Intelligence Agency. 2020. "The World Factbook." Cambodia. Accessed October 5, 2020. <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/cb.html>.

An Province in the North and Biên Hòa in Đồng Nai Province in the South, as well as the mountains of today's Bình Định and Phú Yên Provinces.<sup>4</sup> The Truong Son Cordillera was the frontier that separated the Cham from their enemies, the Khmer people of the Khmer Empire. However, the Chams were sailors, soldiers, and traders, who used their maritime expertise to both carve out a living for themselves in both coastal and mountainous Vietnam, as well as defend their territory against the neighboring Khmer Empire, Southern Chinese, Mongols in North China, and later, the Vietnamese people.

The area that the Chams settled in is Kâmpóng Cham Province, in southeastern Cambodia, which is on the eastern bank of the Mekong River, approximately 124 kilometers northeast of Cambodia's capital city, Phnom Penh. The Cham people migrated to this then-sparsely populated area of Eastern Cambodia for the first time in the fifteenth century, most likely by boat, and settled on the wetlands near the Tonle Sap River.

### **Origin of Champa**

According to historian and archaeologist William A. Southworth, the name Champa was derived from India, being the name of an early kingdom in the lower Ganges River valley near modern Bhagalpur and is the common name for the flowering tree *michelia champaka*. Both plant and kingdom were mentioned in early Indian literature, such as the poem the *Mahabharata*, and the name was likely transported to Southeast Asia through such literature. Champa developed in Central Vietnam during the first millennium A.D. and was first used in the inscriptions at the Hindu temple My Son

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<sup>4</sup> Goodman, Jim. 2015. *Delta to Delta: The Vietnamese Move South*. Vietnam: The Gioi Publishers, 54.

in Quang Nam Province in the late sixth century A.D.<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, Southworth argued that the adoption of Sanskrit, Indian Brahmi scripts; knowledge and use of Indian philosophic, astronomical, and calendrical systems; brick temple constructions and ideas that concerned sacred and secular spaces; and the adoption of Indian iconography and concepts, all attest to the intellectual impact of Indian civilization on Champa during the first millennium A.D.<sup>6</sup> However, in historian and academic author Justin J. Corfield's 2008 book, *The History of Vietnam*, and in historian G. E. Marrison's 1985 article, "The Chams and Their Literature," they stated that according to Chinese annals, Champa was not established until 192 C.E., whereas Corfield stated that Champa was most heavily influenced by Indian culture in the fifth century.<sup>7</sup> Southworth, Corfield, and Marrison claimed that the establishment of Champa and its Indian influence are each about 100 years apart from what their counterparts claimed. Given that Corfield relied on exclusively secondary sources, whereas Southworth and Marrison drew their findings from both primary and secondary sources, Southworth is most likely correct. He not only visited the archeological sites and the Museum of Cham Sculpture in Đà Nẵng, Vietnam, but agreed with other archaeologists in this historiography that Champa was established and evidence of its Indian influence was impactful during the first millennium A.D.

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<sup>5</sup> Southworth, William A. 2004. "The Coastal States of Champa." In *Southeast Asia: From Prehistory to History*, edited by Ian Glover and Peter Bellwood, 209. London and New York: RoutledgeCurzon.

<sup>6</sup> Southworth, 2004, 209-211.

<sup>7</sup> Corfield, Justin. 2008. *The History of Vietnam*. Westport and London: Greenwood Press, 5; G. E. Marrison. 1985. "The Chams and Their Literature." *Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* 58, no. 2: 45. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41493017>.

## **Ethnicity**

According to scholar of Cambodian history David Chandler, no one knows how long the Khmer people have lived in Cambodia, or where they originally came from. Chandler stated that although Carbon 14 dates from a prehistoric cave at Laang Spean in Battambang Province in northwest Cambodia, which was inhabited until the ninth century, suggested that people who knew how to make pots lived there as early as 4200 B.C.E., and another cave near the ocean was inhabited in 3200 B.C.E., it is presumed that the first Cambodians arrived long before either of these dates, as skulls and human bones found at Samrong Sen, in what is now Kâmpóng Chhang Province, suggested that prehistoric Cambodians physically resembled ethnically Khmer people today. Nonetheless, Chandler stated that whether the earliest inhabitants of Cambodia originally came from China, India, or elsewhere in Southeast Asia, is widely debated by scholars, as theories abound that waves of different peoples moved through the region in prehistoric times.<sup>8</sup> To this end, Cambodia had a comparatively sophisticated culture in prehistoric times, which gave rise to the first kingdom of Cambodia in the first century CE, the Kingdom of Funan.<sup>9</sup> Comparatively, the Cham people inhabited what is now Vietnam as early as 1000 B.C.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Chandler, David. 2008. *A History of Cambodia*. Chiang Mai: Westview Press, 13.

<sup>9</sup> Gorlinski, Virginia. "Funan." Historical state, Indochina. Accessed October 8, 2020. <https://www.britannica.com/place/Funan>.

<sup>10</sup> Bray, Adam. "The Cham: Descendants of Ancient Rulers of South China Sea Watch Maritime Dispute From Sidelines." National Geographic news. Last modified June 18, 2014. <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/news/2014/6/140616-south-china-sea-vietnam-china-cambodia-champa/#:~:text=Malayo%20Polynesian%20speaking%20ancestors%20of,the%20Cham%20culture%20began%20flowering>.

Although the Khmer are both the largest and oldest ethnic group in Cambodia, with unknown origins, the Cham are Malay-Polynesian, who have largely maintained their ethnic homogeneity<sup>11</sup> since their first migration from Vietnam to Cambodia in 1456. In academic Leonard Y. Andaya's 2008 book, *Leaves of the Same Tree: Trade and Ethnicity in the Straits of Melaka*, he stated that the Chams had far more in common with the Malay than the Austroasiatic populations of mainland Southeast Asia, as similarities are detected on the first known Cham inscription, which dated from the mid-fourth century, and, like the seventh century Malay inscriptions in Sriwijaya, promised divine rewards for the loyal and hellish punishment for the disloyal. Furthermore, Andaya stated that another similarity was the physical arrangement of their polities, because as in the Malay Peninsula, Cham settlements were located along major rivers, with the principal site inland from the river mouth, which benefited both the lowland Cham people and their upland relatives through trade.<sup>12</sup> Thus, Vietnam scholar Li Tana stated in her 1998 book, *Nguyen Cochinchina: Southern Vietnam in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, that the Kingdom of Champa was populated not only by the Chams, but the Jarai, Rhade, Curu, Roglai, Mnong, and Stieng peoples. Although the Stieng people speak a Mon-Khmer, rather than Chamic, language, unlike the aforementioned tribes, their origins are unknown, so it is unknown as to how they communicated with the other

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<sup>11</sup> Hays, Jeffrey. 2014. "Cham." Facts and Details. Last modified May 2014. <http://factsanddetails.com/southeast-asia/Vietnam/sub59d/entry-3400.html>.

<sup>12</sup> Andaya, Leonard Y. 2008. *Leaves of the Same Tree: Trade and Ethnicity in the Straits of Melaka*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 44.

groups who spoke Chamic languages, though they may have originated from Cambodia, as they live along the Cambodia-Vietnam border.<sup>13</sup> Furthermore, Tana claimed that...

[p]reviously, scholars had applied an inappropriately ‘nationalist’ model that held Champa was the land of the Chams, in much the same way that France was the land of the French. Yet, as Po Dharma has recently shown, the etymology of the word *cam* has nothing to do with that of ‘Campa,’ either historically or ethnographically. While *cam* referred to the Chams, ‘Campa,’ in the context of ‘negara Campa’—the name given to the kingdom by its own people—denoted a confederation embracing Chams and uplanders alike.<sup>14</sup>

Therefore, the Cham people lived among at least six ethnic groups in Champa prior to invasions by the Chinese and Vietnamese, who spoke similar Malay languages.

### **Khmer Language**

According to linguistics scholar Chhany Sak-Humphry, a Khmer language professor at the University of Hawai'i, Manoa, and the Mon-Khmer Languages Project, the Khmer language is the official language of Cambodia and is one of the oldest languages in Southeast Asia, it is spoken by around fourteen million people in Cambodia, with a few more million speakers in Southern Vietnam, and in provinces along the Thailand-Cambodia border, and belongs to the Mon-Khmer family of languages, with a written tradition that spans at least 1,400 years. At the beginning of the fifth century, Cambodia's first kingdom of Funan was colonized by Indians. The first kings of Cambodia followed the Hindu religion, evidenced by numerous stone inscriptions written in the Sanskrit and Pali languages, such as those seen at Angkor Wat. Although the

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<sup>13</sup> Corfield, Justin. 2020. “Mountain Mon-Khmer Groups.” Humanities. Accessed December 16, 2020. <https://www.encyclopedia.com/humanities/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/mountain-mon-khmer-groups>.

<sup>14</sup> Tana, Li. 1998. *Nguyen Cochinchina: Southern Vietnam in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*. Ithica: Cornell Southeast Asia Program, 31.

Mon-Khmer Languages Project stated that the earliest inscriptions in Cambodia show no signs of the Khmer language,<sup>15</sup> this is not entirely true. Buddhist Studies scholar Ian Charles Harris stated that "...old Khmer inscriptions are actually slightly more frequent in Cambodia than those in Sanskrit, even from the earliest period. One of the earliest, found at Angkor Borei [K. 600] and dated 611 C.E., is written entirely in Khmer...."<sup>16</sup> By the Angkor era (802 CE - 1431 CE), complete Khmer inscriptions and documents were used. To this end, the Khmer language has linguistically evolved in three different eras: Old Cambodian (seventh century-fourteenth century), Middle Cambodian (fourteenth century-eighteenth century), and Modern Cambodian (eighteenth century-present). Given Cambodia's geographic location in mainland Southeast Asia, the Khmer language was influenced by India through Hinduism and Theravāda Buddhism with the use of the Sanskrit and Pali languages; it was influenced by both the Thai and Vietnamese languages in the fifteenth century with the decline of the Angkor civilization; and between the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, when Cambodia was under the French Protectorate, the Khmer language was influenced by the French language, which has gradually been replaced by the modern English language.<sup>17</sup> Despite influences of the Tai, Vietnamese, French, and even Chinese languages, the Khmer language was never influenced by the Cham language, despite its own transnational and overseas migration.

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<sup>15</sup> Sak-Humphry, Chhany. 2016. *Colloquial Cambodian: The Complete Course for Beginners*. London and New York: Routledge, xi; Mon-Khmer Languages Project. n.d. "Khmer/Cambodian." Mon-Khmer Languages Project. <http://sealang.net/mk/khmeric.htm>.

<sup>16</sup> Harris, Ian. 2005. *Cambodian Buddhism: History and Practice*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1.

<sup>17</sup> Sak-Humphry, xi; Mon-Khmer Languages Project. n.d. "Khmer/Cambodian." Mon-Khmer Languages Project. <http://sealang.net/mk/khmeric.htm>; Hippocrene Books, Inc. 2015. *Khmer (Cambodian) Dictionary & Phrasebook: Khmer-English/English-Khmer*. New York: Hippocrene Books, Inc., 1.



## Cham Language

The Cham language is distinct, being Austronesian. Its closest affinities are with the Acehnese and Malayic languages spoken in Southwest Borneo, but how long it was spoken on the mainland before 400 A.D. is unknown. However, it likely has a more recent history than the languages that are Austroasiatic.<sup>18</sup> Andaya mentioned that Linguist Graham Thurgood believed that a prior Austronesian-speaking group inhabited the area that became Champa, in around 600 BC or possibly earlier, as extended contact with the Mon-Khmer populations in and around what became Vietnam led to significant borrowings from the Mon-Khmer language, and thus introduced certain linguistic changes to the Cham language over time.<sup>19</sup> To this end, the Cham language has similarities to the Chru, Northern and Southern Roglai, Haroi, Jorai, and Rade languages, which were spoken in Northern, Central, and Southern Vietnam, and hinted that the Cham people may have once inhabited areas much further North than Central Vietnam, and probably what is now North Vietnam.<sup>20</sup> However, archaeologist Charles Frank Wandesforde Higham stated that currently all evidence pointed to a relatively late intrusive settlement of this region by sea from Borneo, which motivated the rise of the Sa Huynh culture and the development of the Cham states in what is now coastal Vietnam.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Higham, Charles. 2002. *Early Cultures of Mainland Southeast Asia*. Thailand: River Books Ltd., 16; Charles Higham. 1996. *The Bronze Age of Southeast Asia*. Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 304; Higham, Charles. 2014. *Early Mainland Southeast Asia: From First Humans to Angkor*. Bangkok: River Books Co., Ltd., 217.

<sup>19</sup> Andaya, 2008, 43.

<sup>20</sup> Thomas, David, Ernest W. Lee, Nguyen Dang Liem, eds. 1977. *Papers in South East Asian Languages No. 4 Chamic Studies*. Canberra: Pacific Linguistics, vii.

<sup>21</sup> Higham, 2014, 217.

## Religion

In her 2000 article, “The Coming of Islam to Champa,” anthropologist Rie Nakamura analyzed the religious history of the Cham, as they have followed Hinduism, Mahāyāna Buddhism, and Islam, in Vietnam and Cambodia. Initially, Champa was greatly influenced by Hindu culture and had considerable prosperity from the ninth to fifteenth centuries, as their ports along the South China Sea enabled not only the exchange of goods, but religious ideas. Although Mahāyāna Buddhism was followed between the ninth and tenth centuries, Hinduism was Champa's state religion. However, prior to the seventeenth century, the Cham in Cambodia and Vietnam converted to Islam, likely as a result of contact with Malay kin who converted centuries earlier or Muslim traders. Nakamura stated that in French philologist Antoine Cabaton’s (December 11, 1863 -November 25, 1942) 1922 book, *Encyclopedia of Islam*, Cabaton suggested that Champa's first contact with the Islamic world possibly began in the seventh century, as foreign Muslims had settled in Champa by the tenth century. However, he pointed out that there are no historical records that indicated that Islam was widely practiced by the Chams. Nonetheless, Cabaton stated that Islam became widespread among the Cham refugees in Cambodia during the fifteenth century, after the fall of Vijaya in 1471. To this end, he credited the Malays with the conversion of the Cham population in Cambodia to Islam in the fifteenth century, possibly due to Malay immigration from Malaysia, Indonesia, or Borneo, as Muslims were domiciled in Champa as early as the eighth century, according to anthropologist Raymond Scrupin. Furthermore, Nakamura stated that religious practices amongst the Sunni Muslim Cham

people in Cambodia have been influenced by the Islam practiced in Malaysia, the religious elite in Cambodia were said to use the Malay language to communicate, and they still use a book written in the Malay language to study the Qur'an.<sup>22</sup> Today, Islam is the dominant religion among descendants of the early people of Champa. Pioneer Cham scholar Po Dharma divided the Cambodian Cham into two groups, orthodox and traditional, based upon their religious practices. Orthodox Cham people are Sunni Muslims, who follow the Shafi'i school; observe the five pillars of Islam: 1) *Shahadah* or the declaration of faith, 2) *solat* or the five daily prayers, 3) *zakat* or the personal taxes paid during Ramadan and on wealth, and *shadaqah* or charity, 4) *sawm* or fasting for Ramadan, and 5) *hajj* or the pilgrimage to Mecca.<sup>23</sup> The orthodox group, which makes up about one-third of the total number of Cham in Cambodia, were located mostly in the Odongk Province area, as well as in Takev and Kampot Provinces.<sup>24</sup> Conversely, the traditional Cham people or Bani Cham, who are called *Jahed* or *Cham Sot*, form part of the community of the *Kan Imam San*, who was a Cham man who lived in Cambodia in the nineteenth century, and was given land by Khmer King Ang Duong. They follow a less orthodox form of Islam, which involves praying on Fridays instead of five times per day, do not require a pilgrimage to Mecca, observe Ramadan, and celebrate Imam San's birthday in October, by travelling to his temple at Udong's Phnom Katera, and read and

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<sup>22</sup> Nakamura, Rie. 2000. "The Coming of Islam to Champa." *Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* 73, no. 1: 56, 57. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41493412>.

<sup>23</sup> Killean, R., R. Hickey, L. Moffett, D. Viejo-Rose, Farina So, and Vannara Orn. 2018. *Cham Culture & History of Cambodia*. Phnom Penh: Documentation Center of Cambodia, 16-17.

<sup>24</sup> Nakamura, 2000, 55.

write in Cham script.<sup>25</sup> The traditional Cham were scattered throughout Central Cambodia, in Battambang, Kâmpóng Thom, Kâmpóng Cham, and Pouthisat Provinces. Most of the Cham people in Cambodia today are Sunni Muslims and have been influenced by a form of Islam practiced in Malaysia, as the religious elite use the Malay language to conduct services. Furthermore, in Cambodia, the Sunni Muslim Cham study the Qur'an in Malay,<sup>26</sup> though this may be because the Qur'an is difficult to acquire in the Cham and Khmer languages, despite that they were released in December 2011.<sup>27</sup> To this end, translations of the Qur'an are available in both the Cham language (at the Cambodian Muslim Community Development's head office in Phnom Penh<sup>28</sup>) and the Khmer language (such as the "Quran Khmer - 2 in 1 Offline Quran [sic] Translation" phone app, which was translated by Deputy Mufti of the Cham orthodox community and the Cambodian Muslim Community Development<sup>29</sup>).

Like the Cham people, the Khmer people of Cambodia previously practiced Hinduism and Mahāyāna Buddhism, but today follow Theravāda Buddhism. Hinduism was first practiced in Cambodia during the Kingdom of Funan and was one of the Khmer

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<sup>25</sup> Nakamura, 2000, 55; Mohan, T. and Va Sonyka. 2015. "Imam San Followers: We Are Muslims." *Khmer Times*. Accessed December 15, 2020. Last modified February 8, 2015. <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/54388/imam-san-followers-we-are-muslims/>.

<sup>26</sup> Nakamura, 2000, 55.

<sup>27</sup> So, Farina. 2018. "The Role of Muslim Organisations [sic] and Grassroots Activists in Rehabilitating Muslim-Buddhist Relations in Cambodia." In *Islam and Peacebuilding in the Asia-Pacific*, edited by Mohamed Newab Mohamed Osman, 7. New Jersey: World Scientific Publishing Co. Pte. Ltd.

<sup>28</sup> Alfin, Sles. 2011. "Category First Qur'an Translated in Cham Language is officially launched in Cambodia." Wordpress. Accessed December 15, 2020. <https://slesalfin.wordpress.com/category/first-quran-translated-in-cham-language-is-officially-launched-in-cambodia/>.

<sup>29</sup> Google Play. 2020. "Quran [sic] Khmer - 2in 1 Offline Quran [sic] Translation." Last modified May 7, 2020. [https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.quran\\_translate.khmer&hl=en\\_US&gl=US](https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.quran_translate.khmer&hl=en_US&gl=US).

Empire's first official religions, as attested by Angkor Wat, the largest Hindu temple in the world, among many others. In 2006, archaeologist Mariam Stark published a book chapter in *After Collapse: The Regeneration of Complex Societies* titled "From Funan to Angkor: Collapse and Regeneration in Ancient Cambodia," in which she stated that since international maritime trade that linked Han China with the Roman Empire through South and Southeast Asia occurred in the mid-first century A.D., South Asian religions and political ideas were diffused into Southeast Asia.<sup>30</sup> Given that Funan was established in the first century A.D., maritime trade from India via the Mekong River enabled Hinduism, statues of Indian deities, Sanskrit documents, and sandstone Hindu temples such as Angkor Wat to materialize in Cambodia. Hinduism was practiced in Cambodia until the twelfth century, when its first Mahāyāna Buddhist king, Jayavarman VII (1125-1218), came to power in 1181. For example, Ta Prohm temple, which was constructed in 1186 in Siem Reap Province, was one of Jayavarman VII's first Buddhist temple projects, and housed an image of his mother, Jayarajacudamani, in the form of Prajnaparamita, the mother of the buddhas.<sup>31</sup> Furthermore, Banteay Chhmar, an enormous Buddhist temple complex in Banteay Meanchey Province was built during Jayavarman VII's reign, and attests to the Khmer king's Buddhist faith. The temple was built in memory of Prince Srindrakumara, son or protégé of Jayavarman VII, and to four of the prince's comrades who had saved his life in battle against the Cham peoples. The bas-reliefs of Banteay Chhmar depict scenes of battle on land and water between the

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<sup>30</sup> Schwartz, Glenn M. And John J. Nichols. 2006 *After Collapse: The Regeneration of Complex Societies*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 148.

<sup>31</sup> Harris, Ian. 2005. *Cambodian Buddhism: History and Practice*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 19.

Khmer and Cham peoples, preparations for war, processions, royal audiences, and a carving of Avalokiteśvara, the bodhisattva of infinite compassion, that embodies the compassion of all Buddhas, on the wall of the western gallery.<sup>32</sup> Although Avalokiteśvara is a Mahāyāna Buddhist deity, it was still important to maintain as Cambodia slowly shifted to Theravāda Buddhism in the thirteenth century. Although the inscriptional record of the thirteenth century in Cambodia is quite bare, when Chinese emissary Zhou Daguan visited Cambodia between 1296 and 1297, he stated that men he called *zhugu* or Buddhist monks, who "...shave their heads and dress in yellow. They leave their right shoulder uncovered, and otherwise wrap themselves in a robe made of yellow cloth and go barefoot,"<sup>33</sup> were present in Cambodia. This is clearly a reference to Buddhist monks, and judging from the color of their saffron robes, they were most likely Theravāda Buddhists. Similarly, Étienne François Aymonier (January 2, 1844-January 21, 1929), a French linguist and explorer, recorded in his 1875 book *Notice Sur le Cambodge*, or *Notes on Cambodia*, that Buddhist monks also wore yellow robes<sup>34</sup> during the French Protectorate in Cambodia. This hints at a changelessness of Buddhist traditions in Cambodia, as monks wore yellow robes for at least 600 years, between Zhou Daguan's and Aymonier's recordings. To this end, by the time King Jayavarmadiparameśvara took the Angkorian throne in 1327, Theravāda Buddhism was well established in Cambodia. According to Buddhist scholar Ian Charles Harris, the last inscription in

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<sup>32</sup> UNESCO. 2020. "The Archeological [C]omplex of Banteay Chhmar." Tentative Lists. Accessed October 9, 2020. <https://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/6456/>.

<sup>33</sup> Zhou, Daguan. 2007. *A Record of Cambodia: The Land and Its People*. Chiang Mai: Silkworm Books, 52.

<sup>34</sup> Aymonier, Etienne Francois. 1875. *Notice sur le Cambodge*. Paris: E. Leroux, 46.

Sanskrit was carved in 1327, and Mahāyāna Buddhism largely disappeared from Cambodia after the fall of Angkor in 1431.<sup>35</sup> Given that Theravāda Buddhism remains the religion of 95% of Cambodians today,<sup>36</sup> its continuous longstanding presence in the country implies an undeterred following in the religion that has bound the Khmer people to their heritage and culture for at least 700 years.

Historians of Khmer and Cham history have not shown how these groups have migrated within Cambodia between 1832 and 2020. Although much has been written about the Khmer Rouge genocide between 1975 and 1979, particularly how the Khmer and Cham peoples suffered under the regime, there has been comparatively little that has been written about the migrations of Cham people in Cambodia since their last large migration into the country from Vietnam in 1832. Consequently, the migratory histories of the Khmer and Cham peoples within Cambodia has been largely neglected, with even less information available about those who migrated to Krong Siem Reap, Kâmpóng Cham, and Kandal Provinces. Thus, the research question “what motivated the Khmer and Cham peoples to migrate within Cambodia between 1832 and 2020?” will be answered. To do so, the work of twelve explorers, historians, anthropologists, and humanitarians were incorporated into this thesis.

Aymonier was the first archeologist to methodically survey the ruins of the former Khmer Empire in Cambodia, Thailand, Laos, and Vietnam. His 1875 book, *Notice Sur le Cambodge, or Notes on Cambodia*, described the history, populations, monarchy, Khmer

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<sup>35</sup> Harris, 2005, 25.

<sup>36</sup> U.S. Embassy in Cambodia. 2020. "2019 Report on International Religious Freedom: Cambodia." Section I. Religious Demography. Accessed October 11, 2020. <https://kh.usembassy.gov/2019-report-on-international-religious-freedom-cambodia/>.

and Cham peoples, castes, provinces, religions, cultures, traditions, revenues, slavery, celebrations, and festivals of Cambodia after Khmer King Norodom signed the French Protectorate of 1863. The French Protectorate, which enabled France to both protect Cambodia from invasions from Vietnam and Siam (Thailand) and simultaneously colonize the country for ninety years, ruled over Cambodia until King Preah Bat Samdech Preah Norodom Sihanouk (October 31, 1922-October 15, 2012), better known as King Norodom Sihanouk (October 31, 1922-October 15, 2012), declared independence from France on November 9, 1953.<sup>37</sup> Despite that Aymonier's book did not focus on the migrations of the Cham and Khmer peoples, he incorrectly described the Cham people as being "of Malaysian origin,"<sup>38</sup> due to similarities in the Cham and Malaysian languages, called the lifestyles of Khmer Theravāda Buddhist monks selfish and their dogmas absurd (despite that he simultaneously claimed to respect them), and labeled Cambodians as apathetic, lethargic, and inhospitable,<sup>39</sup> which reflected the opinionated colonialist and ethnocentric Orientalist perceptions of French explorers toward the Cham and Khmer peoples in Cambodia during colonialism. However, Aymonier's book exemplified how the rituals of Khmer Theravāda Buddhists and Muslim Chams, such as the fifteen-day *Pchum Ben* Festival (the festival of food gathering for ancestors, which occurs in September) and the process of conversion to Islam prior to marriage, have evidently persisted throughout the long histories of both groups, as seen in

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<sup>37</sup>Jeldres, Julio A. 2003. "Young Sihanouk's struggle for independence." *The Phnom Penh Post* (Phnom Penh), November 7, 2003. <https://www.phnompenhpost.com/national/young-sihanouks-struggle-independence>.

<sup>38</sup> Aymonier, 1875, 19.

<sup>39</sup> Aymonier, 1875, 47, 85.



the oral histories conducted by both Sunni Muslim Cham historian Ysa Osman and the author of this thesis. Thus, when coupled with prior histories in this thesis, Aymonier's book showed that the religions and traditions of both the Cham and Khmer peoples who lived in Cambodia in the nineteenth century have persevered through time, in part, because of their overlapping histories and migrations.

May Mayko Ebihara (1934-May 23, 2005), a former anthropology professor at City University of New York, was the first anthropologist to conduct ethnographic research about Cambodia. Her 1968 dissertation titled *Svay: A Khmer Village in Cambodia*, which referred to the village of West Hamlet Svay in Kandal Province, located along the Stung Prek Thnot River, described the setting, social structure, economics, religion, livelihoods, politics, and relations between Khmer villagers, the Cham people, and other villages. Although Svay spoke mostly about the Khmer villagers in Svay, she mentioned the Cham people only in passing, as they were considered foreigners to the Khmer people, despite that they had lived in Cambodia since the fifteenth century. However, research conducted in the last fifty-one years shows that the Cham people migrated to Svay and other areas of Cambodia to search for work to support themselves and their families, as they were economically limited in Kâmpóng Cham to fishing, which is not reflected in Ebihara's early work about Cambodia. Therefore, Ebihara's work reflected the slow but persistent progress and migrations of the Cham people in Cambodia in the mid-twentieth century.

In 1984, American historian of ancient and modern Cambodia and Thailand, Michael Theodore Vickery (April 1, 1931-June 29, 2017), reaffirmed the perceptions of

the Cham people that were made by Khmer people in Ebihara's 1968 dissertation, and sharply criticized both the Khmer Rouge regime death statistics and analyzes of Cham people in Cambodia presented by Yale University historian of Khmer Rouge history and director of its Genocide Studies Program, Benedict F. Kiernan. In Vickery's 1984 book, *Cambodia: 1975-1982*, which analyzed the history of Democratic Kampuchea, Pol Pot, and the Khmer Rouge regime, he hinted, like Ebihara had sixteen years prior, of the ignorance of the Theravāda Buddhist Khmer people toward the Muslim Cham, as the Khmer people believed that the Cham people had supernatural powers (despite that Theravāda Buddhism does not dismiss supernatural powers in its own faith), such as the ability to tell fortunes and create love potions, which caused the Khmer people to visit Cham villages. Furthermore, Vickery's disbelief that the Cham people were targeted for extermination by the Khmer Rouge regime and his own ignorance of Islamic principles was evidenced when he both downplayed Kiernan's statistics of Cham executions, and did not believe that the Cham people refused to eat pork, as pigs were popularly consumed in Cambodia. Even further, in Vickery's 1986 book, *Kampuchea: Politics, Economics, and Society*, which analyzed how the Marxist Pol Pot regime was overthrown by Vietnam's Marxist government, as in his 1984 book, he hinted that the Khmer Rouge regime had not done much damage to the traditions and religion of the Cham people, as he stated that most of the Cham community had returned to a particular village and the same three mosques they used prior to 1975 still functioned. This implied that Vickery was unaware of the revival of Islam among the Cham people in Cambodia that occurred after the Khmer Rouge regime collapsed, hence the reason why he understated the

significance of the Cham people migrating to the mosques. Nonetheless, it was not until the publication of Po Dharma's book a year later that the Cham community of Cambodia understood the significance of the historical migrations their people have taken throughout history.

Pioneer Cham historian Po Dharma was the Cham historian to publish a comprehensive history of the Cham people in the French language. In 1987, he published a book titled *La Panduranga (Champa) 1802-1835: Ses Rapports Avec le Vietnam*, in which he chronicled the migrations of the Cham people within Vietnam and their battles against the encroaching Vietnamese Army, to protect the last Cham stronghold of the Kingdom of Champa, called Panduranga, in the early nineteenth century. Written in layman's terms throughout, Po Dharma hinted that he wanted all Cham people to be able to read his work, in an effort to teach them the correct history of their struggles against the Vietnamese. Furthermore, in 2013, in a book titled *The Kingdom of Champa: Geography, Population, and History*, he stated...

[i]n addition to these academic publications, Vietnamese-language articles and books about Champa continue to be published; however, their content is far from scholarly and accurate[,] as their main *raison d'être* is to satisfy the public's curiosity and to prove that their own versions of Cham history are correct.<sup>40</sup>

While this statement exposed Po Dharma's bias, it simultaneously demanded more fact-checking of Vietnamese sources regarding the history of Champa. However, historian of Vietnam, Bruce M. Lockhart, agreed with Po Dharma's statement, as his 2011 chapter in *The Cham of Vietnam: History, Society[,] and Art*, titled "Colonial and

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<sup>40</sup> Lafont, Pierre-Bernard. 2014. *The Kingdom of Champa: Geography, Population, and History*. San Jose: International Office of Champa, 13.

Post-Colonial Constructions of 'Champa,'" exemplified both attempts of Vietnamese historians to downplay the aggressiveness of the southward Vietnamese expansion and their eventual takeover of the Kingdom of Champa. To this end, unlike incorrect Vietnamese secondary sources regarding Cham history, Po Dharma's book offers a rarely seen migratory history of the struggles of the Cham people in Vietnam in the early nineteenth century, at a time when the Vietnamese people invaded, and eventually conquered, Champa, which caused the Cham people to migrate to Cambodia. Although Po Dharma does not discuss the migrations of the Cham people into Cambodia or describe their Islamic faith or traditions in detail, his book details what their lives were like in Vietnam before their last big migration westward. To this end, his work is applicable to this study, because of its groundbreaking details about the migrations of the Cham people that he researched at a time when little was known about who they were or where they came from. Thus, this migratory history of the group that became the Cham people of Cambodia reflected the slow-but-persevering process of how and why they were forced to abandon the Kingdom of Champa in what is now Vietnam.

Benedict F. Kiernan, an American academic at Yale University, has written extensively on the history of the Khmer and Cham peoples in Cambodia, but two articles he wrote in 1990 debunked Vickery's claims that lesser numbers of the Khmer and Cham peoples were slaughtered under the Khmer Rouge. In a *New York Times* article published on September 4, 1990, titled "By Any Measure, Pol Pot Engaged in Genocide," Kiernan interviewed eighty-seven Khmer Rouge survivors and described the ways in which Khmer, Cham, Vietnamese, and Chinese peoples were executed by the Khmer Rouge,

and pleaded to no avail with the United Nations to hold the Pol Pot regime accountable for the genocide. Although Kiernan's article does not focus on migration of the Khmer and Cham peoples in Cambodia per se, it offers statistics of villages that were emptied under the slaughter and forced migrations of the Khmer Rouge, which contrasts sharply with Vickery's claims that lesser people were murdered. Furthermore, Kiernan's 1990 article titled "The Genocide in Cambodia, 1975-79," which was a reply to Vickery's 1990 article titled "Comments on Cham Population Figures," that attacked Kiernan's 1988 article titled "Orphans of Genocide: The Cham Muslims of Kampuchea [U]nder Pol Pot," for which Vickery stated, "[a]ll Cambodian population statistics, of whatever period, include a large measure of hypothesis, assumption, extrapolation, and pure guesswork, and they may not be adequate for the type of calculations undertaken by either Kiernan or myself."<sup>41</sup> While Vickery's statement about Kiernan's article is true, to an extent, he disregarded that Kiernan had averaged all population statistics that he used, because no one truly knows how many Khmer and Cham people died under the Khmer Rouge regime. Even further, Vickery stated "[u]nfortunately[,] Kiernan has tinkered with the statistics in a tendentious manner in an attempt to prove the case for genocide in Democratic Kampuchea."<sup>42</sup> However, Kiernan stated in both the first paragraph and the conclusion of the 1988 article that "[f]irstly, genocide is not a matter of statistics. The Genocide Convention does not require a proportion of a population to be exterminated.

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<sup>41</sup> Vickery, Michael. 1990. "Comments on [C]ham [P]opulation [F]igures." *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars* 22, no. 1: 31. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/14672715.1990.10413129?needAccess=true>, 31.

<sup>42</sup> Vickery, Michael. 1990, 31.

As Roger Smith puts it, '[g]enocide involves the question of how people die, not how many die.'<sup>43</sup> Given that Vickery avoided any mention of the definition of genocide in his critique of Kiernan's article implied that he did not know the definition of the word. Therefore, Vickery's evidenced skepticism of the Khmer Rouge regime's slaughter of the Khmer and Cham peoples, as well as his ignorance of Islam, hinted that he did not know nearly as much about the Khmer and Cham peoples of Cambodia as Kiernan does. To this end, like Kiernan, other scholars have started to collect the oral histories of the Cham people who survived the Khmer Rouge, so that their stories will never be forgotten.

In her 2002 book, *Soul Survivors: Stories of Women and Children in Cambodia*, humanitarian Bhavia C. Wagner interviewed a Cham fisher woman named Halimas, who lives in the Cham village of Kâmpóng Tralach in Cambodia, and is a survivor of the Khmer Rouge regime, which is still commonly referred to as "Pol Pot time"<sup>44</sup> by both Cham and Khmer peoples. Halimas' oral history interview detailed how she survived before, during, and after the Khmer Rouge regime took control of her village, by helping others and maintaining her faith in Islam by praying to Allah and having a Cham funeral for her then-eighteen year old son in 1978. Although certain details that Halimas described, such as the continuation of Buddhist and Cham religious rituals of Khmer Rouge soldiers and Cham prisoners is questionable, since the regime abolished all religion, her recollection is not impossible, as Cham survivors have told both Sunni

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<sup>43</sup> Kiernan, Ben. 1990. "The genocide in Cambodia, 1975-79." *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars* 22, no. 2. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/14672715.1990.10413120>, 35.

<sup>44</sup> Ysa, Osman. 2002. *Oukoubah: Justice for the Cham Muslims Under the Democratic Kampuchea Regime*. Phnom Penh: Documentation Center of Cambodia; Bruce, Ellen, director. 1989. *Samsara: Death and Rebirth in Cambodia*. Transit Media. Pictures, 1990. 29 minutes. Digital Versatile Disk.

Muslim Cham scholars Ysa Osman and So Farina similar accounts of how they retained their faith in Islam during the Khmer Rouge regime. Although Wagner did not focus on Halimas' migration or religion in her oral history, her story attests to how she maintained her Cham culture and faith in Islam during her forced migration in the 1970s, despite the chaos that took place around her. To this end, Wagner's inclusion of Halimas' oral history is evidence of the importance of Islam and its own migration in the lives of Cham people in Cambodia before, during, and after the Khmer Rouge regime.

In 2005, Buddhist Studies scholar at the University of Cumbria, Ian Charles Harris, published *Cambodian Buddhism: History and Practice*, which analyzed the origins, history, literary and cult traditions, colonialism, nationalism, and reemergence after the Khmer Rouge regime of Theravāda Buddhism. Although Harris' observations of Theravāda Buddhism in Cambodia under the Khmer Rouge have been documented by many scholars, such as the defrocking of monks and Pol Pot's goals of self-denial through sexual abstinence and self-criticism, he never mentioned that, like the Cham Muslims, some ex-monks and Khmer Rouge cadres continued to follow Buddhist teachings in secret and retained their faith, as evidenced by Wagner's Cham oral history interview with Halimas, as well as oral histories documented by Ysa and So. Despite that Harris' book does not focus on migration, the fact that some ex-monks and laity retained their Buddhist faith despite the changes that took place around them is what ultimately enabled Theravāda Buddhism to survive and slowly reemerge in Cambodia, as survivors walked thousands of kilometers back to their hometowns and monasteries when the Khmer Rouge collapsed on January 7, 1979. Therefore, Harris' book presents a sharp contrast to

Wagner's, Ysa's, and So's work, in the ways that Buddhists and Cham Muslims in Cambodia retained their faiths under the Khmer Rouge. Like Harris' book, Philip Taylor's publication also had gaps concerning the Muslim Cham people of Cambodia, despite the migrations taken by both the Khmer and Cham peoples.

Anthropologist Philip Taylor's 2007 book, *Cham Muslims of the Mekong Delta: Place and Mobility in the Cosmopolitan Periphery*, analyzes how the Cham people migrated to Cambodia from Vietnam between 1832 and 1835. According to Taylor, in 1832, the Cham people attained asylum in Cambodia under Khmer King Ang Chan II, which was their last large migration into the region, yet the beginning of a series of smaller migrations within the country. Although it is not known exactly when the Cham people resettled in Cambodia, it is highly likely that it was after the last Cham stronghold of Panduranga was conquered by the Vietnamese in 1796, as described by Po Dharma. King Ang Chan II must have realized that both the Cham and Khmer people had lost their land to a common enemy, as he allowed the Cham people to resettle in his country, which enabled him to repopulate his kingdom, which had been severely decimated by the Vietnamese and Siamese armies. However, Taylor never mentioned that since the Cham people practice a form of Islam that localized both Buddhist and Hindu rituals, both of which the Khmer people have practiced, one of the reasons why the Cham people were able to resettle in Cambodia was that they shared a religious history with the Khmer people. For example, Angkor Wat, Banteay Chhmar, and Phnom Kulen all have both Buddhist and Hindu symbolism on their statuary and temples, which enabled the Cham people to better adapt in a Buddhist country like Cambodia. Furthermore, Taylor did not



analyze the ways in which the Cham people retained their Islamic faith through forced migration into Cambodia by the Vietnamese Army, despite that migration and religion were underlying themes in his book. Nonetheless, Taylor's work aided in telling the migratory history of the Cham people from Vietnam to Cambodia in the nineteenth century, and connected with Islamic Studies scholar Philipp Bruckmayr's work about them in 2019.

Ysa Osman, a Sunni Muslim Cham historian from the village of Svay Khleang in Kâmpóng Cham Province, is the Executive Director of the Community Connection Cambodia, which provides vocational training to Cham students, so that they have a means to support themselves and their families. His books published in 2002, 2006, and 2010, titled *Oukoubah: Justice for the Cham Muslims Under the Democratic Kampuchea Regime*, *The Cham Rebellion: Survivors' Stories from the Villages*, and *Navigating the Rift: Muslim-Buddhist Inter-marriage in Cambodia*, respectively, described through oral history interviews, how the history, ethnography, religion, marriage rituals, and traditions of the Cham people in Cambodia have been challenged by and shared with the county's majority Khmer Theravāda Buddhist population, from ancient times to 2010. Although Ysa does not specifically focus on migration per se in his three books, they describe the forced, obligatory, and traditional movements of both the Cham and Khmer peoples across Cambodia for hard labor, rebellion, employment, family, rituals, religion, and marriage, which has not only involved migration, but, as exemplified in *Navigating the Rift: Muslim-Buddhist Inter-marriage in Cambodia*, has resulted in a change of faith for certain Khmer people. Furthermore, Ysa's 2005 article titled "The Cham Prisoners in the

Khmer Rouge's Secret Prison," which analyzed how the Khmer Rouge regime treated three Cham students, a Lon Nol government official, and a Khmer Rouge interrogation cadre, who retained their Islamic beliefs, culture, and identities, and was part of Ysa's 2006 book, *The Cham Rebellion: Survivors' Stories from the Villages*. Unlike Ysa's other books, his article mentioned the forced migrations taken by the Khmer and Cham peoples between April 16, 1975 and April 18, 1975, from Kandal, Preah Vihear, Battambang, Kampot, Kâmpóng Speu, and Kâmpóng Chhang Provinces, from which the author calculated their distances traveled. This information enables the reader to understand how and why there are still so many Cham and Khmer corpses and bones scattered across Cambodia to this day. Thus, unlike most other scholars of Cambodian history, Ysa's analyses of the Cham and Khmer peoples is an insider's perspective of Cambodia's history, religions, migrations, and cultural traditions, from a scholar who lives, works, and practices Islam in Kâmpóng Cham and Kandal Provinces.

So Farina, a Sunni Muslim Cham anthropologist based in Phnom Penh,<sup>45</sup> is the director of the Documentation Center of Cambodia (DC-Cam). Her 2011 oral history book, *The Hijab of Cambodia: Memories of Cham Muslim Women After the Khmer Rouge*, described the forced separation of families, forced migrations, executions, destruction of mosques, severe food shortages, being forced-fed non-*halal* food such as pork, confiscation of the Qur'an and the abolishment of all religions, and the struggles to retain Islamic traditions and rituals, for twelve Cham women who survived the Khmer

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<sup>45</sup> Aymonier noted in his 1875 book that the name of Cambodia's capital city, Phnom Penh, which means full mountain in the Khmer language, gets its name from the city standing on an artificial mound, a huge and dense pile of bricks that was twenty-seven meters high, which sat atop a pyramid that was thirty-two meters high, whose conical and slender top was seen from afar (Aymonier, 1875, 21).

Rouge regime. Despite So's interviewees temporarily reliving the trauma, she argued that by reconstructing the past through narration, Cham women are restoring the ethnic and religious identity of the Cham people.<sup>46</sup> Furthermore, given that these women now live in ten cities and provinces across Cambodia, it is hinted that the forced evacuation of Cambodians into the countryside in April 1975, in part, caused the Cham people to relocate elsewhere after Cambodia was liberated by the Vietnamese Army on January 7, 1979. Unlike Ysa's books, So did not detail as to how these migrations affected the Islamic faiths and rituals of Cham women *after* the Khmer Rouge regime collapsed, as the oral histories she conducted did not elaborate beyond liberation. However, So's opening chapter in Mohamed Nawab Mohamed Osman's 2018 book, *Islam and Peacebuilding in the Asia-Pacific*, titled "The Role of Muslim Organisations [sic] and Grassroots Activists in Rehabilitating Muslim-Buddhist Relations in Cambodia," built upon her 2011 book, as she stated that Buddhists and Muslims in Cambodia share a "common 'survivor' identity,"<sup>47</sup> which has enabled them to live side-by-side peacefully within the Kingdom of Cambodia and educate one another about their shared histories. Although So does not specifically discuss and analyze migration in her books, the oral histories that she conducted and the survivor identities shared by Buddhists and Muslims in Cambodia coincide with their shared migrations after the Khmer Rouge regime collapsed in 1979.

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<sup>46</sup> So, Farina. 2011. *The Hijab of Cambodia: Memories of Cham Muslim Women After the Khmer Rouge*. Phnom Penh: Documentation Center of Cambodia, 18.

<sup>47</sup> So, Farina. 2018. "The Role of Muslim Organisations [sic] and Grassroots Activists in Rehabilitating Muslim-Buddhist Relations in Cambodia." In *Islam and Peacebuilding in the Asia-Pacific*, edited by Mohamed Nawab Mohamed Osman, 16. Singapore: World Scientific Publishing Company.

In 2013, Harris published *Buddhism in a Dark Age: Cambodian Monks Under Pol Pot*, which analyzed the damages done to the Buddhist *sangha* (the Buddhist community of monks, nuns, novices, and laity) in Cambodia under Democratic Kampuchea. Unlike his 2005 book, which focused largely on the damages done to Buddhist monks and monasteries in Cambodia by the Khmer Rouge regime, Harris' 2013 book humanizes the monks as individuals who were victimized because of their longstanding faith, as Buddhism was regarded as feudal practices by the Khmer Rouge regime. While Harris' book does not focus on migration, it is still valid to this thesis, as it analyzed Theravāda Buddhism in Cambodia, and stressed that, like all people on Earth, the Khmer Rouge regime was bound by the ancient law of karma,<sup>48</sup> which, coincidentally, enabled the faith to reemerge in Cambodia after the Khmer Rouge attempted to abolish it. Thus, like the Khmer Buddhists in Cambodia, the Muslim Cham retained their faith in Islam, which is exemplified by their migrations in undertaking the *Hajj*.

In 2013, Eric Tagliacozzo, professor of history and Asian Studies at Cornell University, published *The Longest Journey: Southeast Asians and the Pilgrimage to Mecca*, which described how Muslims in Southeast Asia have undertaken the *Hajj*, or the annual pilgrimage to Mecca, from ancient times to the present. Unlike the detailed histories of the Khmer Rouge histories given in So's and Ysa's books about the Cham people of Cambodia, Tagliacozzo's analyses of the *Hajj* journeys taken by the Cham people of Cambodia are somewhat sparse, as he often mentioned them only in passing, and did not give any direct quotes from the Cham people who live in Kâmpóng Cham

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<sup>48</sup> Harris, Ian. 2013. *Buddhism in a Dark Age: Cambodian Monks under Pol Pot*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 170.

Province, although he claimed to have spoken to them. Given that he summarized what the Cham people supposedly told him about going to the *Hajj*, by not directly quoting them, Tagliacozzo's book not only left his analyses of their experiences questionable, but represents a continuing problem that has plagued Cambodian history for centuries. That is, the voices and perspectives of the Khmer and Cham peoples of Cambodia are not being documented, and, consequently, not being heard, by Western scholars. However, unlike So's and Ysa's work, Tagliacozzo's book also filled a void by analyzing the *Hajj* journeys of Cham people, because it is usually not discussed in books that include them, despite that it is one of the five pillars of Islam, which they abide by. Thus, Tagliacozzo's inclusion of the *Hajj* experiences of the Cham people from Kâmpóng Cham Province looks at their persistence and drive through migration to continue following Islam in a Buddhist-majority country.

Lastly, in 2019, Islamic Studies scholar Phillipp Bruckmayr published his book, *Cambodia's Muslims and the Malay World: Malay Language, Jawi Script, and the Islamic Factionalism from the 19th Century to the Present*, which described how the Cham people in Panduranga were relocated to what is now Kâmpóng Cham Province, and had to fight their own people in Vietnam to remain in Cambodia. According to Bruckmayr, since the Cham people were known as expert seafarers, they received symbols of royal recognition from Khmer King Ang Duong, due to their influence in political and military affairs, and had the recognition of the king of Cambodia, as well as the British Prime Minister. Although the Cham people appeared to be permanently resettled in Cambodia, Bruckmayr implied that a domino effect of military politics

between the Cham people in both Vietnam and Cambodia resulted in the Cham, who resided in Kâmpóng Cham Province, being forced to take up arms against each other. However, Bruckmayr never analyzed *how* the migrations of the Cham people in Cambodia affected the ways in which they practiced Islam in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, but insisted that political positions were not influenced by Islam, despite their battles against the Vietnamese Army and the Khmer Rouge regime. Thus, Bruckmayr's work shows that despite being comprehensive of the migrations of the Cham people in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, his book left out crucial details regarding their Islamic faith, which guided their beliefs and encouraged them to fight to remain in Cambodia, despite the struggles that they endured.

The work of these twelve historians, anthropologists, humanitarians, and Religious Studies scholars focuses on issues concerning transnational migration, assimilation, cultural traditions, Islam, and Buddhism. This revolves around a theme of Cham and Khmer peoples being confronted with ethnically and culturally different groups of people whose former empires had been conquered, and how they adapted to and resisted the changes that took place around them after they migrated to different areas of Cambodia. The intention of this thesis is to show that the lives and migrations of both the Cham and Khmer peoples in Cambodia from 1832 to 2020 was directed under circumstances that already existed, which were given and transmitted from the past, rather than self-determined.

The importance of this thesis is in the issues and people that it speaks of, which are rarely mentioned in Cambodia's history. The history of the presence and migrations of

the Khmer and Cham peoples who lived in Cambodia from the fifteenth to the nineteenth centuries are not comprehensively documented in school textbooks, nor are their migratory histories in historic journals, because their movements are not typically analyzed by historians, as it is evident from their presumptive analyses that most scholars did not talk to Cambodian people directly. Given that most historians of Cambodia were Americans and Europeans, this likely occurred due to language barriers and/or difficulties with comprehension in the Khmer language. Furthermore, few historiographies analyze the lives and migrations of both the Cham and Khmer peoples who currently live in Cambodia, which also hints that they are not being approached and questioned by scholars, and may be why so little is still known about how and why they migrate. Therefore, it is not surprising that no published sources detail the migrations of both Cham and Khmer peoples in Kâmpóng Cham, Siem Reap, and Kandal Provinces, which all have sizable Khmer and Cham populations. However, given their unique stories and circumstances, it is important to explore what caused their migrations to and within Cambodia, how and why they went about leaving their native provinces, and why they chose to stay in Cambodia, despite their hardships. Ultimately, it was the voluntary and involuntary decisions to migrate that drove the fates of both the Cham and Khmer peoples in Cambodia.

This thesis is an analytical historiography that focuses on migratory events that affected both the Cham and the Khmer peoples from 1832 to 2020. Events mentioned prior to 1832, such as the migrations of the Cham people within Vietnam and their battles fought against the invading Vietnamese Army, are written to lay the groundwork for the

reader, to give context to and relate specific events that occurred at an earlier time to those that affected them at a later time. Chapter one is a historiography of the transnational migrations and battles of the Cham people in what later became Vietnam from 400 BC to 1800 and their westward migration and resettlement in neighboring Cambodia, from 1832 to 1894. This chronicles the migrations of the Cham precursors in Vietnam, the Sa Huynh people, early Cham religious beliefs, the establishment and defense of the Kingdom of Champa and Panduranga, sporadic maritime battles between the Cham and Khmer peoples, ground warfare between the Cham and Vietnamese peoples, the first Cham migrations into Cambodia, and their larger migrations later, which resulted in their permanent resettlement. This lays the groundwork for the reader, to explain not only *how* the Cham people migrated within Vietnam, but also *why* they eventually migrated to Cambodia. This puts the information given in the first part of the chapter into historical context, as the experiences of the Cham and Khmer peoples, through their inland and maritime battles together against the invading Vietnamese Army and the *Bani* Cham (the Cham people who still lived in Vietnam), exemplified that they were much more alike than different, as both groups fought for the Cham people to remain in Cambodia. Chapter three analyzes the population growth that occurred in Siem Reap, Kandal, and Kâmpóng Cham Provinces between 1941 and 1964, as a result of Cham and Khmer families migrating into those areas. Although King Norodom Sihanouk declared Cambodia's independence from France on November 9, 1953, after ninety years of being under the French Protectorate of Cambodia, the French records concerning population growth hinted that France still sought to maintain control over Cambodia,



under the guise of record-keeping, by producing census records to evaluate the country's modernization, as the Cambodian government did not do so at the time. Nonetheless, the French records not only document pre-Khmer Rouge detection of the migration patterns of both the Cham and Khmer peoples that occurred in Cambodia, but also enables a before-and-after population comparison of these two groups that were targeted by the Khmer Rouge regime. To this end, chapter three covers the migratory histories of both the Cham and Khmer peoples from 1969 to 2018, which focuses on their journeys and differentiating struggles to retain their Muslim and Theravāda Buddhist faiths to survive in the countryside under the Khmer Rouge regime, and how they used their faiths to search for their families after the Khmer Rouge regime collapsed. While both groups suffered heavily, as between 1.2 million and 2.8 million people were executed by January 7, 1979,<sup>49</sup> they retained their religious traditions and rituals, despite that all religion was supposedly abolished by the leader of the Khmer Rouge regime, Solath Sar (May 19, 1925-April 15, 1998), better known by his *nom de guerre*, Pol Pot. Thus, these shared experiences of the Cham and Khmer peoples hinted that their longstanding religious beliefs in Cambodia enabled them to survive. Lastly, chapter four focuses on the migrations and religious beliefs of present-day Khmer and Cham peoples, who are descendants of the survivors of the Khmer Rouge regime. Despite that the reasons for their migrations differ from that of prior generations, their stories are unique, as they are educated, travel leisurely, marry whomever they choose, respect the perspectives of their elders, and participate in cultural and religious festivals, while helping their families and

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<sup>49</sup> Sullivan, Meg. 2015. "UCLA demographer produces best estimate yet of Cambodia's death toll under Pol Pot." UCLA Newsroom. Accessed March 15, 2020. <https://newsroom.ucla.edu/releases/ucla-demographer-produces-best-estimate-yet-of-cambodias-death-toll-under-pol-pot>.

giving back to their communities, which exemplifies that while they have retained longstanding cultural and religious traditions, they are simultaneously modernized to live in the twenty-first century. Given that a history of the migrations of both the Cham and Khmer peoples of Cambodia has never been analyzed until now, their journeys and stories are especially unique, as some may have remained untold without inquiry. However, this long story will do both the Cham and Khmer peoples of the Kingdom of Cambodia justice, as they are immortalized in these pages of history.

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## Introduction

According to historian of ancient and modern Cambodia and Thailand, Michael Theodore Vickery, the Cham people of present-day Cambodia are believed to have originally migrated to and arrived by sea to the coast of what is now Vietnam from Borneo, two to three millennium ago.<sup>50</sup> They were originally the inhabitants of the Kingdom of Champa, which ruled a group of polities along the coast of what is now Central and Southern Vietnam. The Cham people also ruled much of what is now Vietnam, between Nghệ An Province in the North and Biên Hòa in Đồng Nai Province in the South, as well as the mountains of today's Bình Định and Phú Yên Provinces.<sup>51</sup> The Truong Son Cordillera was the frontier that separated the Cham people from their former enemies, the Khmer people. However, the Cham people were sailors, soldiers, and traders, who used their maritime expertise to both carve out a living for themselves in both coastal and mountainous Vietnam, as well as defend their territory against the neighboring Khmer Empire, Southern Chinese people, who were later known as the Vietnamese, and the Mongols in North China.

The area that the Cham people originally settled in when they migrated westward is located in the Kroch Chhmar district in Kâmpóng Cham Province,<sup>52</sup> in southeastern Cambodia, which is on the Eastern bank of the Mekong River, approximately forty-five miles northeast of Cambodia's capital city, Phnom Penh. The Cham people migrated to

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<sup>50</sup> Vachon, Michelle and Kuch Nare. 2006. "A history of Champa." *The Cambodia Daily*. Accessed February 29, 2020. <https://english.cambodiadaily.com/news/a-history-of-champa-87292/>.

<sup>51</sup> Goodman, Jim. 2015. *Delta to Delta: The Vietnamese Move South*. Vietnam: The Gioi Publishers, 54.

<sup>52</sup> Ysa, Osman. 2006. *The Cham Rebellion: Survivors' Stories from the Villages*. Phnom Penh: Documentation Center of Cambodia.

this then-sparsely populated area of Eastern Cambodia for the first time in the fifteenth century, most likely by boat, and settled on the wetlands near the Tonle Sap River.

According to historian and archaeologist William A. Southworth, the name Champa was derived from India, being the name of an early kingdom in the lower Ganges River valley near modern Bhagalpur and is the common name for the flowering tree *michelia champaka*. Both plant and kingdom were mentioned in early Indian literature, such as the poem the *Mahabharata*, and the name was likely transported to Southeast Asia through such literature. Champa developed in Central Vietnam during the first millennium A.D. and was first used in the inscriptions at the Hindu temple My Son in Quang Nam Province in the late sixth century A.D.<sup>53</sup> Furthermore, Southworth argued that the adoption of Sanskrit, Indian Brahmi scripts; knowledge and use of Indian philosophic, astronomical, and calendrical systems; brick temple constructions and ideas that concerned sacred and secular spaces; and the adoption of Indian iconography and concepts, all attest to the intellectual impact of Indian civilization on Champa during the first millennium A.D.<sup>54</sup> However, in historian and academic author Justin J. Corfield's 2008 book, *The History of Vietnam*, and in historian G. E. Marrison's 1985 article, "The Chams and Their Literature," they stated that according to Chinese annals, Champa was not established until 192 C.E., whereas Corfield stated that Champa was most heavily

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<sup>53</sup> Southworth, William A. 2004. "The Coastal States of Champa." In *Southeast Asia: From Prehistory to History*, edited by Ian Glover and Peter Bellwood, 209. London and New York: RoutledgeCurzon.

<sup>54</sup> Southworth, 2004, 209-211.

influenced by Indian culture in the fifth century.<sup>55</sup> Southworth, Corfield, and Marrison claimed that the establishment of Champa and its Indian influence are each about 100 years apart from what their counterparts claimed. Given that Corfield relied on exclusively secondary sources, whereas Southworth and Marrison drew their findings from both primary and secondary sources, Southworth is most likely correct. He not only visited the archeological sites and the Museum of Cham Sculpture in Đà Nẵng, Vietnam, but agreed with other archaeologists in this historiography that Champa was established and evidence of its Indian influence was impactful during the first millennium A.D.

In her 2000 article, “The Coming of Islam to Champa,” anthropologist Rie Nakamura analyzed the religious history of the Cham, as they have followed Hinduism, Mahāyāna Buddhism, and Islam, in Vietnam and Cambodia. Initially, Champa was greatly influenced by Hindu culture and had considerable prosperity from the ninth to fifteenth centuries, as their ports along the South China Sea enabled not only the exchange of goods, but also religious ideas. Although Mahāyāna Buddhism was followed between the ninth and tenth centuries, Hinduism was Champa's state religion.<sup>56</sup> However, in Ysa's 2010 book, *Navigating the Rift: Muslim-Buddhist Intermarriage in Cambodia*, he stated that in the fourteenth century, the Cham people in Vietnam converted to Islam, through the efforts of Javanese missionaries,<sup>57</sup> although Nakamura stated that it likely

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<sup>55</sup> Corfield, Justin. 2008. *The History of Vietnam*. Westport and London: Greenwood Press, 5; G. E. Marrison. 1985. “The Chams and Their Literature.” *Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* 58, no. 2: 45. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41493017>.

<sup>56</sup> Nakamura, Rie. 2000. “The Coming of Islam to Champa.” *Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* 73, no. 1: 57. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41493412>.

<sup>57</sup> Ysa, Osman. 2010. *Navigating the Rift: Muslim-Buddhist Intermarriage in Cambodia*. Phnom Penh: Ysa Osman, 18.

occurred as a result of contact with Malay kin who converted centuries earlier or Muslim traders. Furthermore, Nakamura stated that in French philologist Antoine Cabaton's 1960 book, *Encyclopedia of Islam*, Cabaton suggested that Champa's first contact with the Islamic world possibly began in the seventh century, as foreign Muslims had settled in Champa by the tenth century. However, he also pointed out that there are no historical records that indicated that Islam was widely practiced by the Cham people. Nonetheless, Cabaton stated that Islam became widespread among the Cham refugees in Cambodia during the fifteenth century, after the fall of Vijaya in 1471. To this end, he credited the Malays with the conversion of the Cham population in Cambodia to Islam.<sup>58</sup> Today, Islam is the dominant religion among descendants of the early people of Champa. Po Dharma divided the Cambodian Cham into two groups, orthodox and traditional, based upon their religious practices. The orthodox group, which makes up about one-third of the total number of Cham in Cambodia, were located mostly in the Odongk Province area, as well as in Takev and Kampot Provinces. The traditional Cham were scattered throughout Central Cambodia, in Battambang, Kâmpóng Thom, Kâmpóng Cham, and Pouthisat Provinces. The Cham people in Cambodia today are mostly Sunni Muslims and have been influenced by a form of Islam practiced in Malaysia, as the religious elite use the Malay language to conduct services. Furthermore, in Cambodia, the present-day Sunni Muslim Cham study the Qur'an in Malay,<sup>59</sup> though this may be because the Qur'an is difficult to acquire in both the Cham and Khmer languages.

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<sup>58</sup> Nakamura, Rie. 2000. "The Coming of Islam to Champa." *Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* 73, no. 1: 57. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41493412>.

<sup>59</sup> Nakamura, 2000, 55.

Although much has been written about the Angkor Empire and the Cham people, the history and resettlement of the Cham population in Cambodia is often only mentioned in passing in historical manuscripts, despite their centuries-long settlement in the country. However, when the history of the Cham people is pieced together and contrasted with the history of the Khmer people, one finds that little has been written about what led to the beginning of their migrations to Cambodia during the Dark Ages of Khmer history, as Taylor stated, “[t]he Cham who live in the Mekong delta are far removed from the centre [sic] of classical Cham culture and they have not received the scholarly attention paid to the kingdom to which they are linked.”<sup>60</sup>

Archeologist Charles Higham has written extensively about the Khmer Empire, but from 1996 to 2004, he spoke sparingly of the Cham, though widely about their late prehistoric migratory precursors, the Sa Huynh people. In Higham’s 1996 book titled *The Bronze Age of Southeast Asia*, he chronicled the Bronze Age in Southeast Asia and the social contexts in which the metals were used, but only mentioned Cham burials three times. The excavations in which he described are relatively rare with the discoveries of lidded burial jars in the sand dunes near Sa Huynh, Vietnam. Higham states that the Sa Huynh burial jars included a range of grave goods, which included glass and carnelian beads; stone, iron, glass, and bronze bracelets with socketed and tanged iron implements; and jade slit earrings. Similar grave goods as well as iron axes, swords, and slags; gold, zircon, and olivine beads; and a pendant with a double-headed animal figure were also found in Hang Gon on the banks of the Suoi Gia Leu River, which indicated that the Sa

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<sup>60</sup> Taylor, Philip. 2007. *Cham Muslims of the Mekong Delta: Place and Mobility in the Cosmopolitan Periphery*. Honolulu: University of Hawai’I Press, 29-30.

Huynh people were settled in the area between 400 B.C. and 432 B.C. Higham stated that the grave goods suggested that the Sa Huynh and Hang Gon peoples had wide-ranging maritime contact with other areas of Southeast Asia, such as Central Thailand and the Philippines, in the first millennium BC.<sup>61</sup> Furthermore, Higham stated that forty burial urns at Phu Hoa were dated between 38 B.C. to 1408 B.C. and 164 B.C. to 814 B.C., which suggested that the area was occupied in the second half of the first millennium B.C. However, in Ian Glover's and Peter Bellwood's 2004 book, *Southeast Asia: From Prehistory to History*, Higham stated in an article titled "Mainland Southeast Asia from the Neolithic to the Iron Age" that the Sa Huynh culture likely represented a first millennium BC move into Southern Vietnam. Conversely, writer Jim Goodman, who authored the 2015 book *Delta to Delta: The Vietnamese Move South*, believed that the Sa Huynh people occupied this area around 1000 B.C.<sup>62</sup> Nevertheless, the Sa Huynh people inhabited Vietnam sooner than previously believed.

In 1951, historian Lawrence Palmer Briggs published *The Ancient Khmer Empire*, which was the first book to be assembled, compiled, and available in the English language about the Angkor Empire, in which he discussed the transnational migrations of the early Cham people into Cambodia. In his analysis, Briggs stated that in the fourth century, the first king of Indochina, Bhadravarman, was the ruler of Champa, and was versed in the four Vedas, as there were a number of Indian brahmins; erected the national temple of Champa; established the Hindu temple, My Son; and established the national

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<sup>61</sup> Higham, 1996, 304-307.

<sup>62</sup> Higham, Charles. 2004. "Mainland Southeast Asia from the Neolithic to the Iron Age." In *Southeast Asia: From Prehistory to History*, edited by Ian Glover and Peter Bellwood, 60. London and New York: RoutledgeCurzon; Goodman, 2015, 36.



god of the Chams, Sivalinga, under the evocable Bhadresvara, which began the Cham custom of combining a deity with the name of the current king. According to Briggs, this custom did not begin in Cambodia until several centuries later.<sup>63</sup> Thus, the King of Champa created a tradition of the king as a divine being, which was later used by the Khmer kings for centuries.

Southworth's 2004 article, "The Coastal States of Champa," examined artifacts of the early Champa culture in Vietnam. He stated that the artifacts were evidence of the cultural impact of trade with China and India through excavation of grave goods and sandstone sculptures found in Cham burials and shrines, and tribute missions and founding religious establishments that contributed to the "collapse" of Champa in the eighth century.<sup>64</sup> Champa did not collapse in the eighth century, as Southworth stated, but in the early nineteenth century, after centuries of war and rebellions against the Khmer, Chinese, and Vietnamese. Based on Higham's analysis of grave goods found in the Sa Huynh burials, Southworth added that the glass and semi-precious carnelian and agate beads were either created in India or reproduced in Southeast Asia using Indian techniques and raw materials. These grave goods were undoubtedly acquired through either foreign trade or cultural influence. Similarly, Southworth stated that an elaborately carved sandstone square pedestal that measured nearly nine feet on each side with Shaivite saints on it was found at My Son, which, although like patterns seen in Cambodia, Thailand, and Java, he claimed represented a "highly distinctive form of

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<sup>63</sup> Briggs, Lawrence Palmer. February 1951. *The Ancient Khmer Empire*. Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, 24.

<sup>64</sup> Southworth, 2004, 212.

cultural and religious expression.”<sup>65</sup> Furthermore, it denoted Indian localization by the Sa Huynh people. Given that Champa trade was largely done through Tang China circa 650 A.D. to 750 A.D., Higham did not mention the cultural influence of India and Hinduism on the Cham in relation to their grave goods and shrine accessories, though Southworth did. Prior to this, Southworth had not mentioned the marriage alliance between Cambodia and Champa, though Higham did: He stated that in the spring of 605 A.D., Khmer ruler Mahendravarman sent his ambassador to the Cham ruler Sambhuvarman, to conduct tribute missions and to reconstruct the burnt temple, My Son. The next two Champa reigns were peaceful, but the second ruler, Bhasadarma was murdered by one of his ministers and his nephew, Bhadresvaravarman, was crowned as the next king. A dynastic struggle ensued, which resulted in the coronation of Vikrantavarman I, who was descended on his paternal side from Rudravarman and from his maternal side from Ishanavarman. Thus, the union of Vikrantavarman I’s parents linked the kingdoms of Champa and Cambodia for a time. However, the dynasty ended with Vikrantavarman I’s successors, Vikrantavarman II and Rudravarman II, in 758 A.D.<sup>66</sup>

In 2014, Higham wrote a synthesis titled *Early Mainland Southeast Asia: From First Humans to Angkor*, which concerned the latest archeological Sa Huynh findings in Vietnam, to the rise and fall of the Angkor Empire, and French archaeologist Henri Parmentier’s findings pointed to how the Cham used the rivers in Vietnam for burials. Unlike Higham’s earlier books, the Cham are mentioned throughout this work, in both

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<sup>65</sup> Southworth, 2004, 225.

<sup>66</sup> Higham, 2014, 326.

Cambodia and Vietnam, as more archaeological discoveries were made. Higham stated that a Sa Huynh urn burial was found at Ban Kan Luang, in the lower valleys of the Mun River, north of Cambodia, which suggested that the pre-Cham settlement extended further into the interior of mainland Southeast Asia than previously realized.

Furthermore, Higham stated that when the Chinese described the burial rite, the dead were placed in burial jars of the quality that coincided with the status of the deceased, and their remains were consigned to the sea. Even further, the burials were accompanied by bronze bracelets, axes, spears, arrowheads, and iron slag.<sup>67</sup> Therefore, finding the urns near the Mun River indicated that the area was either a Sa Huynh settlement or that the later Cham crossed Truong Son and infiltrated the Mun River Valley during the Iron Age.<sup>68</sup>

This area was fitting for the Cham's maritime trading expertise, as it enabled dues to be collected for ships that passed through their harbors. To this end, in 1909 and 1918, Parmentier identified five major sub-divisions along the Mekong River, which were politically regulated by the Cham.<sup>69</sup> Higham and Southworth agreed that the Cham's knowledge of water routes in the lower Mekong River Valley enabled them to launch a series of naval attacks against Angkor. According to Southworth, the Vietnamese invasion of 982 A.D. had a profound impact on the politics of Champa, as the kingdom of Vijaya in modern Bình Định Province took control of the maritime commerce of Quảng

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<sup>67</sup> Higham, 2014, 217.

<sup>68</sup> Higham, 2014, 217-218.

<sup>69</sup> Parmentier, H. 1918. *Inventaire Descriptif des Monuments Cams de L'Annam*. Paris: Editions Earnest Leroux; H. Parmentier. 1924. "VII.— Dépôts de jarres à Sa-huynh (Quảng-ngãi, Annam)." *Notes d'archéologie Indochinoise. Bulletin de l'Ecole Francaise d'Extreme-Orient* 24: 325-343. [https://www.persee.fr/doc/befeo\\_0336-1519\\_1924\\_num\\_24\\_1\\_3008](https://www.persee.fr/doc/befeo_0336-1519_1924_num_24_1_3008).

Nam in the north and Nha Trang in the south. Since the marriage link between Cambodia and Champa had ended, Vietnam and Cambodia returned to battle each other. Southworth stated that Vijaya, which was once part of the Cham states, was more powerful, populous, and influential than any Cham states that had preceded it, which led to war with Angkor Wat in the twelfth century.<sup>70</sup>

In Higham's 2001 and 2002 books, *The Civilization of Angkor* and *Early Cultures of Mainland Southeast Asia*, respectively, he discussed how the Cham people used their maritime experience to attack Angkor Wat, but made no mention of Mahāyāna Buddhist burials between the ninth and tenth centuries, possibly because Hinduism was still the state religion. While the Central Cham area was exposed to military threats from the Chinese and suffered several campaigns from them, the coastal area that the Cham inhabited meant that no lowland areas were excluded from trading with them. Higham stated that since the Cham were influenced early by Chinese practices, "[s]upremacy in naval warfare, and the rapid transport of armed retainers by sea, may well have been instrumental in securing control over the long coastline."<sup>71</sup> This control extended to Cambodia, since the Mekong River was navigable up to the Tonle Sap River. The Truong Son Cordillera, the principal mountain range that lies between the South China Sea and the Mekong River, was the frontier between the Khmer and the Chams. Although the International Center for Ethnic Studies stated that between circa 1000 A.D. and 1100

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<sup>70</sup> Southworth, 2004, 230.

<sup>71</sup> Higham, 2002, 10, 296.

A.D., the Cham frequently fought the Khmer,<sup>72</sup> Briggs stated that Suryavarman I maintained peaceful relations with the Cham throughout his reign. Briggs is most likely correct, as Ysa stated that according to the *Teuk Vil* chronicle, Suryavarman's son, Baksei Chamkrong, who ruled from 1028 A.D. to 1070 A.D., married Preah Neang Poeu Pisei, who was the daughter of Cham King Sintrea II.<sup>73</sup> Despite this, sinologist René Gaston Georges Maspero and French ethnologist Adhemard Leclere claimed that the Chinese Annals stated that Suryavarman I contracted an alliance with China and Champa in 1030 A.D., to carry on a war against the Vietnamese Emperor, Ly-thai Tong, which lasted for sixty years. It assured peace with Champa, to enable the King of Cambodia to repress vassal king revolts. However, Briggs stated that Maspero's and Leclere's claims lacked authentication. He also added that French linguist Étienne Aymonier stated that an inscription dated 1050 A.D. mentioned Chams, Khmer, Chinese, Siamese, and Paganese among slaves captured during a war against the King of Pagan, though Briggs pointed out that the King of Pagan was not crowned until 1044 A.D., that Pagan controlled only a small strip of land along the upper Irrawaddy River, and that until his conquest of Thaton, well into the reign of King Suyavarman I's successor, the Mon kingdom of Sudhammapura intervened between Pagan and Cambodia or any of its dependencies.<sup>74</sup> Thus, Briggs appeared to be correct when he stated that Suryavarman I maintained peace during his reign. Conversely, although Higham described Suryavarman II as one of the

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<sup>72</sup> International Centre for Ethnic Studies. 1995. *Minorities in Cambodia*. Sri Lanka: Minority Rights Group, 10.

<sup>73</sup> Ysa, 2010, 20.

<sup>74</sup> Briggs, 1951, 160.

great kings of Angkor and that he built enormous monuments such as Angkor Wat to make merit, he also stated “but the darker side of his rule was a series of unsuccessful, even disastrous, military campaigns against the kingdoms traditional enemies east of the Truong Son range: the Chams.”<sup>75</sup>

The twelfth century was strewn with sporadic battles and temporary alliances between the Chams and Khmer kings, which were withstood by King Suryavarman II and his successor, Jayavarmn VII. Suryavarman II had a reputation as a warlike king, who fought both the Chams and the Vietnamese. When he sent embassies to China, the hostile relations between the Cham and Khmer that ensued had severe repercussions for Angkor. Briggs stated that from 1113 to 1139, Champa was governed by a weak king, Jaya Havivarman I. Concurrently, the Vietnamese, who won their independence from China in 939 A.D., were now organized as Dai Viet, and underwent their own succession of weak rulers, under which both the Khmer and Cham peoples took refuge from their enemies. In 1128, Suryavarman II led 20,000 soldiers against Dai Viet to Nghe An, Vietnam, but were driven out. In Autumn 1132, he sent more than 700 vessels to attack the coast of Dai Viet by land and sea with the Cham, and invaded Nghean, but were driven out again. In 1136, the king of Champa, Jaya Indravarman III made peace with Dai Viet and refused to join forces with Suryavarman II, instead aligning with the Vietnamese.<sup>76</sup> Briggs stated that Suryavarman II deposed Jaya Indravarman III between 1144 and 1145, and annexed Champa the following year. The Chams, under King Jaya Harivarman I, defeated Khmer

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<sup>75</sup> Higham, Charles. 2001. *The Civilization of Angkor*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 114.

<sup>76</sup> Briggs, 1951, 190.

troops at Chakling in Southern Vietnam. Suryavarman II put his brother-in-law, Harideva, on the Cham throne at the Cham capital of Vijayapura, but Jaya Harivarman I annihilated him and reclaimed the throne in 1147. Maspero stated that in 1150, Suryavarman II died during a new campaign against Champa, which ended disastrously.<sup>77</sup> This back-and-forth fighting left the Khmer people exhausted by war with the Chams, who then attacked Angkor. In Higham's 2001 work, *The Civilization of Angkor*, he stated that the periods between the deaths of Suryavarman II in 1150 and the crowning of Jayavarman VII in 1181, was evidently one of internal struggle, as Suryavarman II was succeeded by his cousin Dharanindravarman II, who reigned for no more than a decade. He was then succeeded by a relative named Yashovarman II, who was killed in a struggle for power by a non-relative named Tribhuvanadityavarman. Having killed and overthrown Yashovarman II, he faced a water-borne invasion up and across the Mekong and Tonle Sap Rivers by the Chams, led by their King Shri Jaya Indravarmadeva of Vijaya, in 1177. To this end, Angkor was sacked and King Tribhuvanadityavarman was killed. Higham stated that according to an inscription at the Phimeanakas, Jayavarman VII, the future king of Cambodia, was in Champa at the time, and when he heard of the attack, he hurried back to Cambodia, where he defeated the Chams in battle, and was crowned in 1181.<sup>78</sup> This was likely a naval battle against the Chams, depicted on one of the many bas-reliefs of Angkor. Higham, as well as French historian Claude Jaques noted

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<sup>77</sup> Briggs, 1951, 192-193; Ian Mabbett and David Chandler. *The Khmers*. Oxford and Cambridge: Blackwell Publishers, 105.

<sup>78</sup> Higham, 2001, 120-121; Briggs, 1951, 193.

that the bas-reliefs of the Bayon and Banteay Chmar revealed aspects of naval warfare during the twelfth century, as he stated that...

[s]cenes from both sites reveal a naval engagement between the Khmer, who wore loin cloths, and an enemy whose flowered head dresses [sic] indicate[d] that they were Chams. They seem to have used boats as floating fortresses, from which they fought with spears.<sup>79</sup>

However, in Jacques's and French historian Phillippe Lafond's 2007 book, *The Khmer Empire: Cities and Sanctuaries from the 5th to the 13th Century*, they stated that due to Jayavarman VII's problematic genealogy, before ascending the throne, he dispatched a task force led by a Cham general to stop a rebellion in Battambang, Cambodia before he launched the campaigns in Champa. Such Cham campaigns were probably not aimed at annexation, Jaques and Lafond stated, but assisted either a trusted friend or relative to seize the Cham throne,<sup>80</sup> which explained why Jayavarman VII was in Champa when the Chams sacked Angkor 1177. Like the Chams, Southworth noted that Vijaya also fell to Jayavarman VII in 1191.<sup>81</sup> When Jayavarman VII died between 1217 and 1220, he likely had reached an advanced age, but his heroic undertaking was not in vain, as he was a Buddhist, soldier, the most active monument builder of all of the Khmer kings, and, during his reign, Angkor Wat was nearly completed.<sup>82</sup> However, in 2004, archaeologist

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<sup>79</sup> Higham, 2002, 340; Jacques, Claude and Philippe Lafond. *The Khmer Empire: Cities and Sanctuaries from the 5<sup>th</sup> to the 13<sup>th</sup> Century*. Bangkok: River Books, 86.

<sup>80</sup> Jacques and Lafond, 2007, 239-240.

<sup>81</sup> Southworth, 2004, 230.

<sup>82</sup> Jacques and Lafond, 2007, 240; Higham, 2002, 321.



Miriam Stark stated that after Angkor Wat was sacked by the Chams,<sup>83</sup> the Khmer Empire was weakened and slowly declined for the next 241 years.

After Jayavarman VII's death, the sporadic fighting between the Cham people and the Angkor Empire was over, whereas wars with the Cham's old enemy, the Vietnamese, resumed in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Corfield stated that in 1293, Vietnamese King Tran Anh Tong took the throne and ushered in a period of peace with the Mongols and Chams, as his daughter married the king of Champa, which achieved peace for two provinces. Conversely, when the king of Champa died, Tran Anh Tong refused for his daughter to be buried with her husband. Corfield stated that the Cham people took this as an insult, and although Tran Anh Tong tried to avoid war, he launched an attack on Champa and seized their capital in 1318. Although the Vietnamese were victorious, this war seriously weakened Vietnam, which lost many of its young men and civilians in the fighting.<sup>84</sup> To this end, when the Mongol Yuan Dynasty collapsed in 1368, the Cham sacked Thang Long, Vietnam in 1388, as the Vietnamese no longer had help from China to fight their wars. However, Goodman stated that in 1390, the Cham had intended to conquer and take over Dai Viet, but the Vietnamese killed Cham Prince Ché Bồng Nga by canon fire.<sup>85</sup> With the prince dead, the Cham retreated to Champa, where the Vietnamese army general, La Khai, declared himself king. He took the name Sri Jaya

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<sup>83</sup> Stark, Mariam T. 2004. "Pre-Angkorian and Angkorian Cambodia." In *Southeast Asia: From Prehistory to History*, edited by Ian Glover and Peter Bellwood, 106. London and New York: RoutledgeCurzon.

<sup>84</sup> Corfield, 2008, 10.

<sup>85</sup> Goodman, 2015, 70-71; Tana, Li. 1998. *Nguyen Cochinchina: Southern Vietnam in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*. Ithaca: Southeast Asia Program Publications, 43.

Simhavarmadeva, although it is likely that Champa did not acknowledge his authority, as he was not part of the legitimate royal bloodline, whereas Ché Bồng Nga's two sons were. Therefore, Indian historian R.C. Majumdar suggested in his 1985 book, *Champa*, that a general who sought protection in Vietnam in 1397 for his family,<sup>86</sup> was likely La Khai, and that the Cham people did not want him as their ruler. Yet, Majumdar transcribed a Cham plinth on the gate of the royal citadel of Binh Dinh, Vietnam, which stated that after La Khai ruled for twelve [eleven] years (1390 -1401), his son, Sri Brsu Visnujatti Vira Bhadravarmadeva, reigned, but was killed in an invasion of Champa by Vietnamese troops in 1402.<sup>87</sup> Thus, in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the Cham people migrated to continue to defend their homeland against the Vietnamese.

Although Goodman stated that throughout the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, Cambodia lived undisturbed by any outside authorities,<sup>88</sup> both Briggs and historian Michael Florian Herz had already dispelled Goodman's 2015 theory in the 1940s and 1950s, as both Cambodia and Champa fought their own battles with foreign conquerors, and Cambodia attempted to rid its country of Cham refugees. Briggs' 1947 article, "A Sketch of Cambodian History," and Herz's 1958 book, *A Short History of Cambodia from the Days of Angkor to the Present*, spoke of Champa still at war with the Vietnamese, and the Khmer king simultaneously faced threats from Ayutthaya. Neither Briggs nor Herz stated that Cambodia may have unconsciously prevented Thailand from

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<sup>86</sup> Majumdar, R.C. 1985. *Champa: History & Culture of an Indian Colonial Kingdom in the Far East, 2<sup>nd</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> Century A.D.* Delhi: Gian Publishing House, 133-134.

<sup>87</sup> Majumdar, 1985, 134-135, 222.

<sup>88</sup> Goodman, 2015, 193.

conquering Champa, as the Thai were busy conquering the remnants of the Angkor Empire in 1432. Herz stated that Champa was Cambodia's flank protection against the Vietnamese in the north, but in the politics of the day, there was little awareness of it.<sup>89</sup> With the Vietnamese newly independent from China in 1428, they entered Champa in 1446, and established it as their capital in February and March 1471. Herz stated that the Chams sent desperate pleas to Phnom Penh for help, but the Khmer king, Reachea Ramathipatei, was too busy with internal dissension (as two rival kings held portions of Cambodia) and was too preoccupied with Thai threats from the west to bother with the Chams in the east. To this end, the Vietnamese stormed and destroyed Champa, killed some 60,000 people, and took 30,000 prisoners, including the King of Champa and virtually the entire royal family.<sup>90</sup> Although Champa was momentarily conquered, the Cham people were *not* wiped out, as Herz and many other scholars afterwards claimed in their books. Rather, Champa existed well into the nineteenth century. For example, Majumdar stated that after Vijaya was invaded in 1471, Cham general Bo Tri Tri led his remaining army and took refuge in Panduranga, where he declared himself king.<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> Briggs, Lawrence Palmer. August 1947. "A Sketch of Cambodian History." *The Far Eastern Quarterly* 6, no. 4: 355. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2049431>; Michael F. Herz. 1958. *A Short History of Cambodia from the Days of Angkor to the Present*. New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Inc., 41; Stark offered a convincing argument for the collapse and abandonment of Angkor in 1432: "[e]conomic overshoot through the massive building campaigns of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries under Jayavarman VII has also been suggested as a cause for Angkor's demise. This argument, while attractive, cannot yet explain the relationship the relationship between Angkor's collapse during a period in which the first classical states developed in Vietnam (Champa), Thailand (Sukhothai) and Burma (Pagan). Ecological factors like the reduction in control over the water regime may have been 'more a symptom than a cause' of Angkor's decline. Social and ideological factors played a key role in the process, including the structural integrity in relations between kings and officials, the growing self-sufficiency of the periphery—particular with its growing incorporations into a commercial economy—and the influence of Buddhist values on a Hindu-Saivite community (Stark, 2004, 111)."

<sup>90</sup> Herz, 1958, 43-44; Majumdar, 1985, 144.

<sup>91</sup> Majumdar, 1985, 79, 145.

However, the Champa invasion caused thousands of Cham to flee into sparsely populated areas of Eastern Cambodia, as well as Hainan and Guangzhou, China, the Malay Peninsula (Melaka, Aceh, Sumatra, and Java), and Thailand, as refugees.<sup>92</sup> In the mid-fifteenth century, Eastern Cambodia was a remote area to those near the former Khmer capital at Angkor Thom and the newer one at Longvek. Yet, since the only access to it was down the Mekong River by boat, it was a suitable settlement area for the Cham maritime diaspora, as Longvek bordered the Tonle Sap Lake. Thus, this relatively small transnational migration was the beginning of three larger forthcoming Cham migrations into Cambodia, which continued from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries.

Herz stated that under succeeding Khmer kings, the influx of Cham refugees who fled Vietnam became a problem for Cambodia, as they impaired internal Cambodian stability and relations with Vietnam.<sup>93</sup> Consequently, ongoing internal and foreign violence between the Cambodian, Vietnamese, and Thai kings ensued into the end of the seventeenth century, as the Khmer king attempted to rally the people against two foreign invaders. This is likely why archaeologist Bernard Philippe stated in his 2006 book, *Angkor and Cambodia in the Sixteenth Century According to Portuguese and Spanish Sources*, that between 1512 and 1515, Portuguese apothecary Tomé Pires wrote of the king of Cambodia and the Khmer people in a manuscript titled *Suma Oriental*, “[t]he said king is pagan and warlike. His land (extends) far into the interior. He is at war with those

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<sup>92</sup> Filippi, John-Michel. November 4, 2011. “The long tragedy of Cham history.” *Phnom Penh Post*. Accessed November 24, 2018. <https://www.phnompenhpost.com/post-plus/long-tragedy-cham-history>; Herz, 1958, 41.

<sup>93</sup> Herz, 1958, 47-48.

of Brema [Burma] and with Syam [sic, Siam], and sometimes with Champaa [sic], and is subject to no one. The people of Camboja [sic, Cambodia] are warlike.”<sup>94</sup> Thus, as the king of Cambodia fought internal battles and campaigned against the Cham, the Cham simultaneously fled Vietnam and migrated into Cambodia, as the Vietnamese conquered Cham land. For example, Ysa stated in his 2010 book that the Cham people migrated into Cambodia between 1596 and 1597, to what is now Tbong Khmum Province, during the reign of either King Preah Borom Reachea or Ponhea Ton.<sup>95</sup> Furthermore, in 1692, a large Cham migration to Cambodia occurred, in response to a failed revolt by Panduranga. On a lighter note, although Champa was now conquered by the Vietnamese, it was recognized as a state by French Jesuit missionary Alexandre de Rhodes, who lived and worked in Vietnam for ten years. To this end, in Po Dharma’s 1987 book, *Le Panduranga (Campa): 1802-1835 ses Rapports avec le Vietnam*, he stated...

After 1611, Champa lost all chance of recovering this [Quy Nho’n] territory, because the Nguyen applied a program of colonization...by creating many villages, by undertaking defenses, and sending 30,000 Vietnamese prisoners of Trinh. This is confirmed by A. de Rhodes, who in 1640, was in the hands of the Vietnamese, but south of Phu Yen was the Champa kingdom. On the map he published in 1640, the "Kingdom of Champa" is mentioned with its [N]orthern border between the province of Ran Ran (Phu Yen) and Cape Varella. The map of A. de Rhodes is not the first to announce the existence of Champa, since this country is mentioned by European travelers since 1529, which is evidence of its undeniable existence south of Dai Viet after the fall of Vijaya in 1471.<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>94</sup> Groslier, B.P. 2006. *Angkor and Cambodia in the Sixteenth Century According to Portuguese and Spanish Sources*. Bangkok: Orchid Press, 109.

<sup>95</sup> Ysa, 2010, 22.

<sup>96</sup> Dharma, Po. 1987. *Le Panduranga (Campa): 1802 – 1835 Ses Rapports avec le Vietnam*. Paris: Ecole Francaise D’Extreme-Orient, 64-65.

Although Quy Nho'n was lost to Champa, the Cham attempted to recover other territories that were conquered by the Vietnamese. Both Vietnamese historian Li Tana and Po Dharma stated in their books that after a second failed attack to the Nguyen in 1653, the Vietnamese territory reached Cam Ranh, on the South-Central coast of Vietnam. The last attack in 1692 was mounted by Panduranga, as King Ba Tranh fought to recover Kauthara (Nha Trang), which was annexed by the Vietnamese in 1653. However, after the 1692 victory, Lord Nguyen Phuoc Chu decided to incorporate the remainder of Champa into the rest of Vietnam.<sup>97</sup> This likely resulted in the first large Cham migration to Cambodia. Exhausted from fighting the Vietnamese for centuries and in the process of having their homeland conquered before their eyes, the Cham fled, to seek peace from constant war and uprisings. Furthermore, like the Chams, the Khmer had slowly undergone religious changes, as both had followed Hinduism and Buddhism for hundreds of years, which made for cultural similarities between the former enemies. Since the Khmer were now Theravāda Buddhist and the Cham were Muslim, the latter, who was familiar with Buddhism, likely felt that Cambodia was a safer place for them than Vietnam was when they fled. However, Tana and Po Dharma also stated that in late 1693, the people of Panduranga revolted against the Nguyen lord so successfully that the annexation was reversed and Panduranga was recognized within its 1692 frontiers, with its ruler treated as a tributary king. Nevertheless, Tana elaborated, despite the success of the revolt, with the protection of Vietnamese magistrates who regulated the affairs of Vietnamese settlers in the area, Vietnamese immigrants flocked to Panduranga and

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<sup>97</sup> Tana, 1998, 32; Dharma, 1987, 65.

established numerous enclaves, heedless of Cham objections.<sup>98</sup> According to Ysa's 2010 book, this caused 5,000 Cham people, including much of the Cham royalty, to migrate to Cambodia under the approval of Khmer King Jayajettha III (r. 1677-1709), and they resided in what is now Kâmpóng Speu, Tbong Khmum, and Steung Treng Provinces.<sup>99</sup> However, the Vietnamese people kept flocking to Cham territory. Cham American scholar Julie Thi Underhill stated in her 2010 article titled "Democratic Kampuchea's Genocide of the Cham" that during the 1697 migration of the royal unorthodox Cham Jahed from Panduranga to Cambodia, who maintained the ancient Cham language, script, and culture, and followed Hinduized Islamic rites, which included influences of Hindu cosmology, Sufi traditions, honored the spirits of their Champa ancestors, chant Cham poetry, recited the Cham language during their once-weekly prayers, and used original religious Cham scripture.<sup>100</sup> Although the Vietnamese people ventured to expel the Cham people from Vietnam, they were evidently unable to change Cham traditions and religion, as they continued to be practiced in Cambodia by the royal Cham refugees. Thus, by the end of the seventeenth century, although former Cham areas were overrun by the Vietnamese people, the Cham people who remained in Vietnam still fought to regain control of their vanishing lands.

By the end of the eighteenth century, the political and social structures of Cambodia and Vietnam crumbled under wars, rebellions, and another large Cham

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<sup>98</sup> Tana, 1998, 32; Dharma, 1987, 68.

<sup>99</sup> Ysa, 2010, 22.

<sup>100</sup> Underhill, Julie Thi. 2010. "Democratic Kampuchea's Genocide of the Cham." Essays. Accessed March 2, 2020. <https://diacritics.org/2010/12/democratic-kampuchea-s-genocide-of-the-cham/>, 4-5.

migration. Cambodia was reduced to about half of its size at the time of the abandonment of Angkor, and pro-Nguyen Anh authorities in Vietnam simultaneously attempted to push the Cham out of Panduranga. In 1767, Po Ladhunpaghuh led a resistance in the Tay-Son rebellion in Vietnam, and in 1769, Thonburi King Taksin launched a successful war to regain control over Cambodia. Furthermore, in 1790, Po Ladhunpaghuh was made deputy governor of Panduranga. Therefore, Cambodia, Vietnam, and Champa faced their own issues with conquerors. To this end, Po Dharma stated that in 1796, the Vietnamese annals mentioned that a man named Tuan Phu organized a revolt to get rid of the Vietnamese forces in Binh Thuan and fought the policies of the pro-Nguyen Anh authorities in Panduranga, to no avail. Although the Cham had no freedom of action and the prefecture of Binh Thuan was restored by Vietnamese authorities, there were more than 200 Vietnamese villages in the area, which resulted in parts of Panduranga becoming ethnically mixed.<sup>101</sup> Given that the deputy governor of Panduranga, Po Ladhunpaghuh, was a Vietnamese pro-Nguyen Anh supporter and was actively involved in dispelling the Cham people from their homeland, in 1796, a large number of Chams migrated to Cambodia, likely fleeing hardship under the Nguyen Anh regime. This was the last Cham migration to Cambodia in early modern history. By 1800, the Vietnamese had annexed and settled all of Vietnam, although some Cham remained. Now that the Cham lived in Cambodia and Southern Vietnam, in the forthcoming nineteenth century, they fought separate battles in adjacent countries to maintain their place in society, as they retained their customs, dress, religion, language, livelihood, and maritime way of

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<sup>101</sup> Dharma, 1987, 74.



life. Thus, the Cham people ensured that their struggles in Vietnam were not forgotten when they migrated to Cambodia.

## Chapter I: The Cham People Migrate to Cambodia

In 1832, the Cham people attained asylum in Cambodia under Khmer King Ang Chan II, which was their last large migration into the region, yet the beginning of a series of smaller migrations within the country. Although it is not known exactly when the Cham people resettled in Cambodia, as no scholars have cited any sources for it, save for Mak Phoeun's account which construed the Cham people as guests accommodated by the Khmer court,<sup>102</sup> it is highly likely that it was done so because after the last Cham stronghold of Panduranga was conquered by the Vietnamese in 1796. King Ang Chan II must have realized that both the Cham and Khmer people had lost their land to a common enemy. To this end, allowing the Cham to resettle in Cambodia enabled Ang Chan II to repopulate his kingdom, which had been severely decimated by the Vietnamese and Siamese. Furthermore, given that the Cham people practice a form of Islam that localized Buddhist and Hindu traditions and rituals, both of which the Khmer people have practiced, one of the reasons why the Cham were able to resettle in Cambodia was that they have a common religious history (for example, Angkor Wat has both Buddhist and Hindu symbolism on its statuary and temples), which enabled the Cham people to better adapt to a Buddhist country like Cambodia. However, anthropologist Philip Taylor stated in his 2007 book, *Cham Muslims of the Mekong Delta: Place and Mobility in the Cosmopolitan Periphery*, which used Cham oral histories to chronicle the modernizing reforms of the Vietnamese government to borderlands of their homelands in the Mekong Delta, that “[p]revious scholars have argued that the Cham people in the lower Mekong

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<sup>102</sup> Taylor, Philip. 2007. *Cham Muslims of the Mekong Delta: Place and Mobility in the Cosmopolitan Periphery*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 281.

are not a past-regarding people, or that they deal with their historical dislocation in a religious idiom,”<sup>103</sup> despite that the Cham people are descendants of the ancient Kingdom of Champa. Given that they arrived by boat and lived in the forests by the banks of the Mekong River and on the islands of the channel, they hid from the Vietnamese Army, as the River provided refuge. Taylor noted that since the Cham people had been expert seafarers for centuries,<sup>104</sup> the Mekong River provided a suitable area to resettle in. However, a fifty-year-old Cham resident of Chau Phong told Taylor in an oral history interview in 1999 that the Cham who lived on the Mekong River moved away when the Vietnamese population grew, and “[t]hey left no pagodas here to mark their occupation and now there is little trace they ever lived here.”<sup>105</sup> This hinted of the further invasion by the Vietnamese people to take Cham land on Cambodian soil, since the Vietnamese had already pushed the Cham out of Panduranga beforehand. Furthermore, this event coincided with Islamic Studies scholar Phillipp Bruckmayr stating in his 2019 book, *Cambodia’s Muslims and the Malay World: Malay Language, Jawi Script, and the Islamic Factionalism from the 19<sup>th</sup> Century to the Present*, that Cambodia experienced Vietnamese control from the 1820s to the early 1840s, which was briefly interrupted by a Siamese invasion in Cambodia in 1834, and backs up the Cham man’s oral history statement from 1999, as Bruckmayr stated that concurrently, “the Vietnamese relocated, both voluntarily and involuntarily, large numbers of Cambodian and Pandurangan Chams

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<sup>103</sup> Taylor, 2007, 61.

<sup>104</sup> Taylor, 2007, 36.

<sup>105</sup> Taylor, 2007, 37.

to buffer zones such as Thbaung Khmum/Kâmpóng Cham, Tay Ninh[,] and Châu Đốc.”<sup>106</sup> Thus, when King Ang Duong (June 12, 1796-October 19, 1860) took the Khmer throne in 1843 as a kind of shadow king under Vietnamese control, he faced a crumbling kingship, monkhood, and literacy in the Buddhist monasteries.<sup>107</sup>

Efforts for King Ang Duong to demonstrate legitimacy and reestablish Khmer kingship among the Khmer population also impacted the Cham-Malay community, and the traditional relationship between the Khmer kings and their Khmer and Cham subjects. Since the Cham people received symbols of royal recognition due to their influence in political and military affairs, they were given the opportunity to establish their continued relevance in seafaring trade in Kampot Province, which was Cambodia’s last remaining port. To this end, a Malay merchant was entrusted as supercargo for royal trade and charged with building a large junk ship, specifically for trade with Singapore. This position served the Cham-Malay people well, as Bruckmayr stated that at a British delegation’s official reception with British Prime Minister Robert Peel in 1851, the “chief of the Malays” was a present dignitary, doubtless via Kampot, Cambodia. For a time, the Cham-Malay people had the recognition of the king of Cambodia and the British Prime Minister, and they appeared to be permanently resettled in Cambodia, though trouble in Kâmpóng Cham later forced them to take up arms.

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<sup>106</sup> Bruckmayr, Phillipp. 2019. *Cambodia’s Muslims and the Malay World: Malay Language, Jawi Script, and Islamic Factionalism from the 19<sup>th</sup> Century to the Present*. Leiden: Brill, 58.

<sup>107</sup> Bruckmayr, 2019, 59.

In 1858, a Cham-Malay rebellion occurred in Kâmpóng Cham's Sambour and Roka Po Pram villages<sup>108</sup> against the governor of Cambodia's Eastern province, which caused military retaliation by King Ang Duong to crush the rebel forces,<sup>109</sup> which lasted until 1860. During this rebellion, which had been joined by discontented Khmer people, King Ang Duong's envoy was killed, which led the king to lead the subsequent punitive expedition. When the rebels escaped to Châu Đốc, on the Vietnam-Cambodia border along the Mekong Delta, due to prior Vietnamese resettlement of the Cham people, Vietnam now had a large Cham-Malay community, mostly drawn from Cambodia. To this end, the rebels had an already well-established local Cham-Malay community characterized by its loyalty and dependency on its Vietnamese overlords. The Cham people who resided in Kâmpóng Pring, Cambodia in the Tboung Khumum District of present-day Kâmpóng Cham Province, were involved in the rebellion from the beginning, as this villages's *po* or lord as they provided soldiers, supplies, and local topographic knowledge,<sup>110</sup> because as former residents of Vietnam, they knew the terrain. Given that Ang Duong was worried about potential rebellions in Châu Đốc, Vietnam, Bruckmayr stated that according to French witness Magor Miche, 5,000 to 6,000 Cham-Malay people from the site of the rebellion and vicinity were resettled along the Tonle Sap Lake between Phnom Penh and the royal riverine port in Kâmpóng Luong,<sup>111</sup> where a Cham

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<sup>108</sup> Bruckmayr, 2019, 59-60.

<sup>109</sup> Musa, Mohamad Zain, Nik Abdul Rahman, Nik Hassan Shuhaimi, Zuliskandar Ramli, and Adnan Jusoh. 2013. *Consequences of the 1858 Malay-Cham rebellion in Cambodia. Jebat: Malaysian Journal of History, Politics & Strategic Studies* 40, no. 2, 44.

<sup>110</sup> Bruckmayr, 2019, 62.

<sup>111</sup> Bruckmayr, 2019, 60-61.

community resides to this day. Certain areas of Tboung Khmum Province in Cambodia were completely depopulated, as French explorer Henri Mouhot, who is famous for his rediscovery of the ruins of Angkor Wat, observed while he passed through the region between 1858 and 1861. However, in 1859, with Vietnamese ships and ground troops from Châu Đốc, Vietnam, Cham-Malay forces devastated the port city of Kâmpóng Luong, Cambodia and advanced towards the royal capital of Oudong, Cambodia, which caused the future Khmer King Norodom and other Khmer princes to flee. When the Cham-Malay rebels retreated, they took their deported families back to Châu Đốc, Vietnam, though Bruckmayr stated that the deported Cham-Malay people were also resettled in the villages of Prey Pih, Sre Prey, and Chhouk Sar, which are all located inland to the West of the Tonle Sap Lake, in present-day Kâmpóng Chhang's Kâmpóng Tralach District. Consequently, Vietnam's subsequent refusal to return the Cham-Malay families to Cambodia led to Khmer-Vietnamese battles, which ended with King Ang Duong's death in 1860.<sup>112</sup>

The present-day Cham people who live in Kâmpóng Cham and Kâmpóng Chhang Provinces are in whole or at least in their majority descended from the *po*-led group of Cham people who allied themselves with King Ang Duong, rather than with the Malay-led rebels who participated in the Cham-Malay rebellion from 1858 to 1860. According to Bruckmayr, the forced resettlement of their ancestors yielded ironic consequences for the Cham communities in both Vietnam and Cambodia, as the post-rebellion population explosion of Châu Đốc, Vietnam's Cham-Malay people greatly

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<sup>112</sup> Bruckmayr, 2019, 61-62.

strengthened their connections to other Muslims in Kâmpóng Cham, Cambodia, including the field of riverine trade, as the Cham were depended upon for timber. Given that the Cham people were expert seafarers, it made sense that they built their own boats, canoes, and distinctive stilt-houses over waterways from the specific *sao* (*Hopea Odorat*) wood,<sup>113</sup> which is why the riverine timber trade suited them. Incidentally, during the French Protectorate of Cambodia, Cham trade businesses enabled increased migrations across the Mekong River and Tonle Sap Lake between 1869 and 1880, as French colonial policies contributed to the growth of Cham families in the 1890s. This was exemplified in 1875 during the French Protectorate, as Étienne François Aymonier estimated in his book, *Notice Sur le Cambodge*, that Cambodia's population held approximately one million people (although he estimated that 1,500,000 men spoke the Khmer language in an area larger than a third of France<sup>114</sup>), of which 30,000 were Malay and Cham peoples, who lived in fifty dispersed villages between Krong Kampot and the Tonle Sap Lake.<sup>115</sup> When Aymonier explored Cambodia, he hinted that he did not understand the beliefs of Khmer Buddhist monks, yet simultaneously respected them, as he saw that the laypeople greatly respected the monks. For example, Aymonier stated...

[d]espite the absurdity of the dogmas of their doctrine, it is difficult to refrain from feeling some respect inspired by the kindness and selflessness of these religious men. But, solely and selfishly occupied by their salvation, they do not regard themselves as being responsible for other

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<sup>113</sup> Bruckmayr, 2019, 63.

<sup>114</sup> Aymonier, 1875, 19.

<sup>115</sup> Aymonier, 1875, 20.

souls; that is the cause of the main qualities of this clergy as well as its imperfections.<sup>116</sup>

To this end, he understood that Buddhism had a strong presence over the people in Cambodia despite his not understanding it, and which, unbeknownst to him, had a presence in the country since at least Jayavarman VII. Furthermore, Aymonier discovered that like the Khmer people, the Cham people also retained their religion of Islam, after four centuries of practicing it. For example, Aymonier recorded that in the nineteenth century, the Cham people and more Malaysians undertook the *Hajj*, or the annual pilgrimage to Mecca.<sup>117</sup> This hinted of the prosperity of the Cham people under the French Protectorate of Cambodia, as their migration to Mecca would have taken considerable resources to undergo a pilgrimage by boat across Southeast Asia and the Middle East in the nineteenth century. Nonetheless, Bruckmayr noted that Cham-Malay resettlements in Cambodia were freed from paying a head-tax in 1891, which was restricted by 1894 by the French Hanoi-based governor-general of Indochina, M. Chavassieux, who feared the complete depopulation of Cham-Malay villages in Châu Đốc and the complete loss of any remaining tax revenues due to periodic resettlement, turbulence, and deportation. Furthermore, in Cambodia, there were most likely diversified Muslim refugees in the inland vicinity, as well as in Kâmpóng Cham Province, as is the case today, who were devoted followers, were homogenous, and were part of the Cham royal line, as in the *apo* or *oknha khnour*, the latter being an official title that by the end of the twentieth

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<sup>116</sup> Aymonier, 1875, 47.

<sup>117</sup> Aymonier, 1875, 19.



century denoted the leader of the *Kan Imam San* or *Bani Cham* community,<sup>118</sup> who practice a version of Islam that is intermixed with Hinduism. Although Bruckmayr stated that the Cham people's political positions were not influenced by Islam prior to the twentieth century, the author of this thesis disagrees. Their actions in the nineteenth century, such as fighting alongside King Ang Duong during the Cham-Malay rebellion, were potentially influenced by Islam, as they defended themselves against Cham and Vietnamese rebels who attacked them first, and since they wanted to remain in Cambodia and continue to practice their version of Islam, they likely fought the rebels to maintain their freedom against Vietnamese rule. Furthermore, French explorer Charles Lemire stated in his 1899 book, *Les Races Primitives de l'Indo-Chine Francaise* or *The Primitive Breeds of French Indo-China*, that 60,000 Cham people lived in Cambodia,<sup>119</sup> which implied that they had the means to fight their enemies, to stay in the country. Thus, the Cham people who live in Cambodia today were able to stay in the country due to the successful trade and battles that their ancestors endured in the nineteenth century.

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<sup>118</sup> Bruckmayr, 2019, 64.

<sup>119</sup> Lemire, Charles. 1899. *Les Races Primitives de l'Indo-Chine Francaise*. Paris: Boulevard Montmartre, 623.

## **Chapter II: Population Growth and Migrations of the Cham and Khmer Peoples (1921-1964)**

From 1941 to 1964, the University of Virginia, American geographers, the University of Paris, and the French government conducted censuses in Cambodia for Kâmpóng Cham, Siem Reap, as well as nineteen other provinces and municipalities, which measured population growth, births, deaths, sex ratios, electricity installed and used, livestock sustainability, rice paddy production, water usage, statures, skin colors, and the correlations of characteristics between the Cham and Khmer peoples, which may have been done to observe them from a distance and to monitor their modernization, both under the French Protectorate and after King Norodom Sihanouk declared independence from France on November 9, 1953. Censuses were a way for France to maintain a small amount of authority in the country, since Cambodia did not conduct its own censuses until after the Khmer Rouge genocide. Although pre-genocide French censuses from the mid-twentieth century are a vital primary source for analyzing migration patterns in Kâmpóng Cham, Siem Reap, and Kandal Provinces, as they allow one to see the modernizations and improved livelihoods of the Cham and Khmer peoples through their migrations, their results were racially motivated generalizations and conclusions about the people of Cambodia.

In 1955, American geographer Mitchell G. Zadrozny published *Area Handbook on Cambodia*, which gave the populations and percentage of population change in Siem Reap, Kandal, Kâmpóng Cham, and thirteen other provinces, from 1921 to 1950. Although Zadrozny only showed the general population statistics of Cambodia at the time, rather than grouping the population by ethnicity, as anthropologist Georges Olivier

did in 1956, his charts indicated that the populations of cities and towns in Cambodia increased dramatically in only twenty-nine years. For example, Zadrozny stated that Kâmpóng Cham Province's population increased 49% (which was actually a 67% increase, from 383,000 to 570,711 persons), Kandal Province increased 51% (which was actually a 66% increase, from 350,000 to 527,993 persons), Phnom Penh's population increased 385% (which was actually a 63% increase, from 75,000 to 363,800 persons), and since Siem Reap Province was created from a portion of Battambang Province in 1950, it had a population of 215,060 which could arguably be considered a 100% increase, between 1921 and 1950.<sup>120</sup> Zadrozny's findings indicated that more of the Khmer and Cham peoples migrated into, rather than left, these areas in the first half of the twentieth century. Furthermore, the increases in the populations of Kâmpóng Cham Province and Phnom Penh/Kandal Province hinted that more Cham people may have migrated there to pursue Islamic education. For example, Nazy Sles, president of the Cambodian Muslim Media Center, interviewed Muslim Cham people for a 2017 article in *Islamic Horizons Magazine* titled "Cambodian Cham Muslims and the Quran," in which he mentioned that a then-forty-five year old Cham fisherman from the village of Chrey Andet in Kandal Province named Yakkob Safie stated...

I learned the Quran by traveling to different villages seeking *tuans* (Islamic teachers) who were well-known at that to study in Spiu [sic] village [possibly Kâmpóng Speu], where there was a well-known *tuan* who had pursued his Islamic studies in Patani, Southern Thailand."<sup>121</sup>

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<sup>120</sup> Zadrozny, Mitchell G. 1955. *Area [H]andbook on Cambodia*. New Haven: Human Relations Area Files, 158.

<sup>121</sup> Nazy, Sles. 2017. "Cambodian Cham Muslims and the Quran." *Islamic Horizons*. July/August 2017, 35.

Furthermore, Nazy noted that some Muslim Chams migrated to numerous villages in Cambodia to pursue Qur'anic study, before settling in the city. For example, a then-thirty-five-year-old businessman from Phnom Penh named Tulos Mout told Nazy that when he was young, he traveled to several villages to acquire his Islamic knowledge; first, they taught him how to write Arabic and to use the *Muqaddam* (Islamic officials). Afterwards, he studied at *Ummul Qura*, the Cambodian Islamic Center<sup>122</sup> in Phnom Penh. To this end, Zadrony's population study unknowingly linked migration to the Islamic education of Cham people between 1921 and 2017, though it also later applied to two Khmer Buddhists who migrated in Cambodia to pursue monkhood and education in Siem Reap Province in the twenty-first century, which will be explained later. Nonetheless, in 1956, the French racialization and categorization of the Khmer and Cham peoples in Siem Reap, Kâmpóng Cham Province, and Phnom Penh caused anthropologists to investigate the correlations between migration and ethnicity.

In 1956, Olivier published *Les Populations du Cambodge: Anthropologie Physique*, in which he measured the statures, skin colors, and the correlations of characteristics between the Cham and Khmer peoples in nine cities and towns across Cambodia, which included Siem Reap, Kâmpóng Cham, and Phnom Penh, that may have been conducted to both maintain some control over the country, as it was still newly independent, and to estimate where they came from based on their physical characteristics. Olivier stated that in 1936, there were 70,000 Cham people, and that in

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<sup>122</sup> Nazy, Sles, 2017, 35.

1948, there were 3,340,000 Khmer people who lived in Cambodia,<sup>123</sup> but he did not tell the size of both populations in 1956, although that was, in part, the reason for the census. Curiously, Olivier and his team measured the average statures of the Khmer people in Kâmpóng Cham, Siem Reap, and Phnom Penh (who were approximately five feet, three inches tall; five feet, four inches tall; and five feet, four inches tall, respectfully) and the Cham people (who were approximately five feet, three and one-half inches tall). However, Olivier concluded that the differences in height between the Khmer and Cham peoples was insignificant.<sup>124</sup> This may have been done to see if conclusions could be drawn about the statures of Khmer and Cham people based on where they lived and/or had migrated to or from.

Comparing the Khmer and Cham peoples by how dark or light their skin tone was (as both groups had mostly either a light brown or very light brown skin tone<sup>125</sup>) seemed to have also been a way for Olivier and his team to draw conclusions about where they lived and/or had migrated from. To this end, he stated that....

It is certain that the Khmers are darker than the Vietnamese, the Thais and the Chams. We will not fail to observe that the latter are however as clear as their neighbors, the Khmers of Phnom Penh: it is that there is a notable proportion of Sino-Cambodians in this city, recognizable by their lighter skin and their taller stature. However, the Khmers examined are peasants from distant villages, not city dwellers. The shades found for the Months are quite curious, because we agree to recognize them almost the same skin shade as the Khmers.

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<sup>123</sup> Olivier, Georges. 1956. *Les Populations du Cambodge: Anthropologie Physique*. Paris: Impressions André, 12, 14.

<sup>124</sup> Olivier, 1956, 25-27.

<sup>125</sup> Olivier, 1956, 31.

While Olivier was correct when he stated that Khmer people tend to have darker skin tones than Vietnamese and Thai peoples do, he failed to recognize that many Cham people, like the Khmer people, also have a darker skin tone. Furthermore, given that Khmer, Cham, Vietnamese, and Thai people have also migrated to Cambodia and have reproduced with Chinese people for centuries, descendants with lighter skin tones have resulted from those unions. Nonetheless, similarities are found around the world, because when people migrate to a different country and procreate, their descendants' skin tones tend to change.

According to the King of Cambodia Ministry of Planning's *Annuaire Statistique Retrospectif du Cambodge (1958-1961): Direction de la Statistique at des Etudes Economiques*, part of Kâmpóng Cham's modernization occurred, in part, with the large amount of electricity that was used between 1941 and 1964. In the census, Kâmpóng Cham Province used more electricity than 86% of the eight towns that were surveyed in the census in 1961, and the town also used more electricity than twelve out of seventeen towns that were surveyed in the census in 1964.<sup>126</sup> Given that the town's population grew substantially between 1959 and 1962, and therefore had more residents using electricity, the French government's census is believable. Furthermore, Kâmpóng Cham Province also had more increases than decreases in electricity installed and used between 1941 and 1964.<sup>127</sup> To this end, as more residents migrated into Kâmpóng Cham, whether they were Cham, Khmer, or other ethnicities, the census showed that they had electricity and were

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<sup>126</sup> Royaume du Cambodge Ministrie du Plan. 1961. *Annuaire Statistique Retrospectif du Cambodge (1958 – 1961): Direction de la Statistique at des Etudes Economiques*. Phnom Penh: Mith-Yoeung, 65.

<sup>127</sup> Royaume du Cambodge Ministrie du Plan, 1961, 67-68, 81.

using it, much more than any of the other seven cities used it, except for the capital city of Phnom Penh and Kandal Province. However, contrary to the high use of electricity in Kâmpóng Cham, the town had a very slow increase in using electricity, although Kratie, Siem Reap, and Kâmpóng Thom used significantly less electricity than Kâmpóng Cham by 1962.<sup>128</sup> The French apparently wanted to know who had electricity in Cambodia, where it was being used, and which town used it more than others, which was Kâmpóng Cham. Doing so may have been a way for the French government to monitor modernization in Cambodia.

Like electricity usage, the French government and the Ministry of Planning in Cambodia also monitored water production in Kâmpóng Cham, as well as seven other towns, from 1948 to 1961. Like electricity, Kâmpóng Cham consistently used more water than any other town, except for Phnom Penh. This is most likely due to the population explosion that occurred in Kâmpóng Cham between 1959 and 1961, as the census simultaneously recorded that this was when the town had the largest increases of water usage. Again, monitoring water usage in Cambodia was a way for the French government to see where modernization was taking place in the country.

From 1946 to 1963, the rice paddy production in Kâmpóng Cham started off highly at 95,000 tons between 1946 and 1947 and ended with a higher yield of 150,000 tons between 1962 and 1963.<sup>129</sup> Given that the Cham people were, and still are, farmers, these statistics make sense for this group. Furthermore, rice was and still is served with

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<sup>128</sup> Royaume du Cambodge Ministrie du Plan, 1961, 70.

<sup>129</sup> Royaume du Cambodge Ministrie du Plan, 1961, 35.

every meal, so a large capacity of it is a must for nearly all Cham and Khmer peoples. Even further, Kâmpóng Cham produced more rice (2,344,000 tons) than 81% of the sixteen cities surveyed in the census report for rice paddy production between 1946 and 1963.<sup>130</sup> This hinted that Kâmpóng Cham's majority-Cham population had a sizable Muslim community who had settled in the area and used their farming skills to support themselves. Since the Cham people had now lived in Cambodia for more than 100 years, their livelihood had greatly improved compared to the way that their ancestors had lived in the region in the nineteenth century.

The population of Kâmpóng Cham between 1948 and 1962 grew somewhat slowly, from 571,000 people in 1948 to 820,000 people in 1962.<sup>131</sup> Between 1948 and 1950, the population stayed the same, which hinted that Cham families were not procreating for at least two years after World War II. However, according to French geographer Jean Delvert, in 1955, the estimated population of the Cham people in Cambodia was 73,000,<sup>132</sup> and in 1956, the total population of Kâmpóng Cham was much higher, at 657,000 people,<sup>133</sup> which suggested that either the Cham families were having children or more Khmer or Cham people had settled in the area. Nonetheless, the population fell by 1958 to 649,000 people, but was back up to 657,000 people in 1959, which suggested that either the Khmer or Cham peoples had temporarily migrated to

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<sup>130</sup> Royaume du Cambodge Ministrie du Plan, 1961, 35.

<sup>131</sup> Royaume du Cambodge Ministrie du Plan, 1961, 7, 9.

<sup>132</sup> Ebihara, May Mayko. 2018. *Svay: A Khmer Village in Cambodia*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 26.

<sup>133</sup> Royaume du Cambodge Ministrie du Plan, 1961, 7, 9.



another village in 1958 and had returned in 1959,<sup>134</sup> or may have been a documentation error by the French government. Nonetheless, this was apparently quite common among the twenty-one cities surveyed for the population of Cambodia between 1948 and 1962. It is also important to note that in the 1950s and 1960s, the Cambodian government categorized Cham people as Khmer Islam, a misnomer, as they do not regard themselves as being neither Khmer nor following Khmer Islam, but rather Cham Islam,<sup>135</sup> which is a more accurate category, as they follow a unique version of Islam that localized traditions from Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam. For example, Cham people of the *Kan Imam San* community participate in *Mamun*, a three-day celebration of the Cham royal ancestors of the *Kan Imam San* group, that are believed to come alive through a spirit medium. Like the annual Buddhist *Pchum Ben* Festival, participants in *Mamun* offer food to the *Kan Imam San* ancestors, which are believed to imbibe the food, and *Kan Imam San* villagers and lineage are blessed by Islamic rites.<sup>136</sup> Although ancestor worship is not a part of Buddhism, Hinduism, or Islam, ancestors are revered by Buddhists, Hinduists, and Muslims in Cambodia, as the *Pchum Ben* Festival, the use of spirit mediums, and *Mamun* demonstrates. Furthermore, their religion was reflected in their migrations. Given that the Cham people often ventured outside of Kâmpông Cham to travel to other towns and cities to sell food, with one such example being presented in Ebihara's doctoral

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<sup>134</sup> Royaume du Cambodge Ministrie du Plan, 1961, 7, 9.

<sup>135</sup> Maunati, Yekti, ed. 2011. *Cham Diaspora in Southeast Asia: Identity Construction and Transnational Networks of Cham Diaspora in Cambodia*. Jakarta: The Indonesian Institute of Sciences, 120-121.

<sup>136</sup> Noseworthy, William. 2014. "Mamun and the 'Kaum Imam San' of Cambodia." *The Newsletter*, no. 69 (Autumn): 9. [https://www.iias.asia/sites/default/files/nwl\\_article/2019-05/IIAS\\_NL69\\_09.pdf](https://www.iias.asia/sites/default/files/nwl_article/2019-05/IIAS_NL69_09.pdf).

dissertation, *Svay: A Khmer Village in Cambodia*, which may explain the large fluctuations in the population between 1956 and 1962. Furthermore, this may explain why the 1962 census in Cambodia showed that the population had ballooned to 5,740,100 people, with 55% located in Phnom Penh, 40% in the provinces that border the Tonle Sap Lake, 5% in the other provinces, and that Kandal, Battambang, and Kâmpóng Cham Provinces contained over one-third of Cambodia's population in farm villages.<sup>137</sup> Even further, since the population of Kâmpóng Cham grew significantly from 657,000 people in 1959 to 820,000 people in 1962,<sup>138</sup> this population explosion suggested that the Cham people, as well as the city's Khmer residents, now had more children, which made sense for Cham families, which tended to be quite large. Thus, despite having settled in Kâmpóng Cham, the census hinted that the Cham people still migrated to other villages to improve their livelihood and feed their growing families.

Interestingly, both the French and the Minister of Planning in Cambodia took note of the increased population between 1958 and 1959, and in 1962, in Kâmpóng Cham and sixteen other villages. Between April 15, 1958 and April 15, 1959, there were 25,000 births and 13,000 deaths in Kâmpóng Cham.<sup>139</sup> To this end, the birth rate was nearly twice as large as the death rate, which explained the increased population at the time. Furthermore, when people died, there was a young population who took their place. This

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<sup>137</sup> Munson, Frederick P, Kenneth W. Martindale, David S. McMorris, Kathryn E. Parachini, William N. Raiford, and Charles Townsend. 1968. *Area Handbook for Cambodia*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 32.

<sup>138</sup> Royaume du Cambodge Ministrie du Plan, 1961, 7, 9.

<sup>139</sup> Royaume du Cambodge Ministrie du Plan, 1961, 11.

hinted that there were many young people who lived in Kâmpóng Cham between 1958 and 1959, which was increased by the number of young Cham women who were having children, as girls as young as twelve who reached puberty had a coming of age ceremony to welcome them into adulthood, which made them suitable for marriage and procreating, though this ceremony is now much rarer in Cambodia than in Vietnam. Furthermore, by 1962, the French government and the Ministry of Planning in Cambodia did two surveys of the sex ratio. In one, there were 647 more males than females in Kâmpóng Cham, and in the other, there were 721 more females than males in Kâmpóng Cham, out of a total population of 819,223 people,<sup>140</sup> which likely included male children, but since the Cham people in Cambodia carry the mother's family name, it hinted that there were more matriarchal families in the village than previously thought. Nonetheless, there were evidently many more females in Kâmpóng Cham than males. However, the number of births exceeding deaths was not unique to Kâmpóng Cham, as it happened in each of the seventeen villages surveyed by the French and the Minister of Planning in Cambodia. Thus, it appeared that by conducting this population census, the French government still wanted to know how many people lived in certain villages, and how many of those people were birthed or had died, to judge their modernization.

In 1968, anthropologist Ebihara's doctoral dissertation, *Svay: A Khmer Village in Cambodia*, became the first pre-revolution ethnography ever written about Cambodia at the village level. During her fieldwork from 1959 to 1960, Ebihara stated that in

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<sup>140</sup> Royaume du Cambodge Ministrie du Plan, 1961, 5, 8.

Kâmpóng Tuol and in another town several kilometers away, there were two Cham cattle butchers, for which she stated...

[t]he villagers are conscious of the physical similarity but cultural differences between Khmer and Cham in dress, religion, and other customs. And while Chams are treated amiably enough in face-to-face encounters, the Khmer villager feels a deep-seated repugnance toward persons who slaughter animals as an occupation.<sup>141</sup>

Although Po Dharma insisted that the Cham people have lived in Cambodia since at least 1456, Ebihara noted that Khmer villagers were generally suspicious of strangers even among their own ethnic group, and “it is not surprising that their attitudes toward individuals of other ethnic groups are usually negative or ambivalent.”<sup>142</sup> Although she stated this five years before the Cham people were targeted by the Khmer Rouge, it hinted of early Khmer distaste for foreigners in Cambodia, possibly because the country was still newly independent of French colonization. To this end, it is not surprising that Vickery reaffirmed this disconnection between the prewar Cham and Khmer peoples in his 1984 book, *Cambodia: 1975-1982*, in which he stated that many Khmer people regarded Cham people with awe and fear, though some Khmer women simultaneously migrated to get their fortunes told by Cham people. For example, Vickery stated of the Cham people that...

[t]hey were believed to be accomplished in the black arts; and Phnom Penh ladies used to cross over to Chruï Changvar, a Cham community on a peninsula where the Mekong and Tonle Sap rivers meet, to get

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<sup>141</sup> Ebihara, May Mayko. 2018. *Svay: A Khmer Village in Cambodia*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 235.

<sup>142</sup> Ebihara, 2018, 235.

predictions about the future, love potions for husbands and lovers, and noxious prescriptions for rivals.<sup>143</sup>

This fear and awe by the majority Theravāda Buddhist Khmer people toward the Cham people likely occurred due to the ignorance of the type of Islam practiced by the Cham people in Cambodia. It is highly likely that since few, if any, prewar Khmer people converted to Islam, that the type of Islam practiced by Cham people was mistaken for black magic, as they worship differently than Buddhists, despite their overlapping histories. Furthermore, Ebihara stated that the Khmer abhorrence of the slaughter of animals was delegated to Cham butchers,<sup>144</sup> which hinted that due to the strong Buddhist injunction of killing, the villagers had a hyperawareness of the cultural and religious differences between themselves and the Cham people. However, Ebihara mentioned that since *prahok* (a crushed, salted, and fermented fish paste) was a necessity for every household, many families purchased fresh fish from Cham vendors who traveled to different villages in January with truckloads of fish.<sup>145</sup> This also explained the population fluctuations between 1956 and 1962 in Kâmpóng Cham Province.<sup>146</sup> Thus, despite the contempt that Khmer people privately felt toward the Cham people, they seemed to have only associated with Khmer people during food transactions, which enabled them to use their long-held skills as farmers, fisherman, cattle breeders, traders, butchers,

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<sup>143</sup> Vickery, Michael. 1984. *Cambodia: 1975-1982*. Boston: South End Press, 181.

<sup>144</sup> Ebihara, 2018, 163.

<sup>145</sup> Ebihara, 2018, 122.

<sup>146</sup> Royaume du Cambodge Ministrie du Plan, 1961, 35.

transporters, cultivators, and wood dealers<sup>147</sup> to survive in Cambodia. Thus, as exemplified by both the French and American population studies in Cambodia and Ebihara's dissertation, we see that between 1921 and 1962, whereas the Khmer people were largely permanently settled in towns and villages, the prewar Cham people were still migratory, though self-sufficient.

From the perspectives of the French and American population studies and Ebihara's dissertation, between 1921 and 1962, the population shifts in the Khmer and Cham populations in Cambodia resulted from them seeking Islamic education, modernization, selling food, and having their fortunes told by migrating to different provinces. Modernization, in particular, seemed to be the goal of the migrating Khmer and Cham peoples at this time, because their increased use of electricity and running water made life much easier for them, in comparison to lighting candles and having to retrieve water from lakes and rivers, as their ancestors had to do. Given that more Khmer and Cham people became educated abroad in the 1950s and 1960s, and went to countries such as the United States under a program created by the United States and Cambodia, which enabled Cambodian students to attend California colleges and universities to learn about agriculture, industrial arts, and engineering,<sup>148</sup> the populations of their villages and cities grew alongside modernized architecture, and Cambodia's slow modernization appeared to be moving forward on the path to success. However, certain French-educated Khmer people took issue with Cambodia becoming seemingly westernized, after a

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<sup>147</sup> Ebihara, 2018, 27.

<sup>148</sup> Lun, Julie. 2017. "How and Why Did Cambodians Settle in Long Beach, California[?]" Respectability. Accessed December 16, 2020. <https://www.respectability.org/2017/09/how-and-why-did-cambodians-settle-in-long-beach-california/>.

century of colonization by France. To this end, these rebels sought to return Cambodia to what they perceived as the once-powerful and self-sufficient Khmer Empire.

### **Chapter III: Migrations in Cambodia During the Khmer Rouge Regime**

From March 18, 1969 to January 7, 1979, the Cham and Khmer peoples of Cambodia experienced migrations due to nonstop violence from the effects of the United States government's Operation Menu campaign, landmines, and the Khmer Rouge regime. While initial voluntary migrations from the countryside to Phnom Penh occurred to temporarily escape bombings, violence soon followed the migrants into the city, when the Khmer Rouge regime forced the people back into the countryside. However, though certain areas of Cambodia, such as Phnom Penh, had been modernized, both the Khmer and Cham peoples sought to retain their ancestral cultural traditions and religions in the midst of the chaos that occurred around them. To this end, such retention not only enabled many of them to survive the unthinkable, but to also maintain their sanity as they searched for surviving relatives after they migrated back to their villages and cities. Thus, it took the Khmer and Cham peoples almost a decade of both personal reflection and experiencing extreme hardship for them to witness a revival of their religious traditions, and to utilize their faiths for the greater good of their peoples in Cambodia.

Despite that many people believe that the late 1960s and early 1970s were a relatively relaxed era in Cambodia's history, in reality, revolution and bombing occurred. From March 18, 1969 to May 26, 1970, Operation Menu, a secret carpet-bombing campaign approved by United States president Lyndon Johnson, occurred in eastern Cambodia, which made a total of 3,630 flights dropped and 110,000 tons of bombs on over eighty-three areas in Cambodia's countryside, with the goal of killing the South Vietnamese Viet Cong and the North Vietnamese Army in the Cambodian jungle, during



the Vietnam War.<sup>149</sup> Furthermore, Harris stated that an additional 310,000 tons of bombs were dropped by the United States between Autumn 1972 and August 1973.<sup>150</sup> To this end, primary sources indicate that Cambodian citizens were also killed during this time as well. For example, an unpublished photograph from the late 1960s or early 1970s depicted a Khmer grandmother carrying her deceased grandchild, whose body was severely severed from head to toe. Its outline stated...

Phnom Penh, July 26--Child killed in Phnom Penh--A Cambodian woman carries the body of her grandchild who died when rockets fired by insurgents slammed into a slum area on the western edge of Phnom Penh [on] Wednesday. The Cambodian military command said it thought the insurgents were trying to hit a radio station and the Pochengtong [sic] [A]irport. However, the brunt of the attack hit the densely populated slum area about 2 1/4 miles [3.62 km] from the airfield.<sup>151</sup>

This photograph would most likely have caused worldwide outrage had it been published, as it exemplified that Khmer people suffered greatly during the Vietnam War. According to Yale University's Genocide Studies Program, 13,042 villages were targeted, most of which were in the Eastern, Central, Northeastern, and Southeastern areas of Cambodia, of the 231,467 bombings that occurred between October 1965 and May 1975.<sup>152</sup> Furthermore, in 1969, Sou Chamroeun, a member of the central committee of the Khmer Writers

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<sup>149</sup> Tufts University. "Cambodia: U.S. [B]ombing and [C]ivil [W]ar." *Mass Atrocity Endings*. Accessed March 9, 2020. <https://sites.tufts.edu/atrocityendings/2015/08/07/cambodia-u-s-bombing-civil-war-khmer-rouge/>; Chandler, David. 2008. *A History of Cambodia*. Chiang Mai: Westview Press, 265.

<sup>150</sup> Harris, 2005, 170.

<sup>151</sup> Unknown author. n.d. Untitled. Unknown newspaper. From the author's own archival collection.

<sup>152</sup> Yale University; 2020. "U.S. Involvement in the Cambodian War and Genocide." U.S. Involvement. Accessed November 6, 2020. <https://gsp.yale.edu/case-studies/cambodian-genocide-program/us-involvement-cambodian-war-and-genocide>. Yale University. 2020. "Cambodian Genocide Program Interactive Geographic Database (CGEO)." Genocide Studies Program. Accessed November 6, 2020. <https://gsp.yale.edu/cambodian-genocide-program-interactive-geographic-database-cgeo>.

Association, saw a comet cross the sky in Phnom Penh, for which he stated, "[w]hen Cambodians see a comet, they usually believe that a calamity such as war will take place."<sup>153</sup> Although the Vietnam War continued in a neighboring country, the comet hinted that war was about to take place in Cambodia. Thus, the worst tragedies for both the Cham and Khmer peoples were still to come in Cambodia.

From 1970 to 1979, a nineteenth century Buddhist prophecy written on palm leaves by an anonymous sage, now known as the *Puth Tumneay* and *Ein Tumney*,<sup>154</sup> or *Predictions of the Buddha*, implied that not only Buddhism, but also Islam, would cease to exist in Cambodia, when the Khmer Rouge regime came to power. The prophecy stated that...

"[c]rows will fill the sky. The towns and houses will be emptied of people....Blood will flow as high as the elephant's chest The alienated and the ignorant will seize power and enslave the learned. It will be a time without religion, without Buddhism. The *thmil* [atheist barbarians] will have absolute power and will persecute the believers....Only the deaf and mute will survive."<sup>155</sup>

Although it is not known exactly when this prophecy was predicted, Harris believed that it was written in the 1860s.<sup>156</sup> When serious events have happened in Cambodia, such as

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<sup>153</sup> Sok, Sidon, 2005.

<sup>154</sup> According to Ponn Miech, director of the Buddhist Institute of Cambodia's Cultures and Customs research department, the anonymity of the prophesy may have been due to the ability to lose one's life if a prediction displeased a powerful patron. For example, in 1959, Chhuon Dap, the governor of Siem Reap Province, put his astrologer to death because he predicted Chhuon's forthcoming death--Chhuon was assassinated in March 1959, after he failed to topple Prince Norodom Sihanouk. Sok, Sidon. 2005. "[T]he writing on the wall." *Cambodia Daily* (Phnom Penh). April 16, 2005. <https://english.cambodiadaily.com/news/the-writing-on-the-wall-87284/>.

<sup>155</sup> Tian, Veasna. 2019. *Year of the Rabbit*. Montreal: Drawn and Quarterly, front matter.

<sup>156</sup> Harris, Ian. 2013. *Buddhism in a Dark Age: Cambodian Monks Under Pol Pot*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 175.

Cambodia being caught between the kingdoms of Thailand and Vietnam in the nineteenth century and the Khmer Rouge regime taking control of the country between 1975 and 1979, this prophesy has often been referred to. To this end, Alex Hinton, an Associate Professor of Anthropology and Global Affairs at Rutgers University, stated in a 2008 book titled *People of Virtue: Reconfiguring Religion, Power and Morality in Cambodia Today*, that "[i]f Buddhism provides a sort of ontological justice for victims, it also suggests that their suffering is a cosmic consequence of their own (or the Cambodian collective's) bad actions in the past."<sup>157</sup> However, nobody could have imagined the kind of tragedy and agony that befell the people who lived in the Kingdom of Cambodia, that this prophecy foretold. Consequently, from 1970 to 1979, both the Cham and Khmer peoples of Cambodia were forced to migrate away from their cities and villages under the Khmer Rouge regime.

The Khmer Rouge regime had a migratory history in Cambodia, which first involved the migration, interrogations, and executions of the Cham people, as well as the suppression of Islam. In 1970, the Khmer Rouge regime first arrested Islamic leaders in Kroch Chhmar district in Kâmpóng Cham Province.<sup>158</sup> According to Ysa Osman's 2006 book, *The Cham Rebellion: Survivors' Stories from the Villages*, prior to 1970, the Cham

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<sup>157</sup> Kent, Alexandra and David Chandler, eds. 2008. *People of Virtue: Reconfiguring Religion, Power and Morality in Cambodia Today*. Copenhagen: Nordic Institute of Asian Studies Press, 78.

<sup>158</sup> Ysa, 2006, 1. According to Underhill, the executions of the Cham people included, but were not limited to, having Cham *hakem* hung upside down and repeatedly waterboarded in buckets of boiling water. Of the Cham people who had taken the annual pilgrimage to Mecca (*hajj*) prior to 1975, only thirty remained in 1979 (Underhill, 2010, 8). British journalist Philip Short also found that Khmer and Cham prisoners were tortured by chief interrogator of the S-21 prison, Tong Sin Hean (Pon), who beat them to death, then had their arms, backs, and penises cut open, to drain the blood from their bodies, for use in Phnom Penh's hospitals (Short, Philip. 2004. *Pol Pot: Anatomy of a Nightmare*. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 370).

villages of Svay Khleang and Koh Phal, which were ten kilometers away from each other, were two of the five most populous Cham settlements in Kroch Chhmar, and the sites of the Cham Rebellions against the Khmer Rouge in 1975 during the era of Democratic Kampuchea (1975-1979). Although General Lon Nol assumed control over Cambodia in March 1970 after he removed *Samdech* (prince) Norodom Sihanouk from power,<sup>159</sup> many Khmer and Cham people remained loyal to the prince, because according to staff at the Center for Khmer Studies in Siem Reap, to this day, Cambodians believe that everything he did was for the people of Cambodia. Furthermore, the Indonesian Institute of Sciences stated in 2011 that the Cham "hoped the communists would win and reverse the longstanding policies of benign discrimination practiced by central authorities in Phnom Penh."<sup>160</sup> To this end, Prince Sihanouk formed the National Unification Front, which many Cham men joined, to restore Prince Sihanouk to power. Ysa stated that this was the origins of what later became known as the Khmer Rouge.<sup>161</sup> Despite the abhorrent reputation that the Khmer Rouge regime has now, Ysa stated, in contradiction, that in 1970, they offered a great deal of assistance to Cham people, as they gave them clothing, food, and supported their Islamic beliefs and practices.<sup>162</sup> To this end, in 1984, Vickery appeared to label the Khmer Rouge as not that bad in his book *Cambodia: 1975-1982*, as he later disregarded and attacked statistics presented in Kiernan's 1988 article titled

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<sup>159</sup> Ysa, 2006, 2, 78.

<sup>160</sup> Maunati, 2010, 124.

<sup>161</sup> Ysa, 2006, 2.

<sup>162</sup> Ysa, 2006, 78.

"Orphans of Genocide: The Cham Muslims of Kampuchea [U]nder Pol Pot," about the number of Cham people executed under the Khmer Rouge regime.<sup>163</sup> Vickery stated that...

[s]ince 1979[,] the STV has held that the Chams were as a group a special object of DK extermination policy and that few of them have survived. Those reports have exaggerated both the size of the prewar Cham population and, sometimes as a result, the numbers killed, and we need only note here that the number of survivors is unknown and will remain unknown until another census is taken; but the statements of Cham refugees in KID suggest that there was never a central policy to destroy them.<sup>164</sup>

Although Ysa analyzed the brutality of the Khmer Rouge regime to the Cham people in 1970, Vickery's statement hinted that they were not that bad, by his belief that both the prewar Cham population and the numbers of their executions (which, according to Ysa's 2005 article titled "The Cham Prisoners in the Khmer Rouge's Secret Prison," the prisoner execution lists stated that the executions occurred from March 3, 1976 to December 31, 1978, and varied from twenty to thirty people per day in 1976 to 100 to 250 people each day in late 1978,<sup>165</sup> which is supported by Kiernan, as he stated in his 1990 article titled "The Genocide in Cambodia, 1975-79," that the last six months of 1978, his eighty-seven interviews with Khmer Rouge survivors reported that in eleven

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<sup>163</sup> Kiernan believed that over one-third of the Cham population in Cambodia, or about 90,000 people, were executed under the Khmer Rouge regime between 1975 and 1979 (Kiernan, Ben. 1988. "Orphans of Genocide: The Cham Muslims of Kampuchea [U]nder Pol Pot." *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars* 20, no. 4: 19. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/14672715.1988.10412580>; Ben, Kiernan. 1990. "By Any Measure, Pol Pot Engaged in Genocide." *The New York Times*, Section A, pg. 16. September 4, 1990. <https://www.nytimes.com/1990/09/04/opinion/1-by-any-measure-pol-pot-engaged-in-genocide-552390.html>.

<sup>164</sup> Vickery, Michael. 1984. *Cambodia: 1975-1982*. Boston: South End Press, 182.

<sup>165</sup> Ysa, Osman. 2005. "The Cham Prisoners in the Khmer Rouge's Secret Prison." *JEBAT: Malaysian Journal of History, Politics and Strategic Studies* 32: 117. <http://pkukmweb.ukm.my/jebat/images/upload/Ysa%20Osman.pdf>.

villages, the Khmer Rouge executed 1,663 people, in another community of 350 people, ninety-five people were executed, and 3,055 executions occurred in three different sub-districts) were exaggerated, which were proven false by Ysa, So, and Kiernan. Kiernan estimated in his 1990 article titled that the Cham population in Cambodia in 1975 was 250,000, whereas Vickery believed that the Cham population was only 191,000, but failed to justify his lower estimate.<sup>166</sup> This disbelief by Vickery signaled that, unlike Ysa, So, and Kiernan, he neither spoke to the Cham people in Cambodia about their pre or post-war experiences, nor did he adequately research pre and post-war Cambodian population statistics. However, what proved Vickery wrong in his belief that Cham people were not specifically targeted to be exterminated, was that Ysa stated that in 1971, *Angkar* (Organization, which referred to Pol Pot) ordered that Islamic leaders and those with "high" lifestyles be sent to four security offices in Kroch Chhmar district for interrogation, re-education, torture, and execution, which were located at Kroch Chhmar Kraom, Khsach Praches Kraom, Prek A-Chi, and Phnom Lok.<sup>167</sup> Given that Ysa stated that out of approximately one hundred prisoners in his village of Svay Khleang who were arrested, only one person was ever released,<sup>168</sup> is reminiscent of the interrogations, over 4,000 typed and handwritten confessions, torture, and at least 14,000

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<sup>166</sup> Kiernan, Ben. 1990. "The genocide in Cambodia." *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars* 22, no. 2: 36, 38, 39. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/14672715.1990.10413120>; Kiernan, 1990, Section A, pg. 16.

<sup>167</sup> Ysa, 2006, 19.

<sup>168</sup> Ysa, 2006, 20.

executions (of which forty-two were Cham)<sup>169</sup> that occurred at the S-21 Prison (now the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum) in Phnom Penh, from 1975 to 1979, as depicted in the paintings of Khmer prisoners who were blindfolded and tortured. Furthermore, Tagliacozzo later supported Ysa's, So's, and Kiernan's statements that Cham deaths by the Khmer Rouge regime were disproportionately high, as he stated in his 2013 book, *The Longest Journey: Southeast Asians and the Pilgrimage to Mecca*, that...

[a]lthough there is still some debate over whether the Khmer Rouge actively targeted Cham Muslims everywhere because of their religion, there can be no doubt that the death toll among Cham Muslims was shockingly high and disproportionate to other groups in the country. The numbers stretch from 90,000 deaths in one study to many times this in others, but the testimonies of Cham Muslims who survived the horror make it clear that this community was decimated by the regime and was hunted by their agents.<sup>170</sup>

At the security offices in Kroch Chhmar district, the Khmer Rouge soldiers most likely tested methods of interrogations and torture, which were later used on all of the Cham and Khmer peoples imprisoned at the S-21 Prison. Furthermore, in countering Vickery's claims of exaggerated statistics that the Cham people were not specifically targeted, Ysa argued that after the evacuations were finished in 1975, the Khmer Rouge regime still considered the Cham people to be the enemy, because in April 1976, Ke Pauk, the secretary of the North Zone, sent a report to Pol Pot, Nuon Chea (also known as Brother Number Two), and Khieu Samphan, which specified that the enemies of the Khmer Rouge regime were former Lon Nol soldiers, former chairmen of cooperatives who

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<sup>169</sup> Chandler, 2008, 265; Ysa, Osman. 2002. *Oukoubah: Justice for the Cham Muslims [U]nder the Democratic Kampuchea Regime*. Phnom Penh: Documentation Center of Cambodia, 7.

<sup>170</sup> Tagliacozzo, Eric. 2013. *The Longest Journey: Southeast Asians and the Pilgrimage to Mecca*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 238.

served under the older system, and the entire Cham race.<sup>171</sup> Such evidence confirmed that the Cham people were targeted for extermination under the Khmer Rouge regime. This also violated one of the five Buddhist precepts, to abstain from taking life, as Buddhism condemns harming and killing living beings.<sup>172</sup> Despite this, according to Harris, Pol Pot claimed that he lived in a monastery for six years, and lived there for two years as a monk, which is most likely an exaggeration. Harris stated that Pol Pot likely served the royalist monastery of Wat Botum in Phnom Penh as a novice for one year, probably at the age of six, as his hometown of Prek Sbauv in Kâmpóng Thom Province did not have a monastery. To this end, Harris stated that Pol Pot visualized a reconstituted Cambodia in which a “democratic regime will bring back the Buddhist moralism because our great leader Buddha was the first to have taught (democracy).”<sup>173</sup> Paradoxically, for someone later accused of crimes against humanity, Pol Pot was a surprisingly cultured man. Nonetheless, both Pol Pot and the Khmer Rouge regime sought to abolish religion altogether. The Khmer Rouge regime attempted to abolish Islam and prevent *sampahyang* (prayer) in the prisons where Cham men were interrogated from 1971 to 1973, which hinted that the soldiers also sought to exterminate Cham religion and culture. For example, when Ysa interviewed seventy-year-old El Him on January 23, 2001, El stated that...

[w]hen the Khmer Rouge took control of my village [Phum Saoy], Sos, the village chairman, told me not to maintain my religious faith. But as a

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<sup>171</sup> Ysa, 2006, 115.

<sup>172</sup> Dharma Wisdom. 2020. “The Five Precepts: The Five Precepts Constitute the Basic Buddhist Code of Ethics.” Home. Accessed December 16, 2020. <https://dharma wisdom.org/teachings/articles/five-precepts>.

<sup>173</sup> Harris, 2005, 160-161.



Muslim, how could I avoid observing Islam? I did not dare pray in front in front of others; that is true, but behind their backs[,] I did pray just the same. The Khmer Rouge monitored me closely. At night I could see when one of them hid under my house to spy on me.<sup>174</sup>

Disguising one's faith and praying privately were techniques used by both the Muslim Cham and Khmer Theravāda Buddhist peoples who survived the Khmer Rouge regime, as Cham religious leaders (*hakem*) and Khmer Buddhist monks were executed because they were thought to have been brainwashed by foreign ideas, despite that Pol Pot was educated in Paris, France from 1949 to 1953.<sup>175</sup> Furthermore, certain Cham people simultaneously hid their identities for a time against the Khmer Rouge regime, as noted by Ysa in both his 2002 book, *Oukoubah: Justice for the Cham Muslims [U]nder the Democratic Kampuchea Regime*, and his 2005 article. For example, Ysa's cousin, a former Cham student named Ismael Ahmad, from Thmei village in Kâmpóng Cham Province, told him that in 1975, the Khmer Rouge regime changed his ethnic Cham surname to the Khmer-style surname Sok, which he used against them. Ysa stated that...

[a]pparently, Ahmad had tried to hide his ethnicity to prevent suspicion among the villagers that he was anything other than ethnic Khmer. But after being interrogated multiple times at S-21 [from January 31, 1977 to February 16, 1977], Ahmad confessed his true identity.<sup>176</sup>

Nonetheless, disguising his true surname helped Ahmad to survive the Khmer Rouge regime, as he was not rebellious and gained the trust of the Khmer people. Furthermore, Ahmad did not abandon Islam or Cham culture, as he continued to practice Islam, as

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<sup>174</sup> Ysa, 2006, 24.

<sup>175</sup> Encyclopaedia Britannica. n.d. "Pol Pot." Accessed March 23, 2020. <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Pol-Pot>.

<sup>176</sup> Ysa, 2002, 13; Ysa, 2005, 105.

evidenced by him not eating pork in the Khmer Rouge camps,<sup>177</sup> although it caused the Khmer people around him to realize that he was Cham. However, since the Khmer Rouge regime attempted to abolish all religion in Cambodia, the Cham people actively sought to retain their religious and cultural traditions. Given that Sunni Muslim Cham people are Orthodox Muslims and pray five times per day<sup>178</sup> in the direction of Mecca, it was understandably difficult to *not* do so, as their survival depended upon it. Nonetheless, despite that the Khmer and Cham peoples had lived side by side for centuries, the suppression of prayer by Khmer Rouge soldiers deeply insulted the men of the Cham community.

In 1975, although the Khmer Rouge restricted religious practice and expression, by confiscating Qur'ans, the Cham people continued their religious practices, despite that the regime attempted to abolish Islam. One way in which the Cham people retained their religious faith was by continuing to conduct Islamic prayer at mosques. For example, on the day before the end of Ramadan, *Idul Fitri*, the biggest festival in Islam which requires public prayer of Muslims in the morning, one hundred Cham people asked the sub-district chairman for permission to conduct obligatory prayer in the mosque. Although it had been about a year since any prayers were said in the mosque, the sub-district chairman did not respond, so they assumed that their request was permitted. They did not know that the sub-district chairman's assistants had recorded their names that morning. Despite this, the worshippers reasoned that they would confront the Khmer

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<sup>177</sup> Ysa, 2002, 16.

<sup>178</sup> Tagliacozzo, 2013, 243.

Rouge soldiers that night, as they would die anyway, since the cadres already saw their faces.<sup>179</sup> Just like their Cham ancestors had faced in the Cham-Malay rebellion in the nineteenth century, they protected their rights to practice Islam against those who attempted to erase their culture and religion in Cambodia in the twentieth century. The result was a bloody battle that left nearly 1,000 families annihilated and many Cham women widowed.<sup>180</sup> By retaining their Islamic traditions, the Cham men who fought not only protected their Cham identity, but also challenged oppression to their religious freedom, which, in contradiction, was protected by the first sentence in Chapter Fifteen, Article Twenty of the 1976 *Constitution of Democratic Kampuchea*, which stated that "[e]very citizen of Kampuchea has the right to worship according to any religion and the right not to worship according to any religion." However, the *Constitution* also stated that "[r]eactionary religions which are detrimental to Democratic Kampuchea and Kampuchean people are absolutely forbidden,"<sup>181</sup> which was any and all religions in Cambodia, and both directly contradicted and violated its prior statement. To this end, Ysa argued that "[a]nyone who observed religious custom was categorized as a reactionary and became a target for elimination by *Angkar*."<sup>182</sup> Although the Khmer Rouge regime expected both the Cham and Khmer peoples to disregard their religious beliefs

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<sup>179</sup> Ysa, 2006, 79.

<sup>180</sup> Ysa, 2006, 81; Underhill, 2020, 7.

<sup>181</sup> Documentation Center of Cambodia. 1976. "The Cambodian Constitutions (1953-1993)." Democratic Kampuchea Constitution. Accessed March 14, 2020. [http://d.dccam.org/Archives/Documents/DK\\_Policy/DK\\_Policy\\_DK\\_Constitution.htm](http://d.dccam.org/Archives/Documents/DK_Policy/DK_Policy_DK_Constitution.htm).

<sup>182</sup> Ysa, 2002, 96.

over night, they sorely underestimated the perseverance of the ancestral faiths of both groups.

When the Khmer Rouge regime came to power on April 17, 1975, dressed in black peasant clothes and simple khaki uniforms, the soldiers, who were mostly under the age of fifteen,<sup>183</sup> emptied Phnom Penh (whose residents were regarded as both new people and enemies, as were they were from the city and were not under the control of the Khmer Rouge prior to 1975, opposed *Angkar*, were supporters of rebel forces, and had low castes in their villages), Kâmpóng Cham, Kampot, Preah Sihanouk Provinces, and 113 Cham villages (whose residents were called old people, as they lived in areas that were under the control of the Khmer Rouge prior to its victory over the Lon Nol regime),<sup>184</sup> and forced the residents to migrate into the countryside to turn Cambodia into an agrarian society. Pol Pot's experiment lasted exactly three years, eight months, and twenty days,<sup>185</sup> but ultimately failed to completely transform Cambodia into an enslaved dictatorship, as both the Cham and Khmer peoples secretly retained their religious and cultural traditions. Since the Khmer Rouge regime attempted to erase all forms of Cham identity (as they changed Muslim names to Khmer names; forbade the use of the Cham language and traditional dress [sarong]; forced females to cut their traditionally long hair short in the Khmer style; forbade them from wearing *hijab*; and forced them to eat *haram* [forbidden]

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<sup>183</sup> Chandler, 2008, 254.

<sup>184</sup> Ysa, 2005, 102; Guillou, Anne Y. 2006. "The Question of Land in Cambodia: Perceptions, Access, and Use Since De-collectivization." *Moussons* 9-10 (May): 306. <http://journals.openedition.org/moussons/2060>; Kiernan, 1990, 38.

<sup>185</sup> Colm, Sara. "The Killing Fields." *The New York Times*. Accessed on October 15, 2020. <https://archive.nytimes.com/www.nytimes.com/books/first/c/colm-killing.html>.

food, such as pork, and raise pigs<sup>186</sup>) after the Cham rebellions in Koh Phal and Svay Khleang, So, Kiernan, and Ysa believe that the Khmer Rouge regime attempted to completely eliminate the Cham people of Cambodia. However, regarding pork, Vickery was skeptical of the Cham people who stated that they were forced to eat it, as he argued that...

...one must think carefully about stories that they were forced to eat pork, since the general complaint of all refugees is that there was too little meat of any kind. It may have been true that Chams found themselves in places where pork was the only meat ever distributed at all, since it had always been the most commonly used meat in Cambodia, but that does not necessarily signify discrimination by the new authorities.<sup>187</sup>

Since Vickery never mentioned that the Muslim Cham people are forbidden to eat pork because it is *haram* in Islam, this quote hinted of his own ignorance of the religion. This is because chapter five, verse three of the Holy Qur'an states "[p]rohibited to you are dead animals, blood, the flesh of swine, and that which has been dedicated to other than Allah...."<sup>188</sup> Furthermore, he apparently did not speak directly to the Cham people (despite that he was fluent in the Khmer language, which they also spoke) about their experiences eating pork under the Khmer Rouge, and instead used an informant.<sup>189</sup> By not directly speaking to the Cham people, Vickery also would not have known that if they refused to eat pork, they were either force-fed it or executed by the Khmer Rouge soldiers. For example, Ysa stated in his 2002 book that in Sihanoukville Province, the Khmer Rouge

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<sup>186</sup> Ysa, 2005, 101; Underhill, 2010, 7.

<sup>187</sup> Vickery, 1984, 182.

<sup>188</sup> The Noble Qur'an. 2016. "Al-Ma'idah." Al-Ma'idah. Accessed March 23, 2020. <https://quran.com/5/3-9>.

<sup>189</sup> Vickery, 1984, 182.

soldiers forced both Tep Yunus and his brother, Tep Math, to eat pork.<sup>190</sup> Even further, when the author stayed in Siem Reap's Muslim Steung Thmei Village between December 2019 and January 2020, she saw that Cham people in Cambodia eat a variety of different *halal* meats in Muslim restaurants like Wau Restaurant, such as chicken, beef, and fish, but *never* pork, despite its longstanding and widespread availability in the country.

Nonetheless, both the Khmer and Cham peoples were starved and executed daily by the Khmer Rouge regime, as Ysa's 2005 article exemplified how both groups migrated several times in the countryside, which is why the bones and corpses of 400,000 to 500,000 Chams who died during the Khmer Rouge regime are scattered across Cambodia. According to Ysa, between April 16, 1975 and April 18, 1975...

[a] number of Chams and Khmers living near Phnom Penh were moved to Sa-ang [sic] [approximately thirty kilometers away] and Muk Kampoul [sic] [D]istrict of Kandal Province [approximately twenty-six kilometers away]; three or four months later, they were moved again to Preah Vihear [S'ang is approximately 358 kilometers away Preah Vihear, whereas Mukh Kampul is approximately 315 kilometers away from Preah Vihear] and Battambang [P]rovince [S'ang is 360.4 kilometers from Battambang, whereas Mukh Kampul is 337.8 kilometers from Battambang]. The majority of Cham in Prey Nup [D]istrict of Kampot [P]rovince (now Khan Prey Nup, Sihanoukville) were evacuated to Kompong Speu [approximately 182 kilometers away] and Kompong Chhang [P]rovinces [256.7 kilometers away]. The majority of Cham around the Kampot provincial capital were sent to the Touk Meas [approximately twenty-five kilometers away] and Chhouk [D]istricts [approximately eighteen kilometers away] of that province. All provinces of Cambodia received at least some (and in some cases, many) Cham evacuees.<sup>191</sup>

Despite that the author found no studies concerning the distances traveled by the Khmer and Cham peoples under the Khmer Rouge regime, from both Ysa's descriptions and the

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<sup>190</sup> Ysa, 2002, 97.

<sup>191</sup> Ysa, 2005, 103.

author's calculations, the reader sees that most, but not all, of the Cham and Khmer peoples who lived in these areas walked hundreds of kilometers across Cambodia in 1975. According to the author's calculations, this meant that the Cham and Khmer peoples both walked anywhere from eighteen to over 390 kilometers from their towns to the countryside. Since the Cham and Khmer peoples were harassed by Khmer Rouge soldiers prior to 1975, they knew that by migrating into the countryside, they would not return home soon. Thus, they sought to retain their cultural identities by practicing their religions and music, despite that both were abolished by the Khmer Rouge regime.

Cham women sought to not forget their identities and religion when they migrated. For example, in So's 2011 book, *The Hijab of Cambodia: Memories of Cham Muslim Women After the Khmer Rouge*, she stated that Cham women brought the *Qur'an*, *Muqqadam* (elementary Islamic book), and *kitab* (Islamic religious books) with them.<sup>192</sup> This suggested that the Cham people not only protected their Islamic beliefs and practices, but retained their Cham values. Furthermore, Cham women silently rebelled against the Khmer Rouge, by instilling in their children Cham cultural and Islamic religious beliefs. To this end, So stated that...

Some Cham Muslim women performed Islamic rituals for their newborn babies and gave them Muslim names. [No] Halimah remembered that every night she silently recited in Arabic the *adzan* (call to prayer) and *shahada* (declaration of faith) into both ears of her baby girl, starting with her right ear according to Islamic protocol.<sup>193</sup>

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<sup>192</sup> So, 2011, 21.

<sup>193</sup> So, 2011, 43.

This practice exemplified the determination of No to fulfill her *vachip* (religious duty) to instill Islamic beliefs into her newborn, long before she understood them, so that when they survived the Khmer Rouge regime, No's child would have the knowledge to retain her Cham traditions and Islamic beliefs. However, according to a Cham fisherwoman named Halimas, whom Wagner interviewed for her 2002 book titled *Soul Survivors: Stories of Women and Children in Cambodia*, even Theravāda Buddhist Khmer Rouge soldiers also held onto their religious beliefs at this time, and, to an extent, allowed Muslim Cham people to practice their own culture in seclusion. Halimas told Wagner that when her eighteen-year-old son, who was a soldier under the Khmer Rouge, died in 1978...

[t]he Khmer Rouge held a big Buddhist funeral that lasted three days and three nights for all of the dead soldiers. The Khmer Rouge asked me to come to the ceremony and put soil on the grave. I told them it would be a sin if I joined a Buddhist funeral and asked permission to have a Cham funeral at home. I felt a little better then the Khmer Rouge agreed to let me hold a Cham funeral and gave me extra rice and a chicken so I could prepare food for the ceremony. First, I made special noodles and chicken soup, and then I invited a Cham priest and three Cham elders who had studied Islam to come to my house to chant. The priest prayed for my son and I served food to everyone. I followed all the steps of a Cham funeral ceremony but I could not invite many people because I didn't have much food. I believed my son would be reincarnated.<sup>194</sup>

Although So hinted that the Khmer Rouge regime completely abolished religion, as she stated that "Cham Muslims were prohibited from carrying out required Islamic rituals, known as the Five Pillars of Islam,"<sup>195</sup> Halimas' oral history interview contradicted So's

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<sup>194</sup> Wagner, Bhavia C. 2002. *Soul Survivors: Stories of Women and Children in Cambodia*. Eugene: Wild Iris Press, 73.

<sup>195</sup> So, 2011, 59. The Five Pillars of Islam are faith (*shahadah*), prayer (*solat*), charity or tax (*zakat*), and a pilgrimage to Mecca (*hajj*).



statement, as she not only professed her faith, but practiced it sparingly, which left a gap of unexplored information from a Cham woman in So's book. Furthermore, Halimas' oral history interview humanized the Khmer Rouge soldiers, as they understood the importance of following long-held religious traditions, such as funerals, which may have been the reason they allowed Halimas to properly grieve for her son, despite that they were not Cham themselves. As Buddhists, they may have also feared that they would not be reincarnated themselves and would just die if they violated funerary traditions, despite that other Khmer Rouge soldiers did so to between 1.2 million and 2.8 million<sup>196</sup> other people by 1979. Even further, given that Cham people have lived in Cambodia since at least the fifteenth century, Halimas' oral history interview reflected similarities between Cham Islam and Theravāda Buddhism, as she spoke of her belief in reincarnation. To this end, despite that religion was restricted during the Khmer Rouge regime, evidently, not all religious traditions were completely abolished. Furthermore, like Halimas' experience under the Khmer Rouge, Kravanh Daran's and Bree Lafreniere's 2000 book titled *Music Through the Dark: A Tale of Survival in Cambodia*, told of how Kravanh survived the Khmer Rouge regime by playing his accordion for the soldiers in the camp,<sup>197</sup> despite that Western-style music was, like religion, abolished during the regime. Although both Halimas' and Kravanh's stories are contested, they are also persistent, as both of them witnessed Khmer Rouge soldiers approving of things that were abolished by *Angkar*, yet they were able to conduct a Cham funeral and play Western-style music, without

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<sup>196</sup> Sullivan, 2015.

<sup>197</sup> Lafreniere, Bree and Daran Kravanh. 2000. *Music Through the Dark: A Tale of Survival in Cambodia*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 96-98.

interruption. Thus, during the Khmer Rouge regime, both the Cham and Khmer peoples retained their religious and cultural traditions in the midst of extreme oppression, which, in part, enabled them to survive.

Given that So stated that between 1.2 million and 2.8 million Cambodians (or two million, or one in four people, according to Chandler, and which Underhill believes was 50% to 80% of the prewar Cham population), who died from exhaustion, malnutrition, starvation, disease, neglect, being overworked ten to twelve hours per day, twelve months per year, and execution by the Khmer Rouge regime when they migrated into the countryside,<sup>198</sup> as they were forced to walk for days in Cambodia's hot, tropical heat, at least six million Cambodians survived,<sup>199</sup> and used their faiths to search for their families. In a 2017 article by *Anadolu Agency*, Youk Chhang, executive director of DC-Cam, stated that when the Khmer Rouge regime collapsed, he walked barefoot approximately 400 kilometers back to Phnom Penh from Banteay Meanchey Province.<sup>200</sup> This implied that Youk had also walked *to* Banteay Meanchey Province, likely from numerous other provinces, so it can be said with certainty that he migrated *at least* 800 kilometers between 1975 and 1979. Furthermore, after the Vietnamese Army invaded Cambodia on December 25, 1978 and liberated the country from the Khmer Rouge on January 7, 1979,

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<sup>198</sup> So, 2011, 21; Chandler, 2008, 259; Underhill, 2010, 8.

<sup>199</sup> Ysa, 2002, 1. Kiernan stated that of 113 Cham community leaders, only twenty survived in 1979, only twenty-five of their 226 deputies survived, and all but thirty-eight out of 300 religious teachers at Islamic schools perished. Of the Khmer people, 15% of the rural population and 25% of the urban population perished under the Khmer Rouge regime (Kiernan, 1990, Section A, pg. 16; Kiernan, 1990, 38, 39).

<sup>200</sup> Crothers, Lauren. 2017. "Cambodia: Long walk home recalled as Khmer Rouge fell." Accessed March 13, 2020. <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/asia-pacific/cambodia-long-walk-home-recalled-as-khmer-rouge-fell/722216>. Chandler, 2008, 264.

Pol Pot fled in a jeep, other high officials and foreign diplomats left by train,<sup>201</sup> and the former Khmer and Cham prisoners migrated back to their cities and villages to search for their missing family members. One such story was that of a young Khmer man who was featured in Ellen Bruno's 1990 documentary, *Samsara: Death and Rebirth in Cambodia*, which depicted how Khmer people rebuilt their lives after the Khmer Rouge genocide. At what is now the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum in Phnom Penh, he hinted that the Khmer people had not lost their Buddhist faith under the Khmer Rouge regime, but retained it, when he stated....

I heard that if my relatives were missing, I should look for their photos here at Tuol Sleng Execution Center. Pol Pot might have sent them here. But I haven't found them yet. I haven't found their photos. For those we know to have died, we the survivors already made the offerings to send their spirits out of this world. But if we feel in our hearts that our relatives are still alive we are afraid to make the offerings to release their spirits. So we continue to search.<sup>202</sup>

Since Theravāda Buddhists do not perceive death as the end of one's life, but as the end of a life cycle, in which they will be reincarnated in their next life, this man's explanation of his fear of releasing the spirits of his family members who may have still been alive reflected the perseverance of Buddhist teachings in the lives of Khmer people after the Khmer Rouge genocide. To this end, Ysa stated that the Khmer people believe that the failure of Democratic Kampuchea resulted from the Khmer Rouge regime's total disregard for Buddhist teachings, as the executions they committed are a violation of one

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<sup>201</sup> Chandler, 2008, 274.

<sup>202</sup> Bruce, Ellen, director. 1989. *Samsara: Death and Rebirth in Cambodia*. Transit Media. Pictures, 1990. 29 minutes. Digital Versatile Disk.

of the five Buddhist precepts, to refrain from taking life.<sup>203</sup> Ysa's interview with Cham S-21 prisoner and soldier Him Man's parents, Him Kaup and Math Keas, from Po Tonle Village in Kandal Province, mentioned a similar journey taken by Him's mother to S-21 like the aforementioned young man, as well as several villages and temples, in search of her son in 1979. However, Man's father remembered his son's last words to him, "Mother and Father, if I am gone for long, don't look for me. I'll be dead."<sup>204</sup> Although unlike Halimas, Him and Math were unable to give their son a proper Cham funeral, by remembering his last words to them and sharing his story with Ysa, is a way in which they have remembered their son. To this end, for both the Khmer and Cham peoples, rather than disregarding their ancestral faith, their traumatic experiences brought them closer to it, as exemplified by the young man stating that....

As for us, the survivors, we must salvage what is left from this destruction. We have through such hardship and danger together. Now we must love one another, really love one another...even more than before Pol Pot time. Because before Pol Pot we thought only of ourselves. We didn't care about others. Now, if we want the spirits of those who died to rest in peace, those of us who are left must change our ways. We must stop being selfish, stop thinking only of ourselves or we will betray the spirits of those who died here.<sup>205</sup>

For Buddhists, honoring one's deceased relatives and ancestors through offerings such as food is both an every day practice in Cambodia (as evidenced by the small shrines seen inside and outside of homes and businesses) as well as an annual cultural event, the

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<sup>203</sup> Ysa, Osman. 2010. *Navigating the Rift: Muslim-Buddhist Inter-marriage in Cambodia*. Phnom Penh: Ysa Osman, 32.

<sup>204</sup> Ysa, 2002, 54.

<sup>205</sup> Bruce, Ellen, director. 1989. *Samsara: Death and Rebirth in Cambodia*. Transit Media. Pictures, 1990. 29 minutes. Digital Versatile Disk.

fifteen-day *Pchum Ben* Festival in September, in which Cambodian Buddhists migrate to their hometowns to make offerings to their ancestors, whose spirits are believed to be able to receive offerings from living relatives and gain some relief. This festival is taken quite seriously, as those who do not travel to their hometowns to make offerings to their ancestors are believed to have bad luck for the next year. Nevertheless, although the Pew Research Center stated that Cambodia's Buddhist population will decline to 96.7% after 2050, the country's official religion appears that it will withstand the test of time, as the 0.2% of Cambodia's Buddhist population as a share of the world's population in 2010 is expected to be the same percentage in 2050,<sup>206</sup> as Cambodia's majority Khmer population will likely continue to practice it. This may be because Buddhism has not only taught men in Cambodia morality, but has simultaneously helped the Khmer people to heal from the Khmer Rouge genocide, to migrate within the country, has encouraged them to pursue higher education, and to give back to their communities, as seen in four oral histories of Khmer people who currently live in Cambodia, that were conducted by the author between March 2020 and April 2020. Likewise, the Cham people also resumed practicing Islam after the Khmer Rouge regime, as evidenced by Vickery stating in his 1986 book, *Kampuchea: Politics, Economics and Society*, that an unnamed Cham elder in Chruï Changvar told him that eighty of the 150 Cham families who lived there before 1975 had returned, and the same three mosques were functioning.<sup>207</sup> To this end, like the Khmer people, the forthcoming generation of Cham people in Cambodia had more

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<sup>206</sup> Pew Research Center. 2015. "Buddhists." Projected Changes in the Global Buddhist Population. Accessed March 11, 2020. <https://www.pewforum.org/2015/04/02/buddhists/>.

<sup>207</sup> Vickery, Michael. 1986. *Kampuchea: Politics, Economics and Society*. London: Frances Pinter, 164.

opportunities than their forebears to migrate. Thus, whereas the older generations of Cham and Khmer peoples were often forced to migrate due to war and bombings, they never lost their ancestral cultures and traditions, which have been shared with their descendants, who have had more freedom to migrate across Cambodia to pursue monkhood, education, marriage, employment, manage businesses, maintain the environment, and build schools.

Despite the ongoing legacy of the Khmer Rouge regime, both the Khmer and Cham peoples in Cambodia today have retained their cultural and religious traditions, which has enabled the descendants of the survivors to live more freely than that of their ancestors. However, some former Buddhists who survived the Khmer Rouge regime lost their belief in the power of spirits, because, as one Khmer peasant said, “[s]ince they didn’t do anything against the Khmer Rouge, I don’t trust them anymore.”<sup>208</sup> This indicated the severity of the destruction of religion and faith for Khmer Buddhists by the Khmer Rouge regime, as Kiernan stated that “Pol Pot’s government tried to eradicate Buddhism from Cambodia....Of a total of 2,680 Buddhist monks from 8 of Cambodia’s 3,000 monasteries surveyed by Chanthou Boua, only 70 monks were found to have survived in 1979.”<sup>209</sup> With so few monks in monasteries across Cambodia, it is no wonder that Theravāda Buddhism had a slow revival in the country. To this end, although Harris stated that from April to June 1981, a national gathering of 400 monks in Phnom Penh was held to celebrate the revival of Buddhism and the victory of January 7, 1979, 500

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<sup>208</sup> Harris, 2005, 176.

<sup>209</sup> Kiernan, 1988, Section A, pg. 16; Kiernan, 1990, 39.

monks were re-ordained and 1,500 pagodas were under construction, in 1982, there were 2,311 monks in 1,821 monasteries, which represented an overall decrease of approximately 60,000 monks since the Khmer Rouge regime took power.<sup>210</sup> Given that the revival of Buddhism is relatively recent in Cambodia, today, its perseverance is a reflection of its longstanding history in Cambodia. Therefore, although much has changed in Cambodia since 1979, many more religious and cultural things have remained the same. For example, the *Pchum Ben* Festival has happened every year in September since the Angkorian era<sup>211</sup> (with the exception of the Khmer Rouge era, which lasted last three years, eight months, and twenty days<sup>212</sup>) and was even celebrated in 2020, despite that the Covid-19 pandemic affected people in Cambodia. Furthermore, as we will see, former Khmer Buddhists have intermarried with Cham Muslims, and converted to Islam. This perseverance of changelessness reflects not only the long-held religious traditions of Cambodia, but is also one of the things that is unique about the country, as both the *Pchum Ben* Festival and Cham marriages have not changed since the Angkorian era. However, when Pol Pot died at 11:15pm on April 15, 1998 just north of Anlong Veng in Northern Cambodia, after he committed suicide from a lethal dose of valium and chloroquin because he feared being handed over to the United States for an international trial, he was not given a Buddhist funeral. Instead, he was set atop a funeral pyre, and

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<sup>210</sup> Harris, 2005, 194.

<sup>211</sup> Ou, Mom. 2009. "Background: A [H]istory of Pchum Ben." Accessed October 15, 2020. <https://www.phnompenhpost.com/national/background-history-pchum-ben>.

<sup>212</sup> Colm, Sara. "The Killing Fields." *The New York Times*. Accessed on October 15, 2020. <https://archive.nytimes.com/www.nytimes.com/books/first/c/colm-killing.html>.

“burned like old rubbish,” stated the *Phnom Penh Post* in an article.<sup>213</sup> To this end, while Pol Pot’s journey in Cambodia had ended, it enabled the descendants of the survivors of the Khmer Rouge regime to live without fear of them. Thus, for the new generation of Khmer and Cham peoples, their migrations signaled an obligation not only to themselves, but to their families, to live life on their own terms.

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<sup>213</sup> Although a 1988 article titled “The Khmer Rouge: A Profile” in the *Indochina Issues* journal reported no non-Khmer Rouge person had seen Pol Pot in years, the Khmer people still feared the possibility of the Khmer Rouge regaining power in Cambodia (Magistad, Mary Kay. 1988. “The Khmer Rouge: A Profile.” *Indochina Issues* 86 (December): 1, 7); Gittings, John and Mark Tran. 1999. “Pol Pot killed himself with drugs.” *The Guardian*. Accessed October 15, 2020. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/1999/jan/21/cambodia>; Sainsbury, Peter. 2009. “Burned like old rubbish: Pol Pot’s funeral.” <https://www.phnompenhpost.com/national/burned-old-rubbish-pol-pots-funeral>.



#### **Chapter IV: Migratory Changes for the New Generation**

After the Khmer Rouge regime collapsed, a historic baby boom occurred in Cambodia,<sup>214</sup> which marked the beginning of a new generation of Khmer and Cham peoples who would not only continue the cultural and religious traditions of their forebears, but migrated to become instructors, monk novices, had a family member become a landmine victim, pursue their education, become business owners, and converted to Islam from Theravāda Buddhism, who have migrated across Cambodia to pursue their aspirations. Between March 16, 2020 and April 3, 2020, the author interviewed three Khmer men from Siem Reap and Kandal Provinces, named Kheng Bunny, Thorn Bunthen, and Wath Sawoeng, about their migrations within and away from Cambodia. Despite their different upbringings and experiences in Cambodia, the author found that ultimately, education is what has enabled them to both pursue their goals and help others in their communities. Furthermore, Kheng's, Thorn's, and Wath's experiences echo those of Khmer people who lived in Cambodia hundreds of years ago. Conversely, migrations for marriages between Theravāda Buddhist Khmer and Muslim Cham peoples has changed drastically since the eleventh century in Cambodia. Thus, this perseverance in Cambodia has exemplified the ancient traditions in the country, and the ability of current and future generations of Khmer and Cham peoples to retain their cultural identity, despite the changes that regional migration brings to them.

In an oral history interview conducted on March 16, 2020, Wath stated that when his father, Ros Savat, was thirteen years old, he became a soldier with the Khmer Rouge

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<sup>214</sup> Kiernan, 1988, 19.

to win support for King Norodom Sihanouk, to restore the monarchy in Cambodia, but when Ros migrated through the jungle in either 1983 or 1984, he stepped on a landmine.<sup>215</sup> In 2016, the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining showed that in 1983, more than 2,500 Cambodians were struck by landmines,<sup>216</sup> which were placed in the countryside during the decades-long war in Cambodia by the Cambodian army, the Khmer Rouge regime, the Vietnamese military, the Thai army, the United States military, and non-communist fighters.<sup>217</sup> Two soldiers who were behind Ros were killed by the explosion, but he was badly maimed, and it took twenty-four hours to transport him to a hospital,<sup>218</sup> because they had to walk through the jungle. Like Ros, Siem Reap Province native Yeak Eoun, better known by his *nom de guerre*, Aki Ra, was a conscripted child soldier who, at the age of twelve, worked for the Khmer Rouge, deposited between 100 and 1,000 landmines a day, and learned how to set and detonate landmines.<sup>219</sup> Yeak stated in 2017 that...

[m]any people between the years 1984 and 1990 were killed or injured by landmines. The hospitals were far away and there were few civilians or

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<sup>215</sup> Wath, Sawoeung. 2020. Interview by author. Riverside. March 16, 2020.

<sup>216</sup> Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining. 2016. “‘Finishing the Job’: An Independent Review of the Mine Action Sector in Cambodia.” Accessed November 6, 2020. <https://www.gichd.org/fileadmin/GICHD-resources/rec-documents/Cambodia-Sector-Review-Final-Report-GICHD.pdf><https://www.gichd.org/fileadmin/GICHD-resources/rec-documents/Cambodia-Sector-Review-Final-Report-GICHD.pdf>, 14.

<sup>217</sup> Dunlop, Nic. 2016. “Beating the odds and clearing landmines in Cambodia.” In Pictures. Accessed November 6, 2020. <https://www.aljazeera.com/gallery/2017/9/12/beating-the-odds-and-clearing-landmines-in-cambodia/>; Congressional Research Service. 2019. “War Legacy Issues in Southeast Asia: Unexploded Ordnance (UXO).” Accessed November 6, 2020. <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/weapons/R45749.pdf>, 6.

<sup>218</sup> Wath, Sawoeung. 2020. Interview by author. Riverside. March 16, 2020.

<sup>219</sup> Asia Society. 2009. “The Incredible Journey of Aki Ra, Former Child Soldier.” <https://asiasociety.org/incredible-journey-aki-ra-former-child-soldier>.

soldiers who had first-aid knowledge to help. Hospitals were set up in the jungle by the armies[,] but there were many casualties and few doctors or medicines or equipment[,] so many people died.<sup>220</sup>

To this end, Wath stated “[t]hat was the idea, landmine[s] [are] not just [to] kill you, but to stop the movement of the troop[s].”<sup>221</sup> Nonetheless, Ros was victimized by his migration with the Khmer Rouge. Given that the Vietnamese army came to Cambodia in 1979 and liberated the Khmer and Cham peoples that had been tortured under the Khmer Rouge regime, they did not reach Siem Reap Province until 1983.<sup>222</sup> Nonetheless, innocent people, such as Ros, had already been affected by landmines when they migrated, which are scattered across Cambodia to this day. However, Yeak’s life dramatically improved when he migrated to pursue his education, like Kheng, Thorn, and Wath.

When thirty-six-year-old Kheng was born in Rocacaoun Commune in Kandal Province along the Mekong River, about forty-five kilometers away from Phnom Penh, no one in his family had supposedly ever migrated before, and no one could have guessed that he would do so at a young age, because he was disabled as a child with polio. In an oral history interview conducted with Kheng on April 3, 2020, he stated...

[m]ost of the people in the village, they did not value me, because I am disabled, so they don’t treat me like the other boys. Most of them, they just addressed me like ‘disabled boy.’ But I was happy with my childhood, because I had my siblings, and my parents, and some of my school friends. They were really good to me. But, most of the people in the village, they

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<sup>220</sup> Aki, Ra. 2017. “The Story of [M]y Life by Aki Ra.” Cambodian Self Help Demining. Accessed October 20, 2020. <https://www.cambodianselfhelpdemining.org/aki-ras-story/>.

<sup>221</sup> Wath, Sawoeung. 2020. Interview by author. Riverside. March 16, 2020.

<sup>222</sup> Aki, Ra. 2017. “The Story of [M]y Life by Aki Ra.” Cambodian Self Help Demining. Accessed October 20, 2020. <https://www.cambodianselfhelpdemining.org/aki-ras-story/>.

don't know [me]; they didn't know my name, because they just addressed me with 'disabled boy.'<sup>223</sup>

It is highly unlikely that no one in Kheng's family had ever migrated before, considering the migrations that occurred across Cambodia when the Khmer Rouge regime was in power. If anyone had migrated prior to him, it would have been his parents or his grandparents, who would have been forced to migrate into the countryside in 1975. However, the first time Kheng migrated, he traveled to Phnom Penh for one hour on a tuk-tuk, a three-wheeled motorized vehicle, for school, after he finished the eighth grade,<sup>224</sup> much like the Cham Muslims who migrated to several villages to acquire Qur'anic knowledge in the twentieth century. For Khmer people in Cambodia prior to the Khmer Rouge regime, Ebihara stated...

[t]he temple school or the instruction one received while a monk were once the major and sometimes the only means of education for villagers. Of thirty-five men in West Svay over eighteen years of age who are literate, all but four learned the rudiments of Khmer (and sometimes a smattering of other subjects) while they were monks. Illiteracy among the adult men correlates directly with not having entered the monkhood; as one of them said, "I cannot read because I was not able to become a monk."<sup>225</sup>

However, unlike most male Khmer boys in Cambodia in the past and present, Kheng never entered the monkhood, but became literate by attending primary school in Kandal Province. Although Kheng did not follow the monkhood tradition in his youth, possibly because of polio, he not only still became educated when he left Rocacaoun Commune, but used his knowledge of the English language to educate others when he migrated to

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<sup>223</sup> Kheng, Bunny. 2020. Interview by author. Riverside. April 3, 2020.

<sup>224</sup> Kheng, Bunny. 2020. Interview by author. Riverside. April 3, 2020.

<sup>225</sup> Ebihara, 2018, 170.

Siem Reap Province on a seven-hour bus ride with Capitol Bus Company in approximately 2003, to live with his parents. To this end, Kheng stated...

[n]ow I am so grateful with my life, because I'm like, I got educated, and I can share my knowledge and initial experience to other people. I just would like to let you know that I am a teacher of English. I love this job so much, because I can transfer the knowledge of English to other people, and I also learned [it] myself as well.

Thus, like the Buddhist monks in Cambodia prior to to the Khmer Rouge regime, prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, Kheng taught English to students from rural villages, who may not have otherwise been able to attain an education. Like Kheng's students, Thorn also attained his education through migration.

Thorn was born on a farm in Jiem Village, in Rseilo Commune, in Chi Kraeng District, which is located about forty-five kilometers Southeast of the center of Siem Reap Province, and his migration was guided by both his education and Theravāda Buddhism. Like many Theravāda Buddhist boys in Cambodia, he studied at the pagoda in his village for three years, before he attended primary school. Thorn then migrated to Siem Reap on his motorbike, with only a small bag that held a few pairs of clothes, in late 2004 or early 2005, to attend 10 January 1979 High School, which is the largest high school in the city. After Thorn graduated from high school in 2009, he migrated to Thailand to obtain his Bachelor's Degree, where his older brother had moved in 1998. To this end, according to Thorn, the first condition was that he was to become a monk, which he rejected, although he is a Theravāda Buddhist. However, his parents approved of his decision to not become a monk. In an oral history interview on March 16, 2020, Thorn stated...

[t]hey follow[ed] my decision. In Cambodian culture, at least, a man [is] supposed to be a monk, and to respect the parents, and we are supposed to do something good in religion to dedicate the good stuff to the parents. Yeah, that's why my mom asked me to be a monk.<sup>226</sup>

Nonetheless, Thorn's decision was a blessing in disguise, which enabled him to retain both his Buddhist faith and pursue his education. Given that he was unable to learn the Thai language, and did not speak English yet either, he returned to Siem Reap Province. When he was twenty-two years old, Thorn enrolled in a short course by an NGO titled "Youth Buddhist for Education," in which he was a monk for two weeks with 2,500 men aged fifteen to twenty-five years old. Thorn stated...

...they reaffirmed that [the] Buddhist concept to be a philosophy concept. And we learn that much about philosophy. So, we start breakfast by 7:00 [am], before we did meditation for two hour[s]. So after that, we have got philosophy class, we have got Buddhist term class, we have got Christianity class, Christian class, we have got other religion[s], and we learn through society, we learn through education, we learn through the philosophy.<sup>227</sup>

Since Thorn was educated in the pagoda as a child and later became a novice monk, he has exemplified following and retaining his Theravāda Buddhist faith, which is a huge part of Khmer culture, as he never stopped practicing his religion when he migrated to Thailand, despite that he initially rejected becoming a monk there. Although The Pew Research Center has estimated that the number of Buddhists around the world is expected to increase between 2010 and 2030, rising from 488 million to approximately 511

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<sup>226</sup> Thorn, Bunthen. 2020. Interview by author. Riverside. March 16, 2020.

<sup>227</sup> Thorn, Bunthen. 2020. Interview by author. Riverside. March 16, 2020.

million, it is expected to decline after 2030, falling to 486 million by 2050.<sup>228</sup> Since Theravāda Buddhism has been a longstanding religion in Cambodia since ancient times, and is the religion of the majority of its population, it is highly unlikely that it will decline by 2050. Even further, both Thorn's mother and grandmother are Buddhist nuns, which has enabled him to retain his Theravāda Buddhist faith and pursue his education. To this end, Thorn stated...

[s]o my mom moved to Siem Reap and she want[ed] to be a nun, a Buddhist nun. So, because Buddhist nun[s] have no retire[ment], has [sic] no money, so I [was] supposed to leave it to her and find a good job, to get an education, and find a good job, to take care [of] her.<sup>229</sup>

To pursue both a career and take care of his elderly mother, Thorn decided to become highly educated.

In 2010, Thorn was accepted to Paññāsāstra University of Cambodia, which is commonly known as PUC in Siem Reap Province. For one and a half years, he studied the English language. Thorn then majored in linguistics, and obtained his TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) certification.<sup>230</sup> Since 2008, he has taught foreigners the Khmer language and about the Khmer culture, which has enabled him to travel across Cambodia. To this end, he stated, "I love my language and I respect my culture."

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<sup>228</sup> Pew Research Center. 2015. "Buddhists." The Future of World Populations: Population Growth Projections, 2010-2050. Accessed March 11, 2020. <https://www.pewforum.org/2015/04/02/buddhists/>.

<sup>229</sup> Thorn, Bunthen. 2020. Interview by author. Riverside. March 16, 2020.

<sup>230</sup> Thorn, Bunthen. 2020. Interview by author. Riverside. March 16, 2020.

The knowledge that Thorn gained at Paññāsāstra University of Cambodia has enabled him to both migrate in Cambodia and teach foreigners about the Khmer language and about the Khmer culture. For example, in the Summer of 2019, he taught American students the Khmer language and about Khmer culture, when he participated in the Khmer Language and Culture Study Program, which was hosted by the Center for Khmer Studies in Siem Reap and Phnom Penh. Furthermore, when Thorn migrated to Phnom Penh with his students, he learned a lot about how life in a large city affects Khmer people, in comparison to living in a smaller community, such as Siem Reap. Thorn stated “I would say I don’t like Phnom Penh yet. And there are two reason[s]. The first one is [that it is a] big city, with the noisy [sic]. [The] second one is about the building construction.”<sup>231</sup> Phnom Penh has a population of 2,077,757 people, and is the largest city in Cambodia,<sup>232</sup> in part, because many of its residents are migrants from other provinces and receives half of all of Cambodia’s rural migrants,<sup>233</sup> such as those who work in the garment industry, who often migrate to the city from rural villages. The recent construction boom in Phnom Penh, funded by the Chinese Communist Party, has increased Cambodia’s tourism, with its increased hotels, apartments, and skyscrapers,<sup>234</sup>

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<sup>231</sup> Thorn, Bunthen. 2020. Interview by author. Riverside. March 16, 2020.

<sup>232</sup> World Population Review. 2020. “Phnom Penh Population 2020.” Cambodia Population. Accessed October 27, 2020. <https://worldpopulationreview.com/world-cities/phnom-penh-population>.

<sup>233</sup> UNESCO Bangkok. 2018. "Overview of Internal Migration in Cambodia." Accessed March 2, 2020. <https://bangkok.unesco.org/sites/default/files/assets/article/Social%20and%20Human%20Sciences/publications/Policy-brief-internal-migration-cambodia.pdf>.

<sup>234</sup> Roughneed, Simon. 2019. “Photo essay: Phnom Penh and China-backed building boom.” The interpreter. Accessed October 27, 2020. <https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpreter/photo-essay-phnom-penh-and-china-backed-building-boom>.



which has brought an influx of migrants to the city. In June 2019, the Kingdom of Cambodia's Ministry of Planning stated that Siem Reap, in comparison, has a population of 1,006,512 people,<sup>235</sup> many of whom, like those in Phnom Penh, migrated there to seek work or to go to school. However, Thorn hinted that the construction boom and the large population of people in Phnom Penh have caused the people to become strangers to each other. He stated...

So, I feel like it's the free jail in Phnom Penh, so where I stayed over there, so I can't see the people; there is no conversation in between neighborhood[s], I mean, one family to the other family. So, they are afraid of *something*, they are afraid of the people. The people are afraid of people. This is what I am afraid of, the people. So, I feel like I am here in Siem Reap, so we change some food, we talk together with the people, but when I was at Phnom Penh, so even [when] they live next door to each other, but [sic] they don't really know each other. They don't really know each other. Yes. So, I feel like the building is completely being a jail, being a jail.<sup>236</sup>

The fear sensed by Thorn between people in Phnom Penh was also sensed by the author when she participated in the Khmer Language and Culture Study Program in the Summer of 2019. After spending seven hours at the Center for Khmer Studies learning the Khmer language, the author got lost walking home in Phnom Penh, and spent nine hours trying to get a ride from tuk-tuk drivers, each of whom refused to drive her home, because claimed they were busy, although they understood the Khmer she spoke to them. To this end, the author concluded that the tuk-tuk drivers may have feared foreigners in Phnom Penh, although they, in part, enable them to work. Or, rather, according to Thorn, the

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<sup>235</sup> National Institute of Statistics of Cambodia and Ministry of Planning. 2019. *General Population Census of the Kingdom of Cambodia 2019: Provisional Population Totals*. Royal Government of Cambodia. [https://www.nis.gov.kh/nis/Census2019/Provisional%20Population%20Census%202019\\_English\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.nis.gov.kh/nis/Census2019/Provisional%20Population%20Census%202019_English_FINAL.pdf), 7.

<sup>236</sup> Thorn, Bunthen. 2020. Interview by author. Riverside. March 16, 2020.

people in Phnom Penh may fear migrants, or those who are not originally from the city.

For example, Thorn stated...

[a]t the capital city of Phnom Penh, the people move from *everywhere*, especially [since] the people move from Takeo [Province], the people move from Stung Treng [Province], people move from Kampot [Province], Sihanouk[ville] [Province,] so [sic] Kâmpóng Cham [Province]. So when they are not at [sic] the same province, when they think that they are from Kâmpóng Cham Province, and the people move from Kampot Province, they don't feel like friend[s], they don't feel like friend[s].<sup>237</sup>

Conversely, neither the author nor Thorn have ever experienced avoidance in the town of Siem Reap. This is likely because Siem Reap houses many foreigners, expatriates, and migrants from all over Cambodia, and it is a tourist location, as Angkor Wat, Phnom Kulen, and the floating village are nearby. Given the constant interactions of Khmer people with migrants in Siem Reap, Thorn stated...

[s]o the countryside people seem to be like a very *generous* people in Cambodia. So in Khmer, what we call that *mienchet*. So the word *mienchet* it mean[s] that even [though] they've got small thing[s], but you see it. So the word *mienchet* [is] what we call to share. To share and to help.<sup>238</sup>

The generosity of Khmer people in the countryside likely resulted from modern globalization, as Aymonier perceived them as inhospitable in the nineteenth century, possibly because he was both a foreigner and a colonizer. To this end, Aymonier stated...

[v]ery apathetic and lethargic, the Cambodians are less deceitful than the Annamese although they try. They are less hospitable. On the main roads, various inns called *sala*, or *tram* or again *precham chun*, provide a shelter to the travelers. Elsewhere the latter must present themselves to the *me srok* who will find some accommodation for them. If the inhabitants are informed in advance of the arrival of a mandarin, they will build a

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<sup>237</sup> Thorn, Bunthen. 2020. Interview by author. Riverside. March 16, 2020.

<sup>238</sup> Thorn, Bunthen. 2020. Interview by author. Riverside. March 16, 2020.

temporary shelter for him. But the head of a hut, the Cambodian, generally does not view the arrival of a guest with great pleasure.<sup>239</sup>

Despite Aymonier's negative perceptions of the hospitality of Khmer people in the nineteenth century, Cambodia has been transformed by modernity, globalization, and deforestation in the past fifteen years. Consequently, this has affected Thorn's ability to return to his hometown in Siem Reap Province.

Despite Kheng's and Thorn's respect for their culture and Thorn's adherence to Theravāda Buddhism, unlike most Khmer people in Cambodia and Cham people who travel annually to Malaysia to celebrate Ramadan, neither of them have returned to their hometowns to celebrate the *Pchum Ben* Festival (the festival of food gathering for ancestors) in years, due to both friends and family migrating elsewhere and deforestation. When Kheng visited Rocacaoun Commune to see friends and relatives in approximately 2016, he stated that most of them had left to work in another country, such as Thailand and South Korea. However, to celebrate the *Pchum Ben* Festival, Kheng visited his *parents'* hometown three years ago.<sup>240</sup> As aforementioned, the *Pchum Ben* Festival has occurred the same way every September since Angkorian times (with the exception of the Khmer Rouge regime era), and from Aymonier's writings in 1875, it is still practiced the same way. According to Aymonier, when the *Pchum Ben* Festival...

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<sup>239</sup> Aymonier, 1875, 49.

<sup>240</sup> Kheng, Bunny. 2020. Interview by author. Riverside. April 3, 2020.

[f]rom the first day of the waning moon, everyone, mandarins, men and women are actively preparing for this feast. For travelers, shelters are built, the sala are repaired as well as the pagodas. Everyday some carry food to the pagoda; others invite the monks to come and have their meal at their house. People give them clothes as presents. Finally, on the last day of the month[,] a room is prepared inside the house where people put food, cakes, sweets[,] as well as candles and joss sticks, then the whole lot is given as an offering to the ancestors whom one invites, repeating the following invocation three times: “You, our ancestors who departed this life, deign to come and eat what we are offering you and bless your posterity, make them happy.”<sup>241</sup>

Given Aymonier’s short description of the fifteen-day *Pchum Ben Festival*, it is highly likely that he did not participate in it, as he made no mention of Khmer people visiting at least three pagodas, the places where their ancestors died, and that it is a festival for Khmer people to both honor their ancestors and to bring food to the monks at the pagodas.<sup>242</sup> To this end, the *Pchum Ben* Festival brings both merit and karma to the Khmer people for honoring their ancestors and the monks. Despite that it is widely believed in Cambodia that those who do not visit their hometowns for the *Pchum Ben* Festival will have bad luck until the next year, both Kheng and Thorn have experienced promising educational and business prospects in the past year. Nonetheless, Thorn has not migrated back to Jiem Village in years due to deforestation. He stated...

And the thing that I feel shocked [by] is about [the] forest. The people cut a lot of forest, and I feel like it seem[s] to be like the big ocean. So when I was very little, during [the] 1990s, for my fifteen year[s] in my hometown, so [sic] I feel like the forest and the people are together. So I can’t get into the forest, I can’t pick up some fruit, and I can’t talk to my friend[s], and we can’t feed the animal[s], like pig[s], or buffalo, or cut over there....But

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<sup>241</sup> Aymonier, 1875, 59.

<sup>242</sup> Phare Circus. 2018. “How to Celebrate Pchum Ben.” About Cambodia, Phare News. Accessed October 29, 2020. <https://pharecircus.org/how-to-celebrate-pchum-ben/>.

now, the people cut, cut the tree[s]. And it is very hot. It's supposed to be climate change, but it is that hot.<sup>243</sup>

Since 80% of Cambodians live in rural areas and 65% of those people depend on forest resources that supports their local economies and ensures their food securities,<sup>244</sup> deforestation has affected the livelihoods of people like Thorn, because their hometowns are rapidly being depleted of natural resources by the illegal timber trade, as Cambodia lost over 70% of its forests as of 2007.<sup>245</sup> Although in 2018, trees were blessed by Buddhist monks and tied with brightly colored saffron fabric in Prey Lang Wildlife Sanctuary, located in Kâmpóng Thom, Preah Vihear, Kratie, and Stung Treng Provinces, in an effort to deter illegal loggers who may have reservations about cutting down trees blessed by monks,<sup>246</sup> the practice continues unabated. Consequently, deforestation has forced rural Khmer people to migrate to the cities due to both climate change and to sustain their livelihoods. For example, in a 2019 article by environmental scholars Chris Jaconson, Stacy Crevello, Chanthan Chea, and Ben Jarihani titled “When is migration a maladaptive response to climate change?” published in *Regional Environmental Change*, a study of migration in the villages of Lvea Krang, Popok, and Chamkar Samrong in Northwestern Cambodia showed that of the 45% of migrations that occurred, over half

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<sup>243</sup> Thorn, Bunthen. 2020. Interview by author. Riverside. March 16, 2020.

<sup>244</sup> Kresek, Kai. 2019. “What’s Happening in Cambodia’s Forests?” Data and Research. Accessed October 29, 2020. <https://blog.globalforestwatch.org/data-and-research/whats-happening-in-cambodias-forests/>.

<sup>245</sup> Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. 2007. “Brief on National Forest Inventory NFI: Cambodia.” Accessed November 8, 2020. <http://www.fao.org/3/ap183e/ap183e.pdf>, 3.

<sup>246</sup> Kresek, Kai. 2019. “What’s Happening in Cambodia’s Forests?” Data and Research. Accessed October 29, 2020. <https://blog.globalforestwatch.org/data-and-research/whats-happening-in-cambodias-forests/>.

were climate-related.<sup>247</sup> Although deforestation was not mentioned in the article, it is directly related to the migration of Khmer people in these villages, as tree loss has a profound impact on soil, erosion, and air quality of agricultural land in Cambodia, which Jacobson, Crevello, Chea, and Jarihari, in part, stated were the reasons for migration in the three villages.<sup>248</sup> Consequently, deforestation has caused Jiem Village to become hotter, as noted by Thorn, as the water in the trees can no longer be transpired by the surrounding air to cool the temperature,<sup>249</sup> which has affected Thorn's migration to his hometown. However, unlike Kheng and Thorn, Wath visits his hometown often, as he stated "I've seen my homeland usually, like, once a month, but when I'm busy, every few month[s], three months."<sup>250</sup> Thus, the migrations of family and friends outside of Cambodia, deforestation, and a diligent work schedule have prevented these men from returning to their hometowns regularly.

Like Kheng and Thorn, Wath's migration out of his hometown of Kouk Pnov Village in Siem Reap Province, which is about seventy kilometers Northwest of the town of Siem Reap, was motivated by education, which encouraged him to give back to Cambodia by building primary schools. Wath stated that when he was a child in the countryside, he walked back and forth for twenty kilometers between his parents' home

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<sup>247</sup> Jaconson, Chris, Stacy Crevello, Chanthan Chea, and Ben Jarihani. 2019. "When is migration a maladaptive response to climate change?" *Regional Environmental Change* 19, no. 1 (January): 101. <https://search.proquest.com/openview/8401aea16bd356799c9ab85bb615e65d/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=54543>.

<sup>248</sup> Jaconson, Crevello, Chea, and Jarihani, 2019, 102.

<sup>249</sup> Trees for Energy Conservation. 2019. "How do trees cool the air?" Accessed October 29, 2020. <https://trees-energy-conservation.extension.org/how-do-trees-cool-the-air/>.

<sup>250</sup> Wath, Sawoeung. 2020. Interview by author. Riverside. March 16, 2020.

and the home of his grandmother, where he studied. Furthermore, when he was eight, nine, or ten, for *Pchum Ben*, he visited temples with his friends, and stayed there all night. To this end, he stated...

[b]ecause we went there in the evening, and we just bring [sic] our hammocks with mosquito net[s], just [to] make sure we protect[ed] ourselves from malaria, and then in the morning at four [o'clock], we wake [sic] up, then we just joined whatever the event [that was happening].<sup>251</sup>

Given that Wath and his friends were at the temples in the early morning, they likely participated in chanting with the monks and made offerings of *bay ben*, or rice balls, to their ancestors,<sup>252</sup> which has been a tradition in Cambodia since Angkorian times. When Wath attended middle school, which was twenty-three kilometers away from his parents home, he rode his bicycle back and forth for transportation. In his middle school, Wath was one of only three boys who attended, out of all of the people in his entire village. He lived with the educated family of one of his classmates, on a pig farm, while the landlord was in charge of all of the teachers in the area. Given that they also sold electronics and bought a lot of things, Wath stated “[a]nd I can [sic] see that, how educated people live, and how you live, when you have an education.”<sup>253</sup> To this end, Wath’s experience with this family changed his life, as he stated “...that helped me to understand about education.” This experience encouraged him to become educated and lift his family out of poverty. However, after he finished ninth grade, his two friends who had gone to middle school with him stopped going to school. Therefore, in 2006, when Wath

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<sup>251</sup> Wath, Sawoeung. 2020. Interview by author. Riverside. March 16, 2020.

<sup>252</sup> Daravuth, Ly. 2003. “Notes on Pchum Ben.” Accessed November 4, 2020. [https://www.brandeis.edu/ethics/peacebuildingarts/pdfs/peacebuildingarts/ly%20notes\\_on\\_pchum\\_ben-2.pdf](https://www.brandeis.edu/ethics/peacebuildingarts/pdfs/peacebuildingarts/ly%20notes_on_pchum_ben-2.pdf), 1.

<sup>253</sup> Wath, Sawoeung. 2020. Interview by author. Riverside. March 16, 2020.

migrated to the town of Siem Reap to attend 10 January 1979 High School, he became the only boy in his village to attend high school, and in 2009, he became the first boy in his village to receive a high school diploma. While Wath was in high school, he worked for a hotel to support himself, which was illegal under Cambodian law, as he had to be at least fourteen years old to be able to work.<sup>254</sup> Like Thorn, Wath completed almost one year of English courses to be accepted to Paññāsāstra University of Cambodia, but it took him six years to graduate, because he said that being in school was “a bit [like] suffering in university,” possibly because it took him longer than four years to graduate. Nonetheless, Wath became the first man in his village to receive a Bachelor’s degree in International Relations. Thus, Wath’s education enabled him to create his business, called To Asia Travel,<sup>255</sup> which creates travel plans for clients within Cambodia, that enables them to experience Khmer culture, see Khmer historic sites, and inspires both locals and tourists to create positive changes in their local and global communities.<sup>256</sup> Since Wath’s education enabled him to travel, learn about Khmer history, and about issues affecting Khmer people, he built seven primary schools in villages that do not have them, for over 1,000 children, and replanted at least 80,000 trees to combat deforestation in Cambodia.<sup>257</sup> For

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<sup>254</sup> Wath, Sawoeung. 2020. Interview by author. Riverside. March 16, 2020; LinkedIn. 2020. “Wath Saw.” Accessed November 3, 2020. <https://www.linkedin.com/in/wath-saw>; Internet Archive Wayback Machine. “List of Ratifications of International Labour Conventions: Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138).” Internet Archive Wayback Machine. Accessed November 2, 2020. <https://web.archive.org/web/20121013183229/http://webfusion.ilo.org/public/db/standards/normes/appl/appl-byConv.cfm?hdroff=1&conv=C138&Lang=EN>.

<sup>255</sup> Wath, Sawoeung. 2020. Interview by author. Riverside. March 16, 2020.

<sup>256</sup> To Asia Travel. “Choose To Asia Travel for....” Home. Accessed November 2, 2020. <http://toasiatravel.com/>.

<sup>257</sup> Instagram. 2020. “Wath Saw.” Accessed November 3, 2020. <https://www.instagram.com/wathsaw/?hl=en>.



example, Char Primary School, a forthcoming four-room schoolhouse that will educate about 200 students in Siem Reap Province, in the Varin District, is currently being built with funds raised by Wath through a Go Fund Me crowdfunding webpage. Wath stated...

These kids already have a school[,] but it is very old and made of wood. Now the roof is leaking during the rainy season[,] which lasts six months each year[,] and during dry season it is very hot, this is not a good learning environment for the children. It is about 70km away from Siem Reap town but it takes about 3 hours to get there since the roads are difficult to drive on.<sup>258</sup>

Given that Wath had migrated as a child to get himself educated, he empathizes with children in Cambodia's countryside who must trek for long distances or migrate to another village or city to go to school. To this end, he stated, "[there are] so many small villages in the countryside, that kid[s] never go to school, because they have no school [to go to]....And all [of] the school[s] are the first school in the village....And all [of] the school[s] are private school[s]—*government* school[s]." <sup>259</sup> Thus, Wath's migrations and education encouraged him to help other Khmer people in Cambodia to go to school, because he learned the value of an education at an early age.

Like Thorn, Wath is also a Theravāda Buddhist, and has sought to combat deforestation by replanting trees, which has enabled him to migrate across Cambodia. In his hometown, Wath stated "...we lost a lot of forest. Like my homeland, was, like twenty years ago, was, like, full of jungle and forest. Now, [it's] all empty with plantation[s].... we cannot stop the infestation, of cutting down tree[s], because it's a big business. But,

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<sup>258</sup> Go Fund Me. 2019. "Building a 4 classrooms school in Rural Village." Accessed November 3, 2020. <https://www.gofundme.com/f/building-a-4-classrooms-school-in-rural-village>.

<sup>259</sup> Wath, Sawoeung. 2020. Interview by author. Riverside. March 16, 2020.

we can replant.”<sup>260</sup> Given that much forest in Cambodia has disappeared, like Thorn, Wath has also seen the greenery near his hometown lessen. To this end, Wath’s company has its own nursery farm that plants and replants its own trees. He stated, “[w]e pick up the seed and put it in plastic, and then grow it, and then six [months], seven months...later, they grow up, and we plant. So I think, it seem[s], like, [in] two year[s], three year[s] we plant maybe 100,000 trees,” that have been replanted in ten provinces across Cambodia.<sup>261</sup> To this end, by replanting trees, Wath upholds the Theravāda Buddhist belief in spirits which inhabit trees, plants, and animals. Furthermore, trees are sacred in Buddhism, as Prince Siddhartha Gautama attained enlightenment and became the Buddha after he meditated under a fig tree, better known as the Bodhi Tree.<sup>262</sup> Thus, by Wath growing and replanting trees in Cambodia to combat deforestation, he is not only helping to conserve nature, but is following ancient Buddhist practices that have been followed in Cambodia since at least the twelfth century.

For Muslim Cham people in Cambodia, migrations to marry Khmer Theravāda Buddhists have been made since at least the eleventh century, and have continued to the present time. Although the marriage between Buddhists and Muslims is approved of in both religions, Buddhists are encouraged, but not required, to convert to Islam, although not all do. For example, according to 420 surveys distributed by Ysa in 2006 as research

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<sup>260</sup> Wath, Sawoeung. 2020. Interview by author. Riverside. March 16, 2020.

<sup>261</sup> Wath, Sawoeung. 2020. Interview by author. Riverside. March 16, 2020.

<sup>262</sup> Johnson, Laura Kay. 1992. “The Buddhist Perception of Nature: Implications for Forest Conservation in Thailand.” *The Trumpeter: Journal of Ecosophy* 9, no. 1: 1, 2. <http://trumpeter.athabascau.ca/index.php/trumpet/article/view/445/734>.

for his 2010 book, *Navigating the Rift: Muslim-Buddhist Inter-marriage in Cambodia*, to schools, offices, villages, mosques, temples, and markets in Cambodia, 100% of the Khmer people who had married Cham people had converted to Islam. However, among 526 intermarried couples, 463 (88%) practiced Islam, whereas fifty-four people (10.3%) practiced Buddhism, and nine people (1.7%) practiced their respective religions. To this end, Ysa stated...

Islam doesn't want non-Muslims to convert simply because of marriage. On the contrary, non-Muslims must adopt Islam as a result of their own understanding and judgement; they cannot be forced or coerced to convert. Most Muslims believe that two people of different beliefs and cultures cannot live together happily.<sup>263</sup>

On the contrary, both Khmer people and Cham people have disproved this perception throughout the history of Cambodia. For example, according to the *Teuk Vil* chronicle, *Pongsaoda teuk vil*, when the Buddhist Khmer king Baksei Chamkrong, who reigned from 1028 to 1071, sought to marry Cham princess Preah Neang Poeu Pisei, who was the daughter of Cham king Sintrea II, he feared that he could not marry her because her father expected her to marry a Muslim. However, during a meeting between King Baksei Chamkrong and Princess Preah Neang Poeu Pisei, he persuaded her to go with him to his palace in Moha Nokor, then the capital city of Cambodia, and they secretly departed by boat. To this end, by the time King Sintrea II learned of his daughter's relationship with the Khmer king, King Baksei Chamkrong and Princess Preah Neang Poeu Pisei had already left, and King Sintrea II died soon afterward of a broken heart.<sup>264</sup> The author found

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<sup>263</sup> Ysa, 2010, 68.

<sup>264</sup> Harris, 2005, 64; Ysa, 2010, 20.

no evidence that suggested that King Baksei Chamkrong ever converted to Islam, and it is highly likely that he retained his Buddhist faith, as Harris stated that his *stupa* sits near Wat Sithor<sup>265</sup> in Kandal Province. The relationship between King Baksei Chamkrong and Princess Preah Neang Poeu Pisei exemplified the ability of both Buddhists and Muslims to migrate to marry each other in ancient times, despite differences in their religious beliefs, and hinted that they were far ahead of their time, as it is still believed by Cham Muslims in Cambodia today that a marriage between non-Muslims and believers may cause problems. However, in contradiction of Ysa's statements that non-believers are not required to convert to Islam to marry Muslims, he also stated that...

Islam allows its believers to marry non-Muslims, but under the condition of conversion, so that they are returned to their original religion. Thus, when a Muslim wants to marry a non-Muslim, he or she must introduce their partner to Islam before the wedding. Once the partner agrees to adopt Islam, they can discuss marriage. If the partner refuses, Allah prohibits the Muslim from attempting to marry the non-Muslim.<sup>266</sup>

Nonetheless, there were Khmer kings who converted to Islam when they married Cham women. When Khmer king Preah Bat Nearay Reameaso, who reigned from 1367 to 1377 and resided in the then-capital city of Longvek, in present-day Kâmpóng Speu Province, sought to marry Muslim Cham Maghas Devi, he requested permission from her parents to marry her. The parents gave him their consent, on the condition that he converted to Islam, for which King Preah Bat Nearay Reameaso both consented to convert and be circumcised (although circumcision is optional for a man over the age of puberty<sup>267</sup>),

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<sup>265</sup> Harris, 2005, 36, 251.

<sup>266</sup> Ysa, 2010, 64.

<sup>267</sup> Ysa, 2010, 66.

which became a tradition in Cambodia and was followed by many Khmer men who married Cham women.<sup>268</sup> Like King Preah Bat Nearay Reameaso, a present-day example of a Khmer man who converted to Islam from Buddhism and was circumcised is that of Hoeun from Stung Treng Province, who married a Cham woman named Ly Matzain from Chroy Changva Village in Phnom Penh. Like Devi's parents, Ly's condition for marriage was that her then-coworker convert to Islam, as she stated, "[i]f he had not offered to follow Islam, I wouldn't have married him."<sup>269</sup> This shows both the adherence of the Cham people to Islam and the retainment of their religious traditions in Cambodia. Furthermore, Hoeun also followed Buddhist tradition in his marriage to Ly, as Harris told Ysa that "[t]here is no problem about Buddhists marrying non-Buddhists. This is because the Buddha seems to have regarded all forms of religion as representing some kind of truth."<sup>270</sup> Even further, King Preah Bat Nearay Reameaso also retained Khmer marriage traditions in Cambodia, because after his marriage to Maghas Devi, he issued an edict that stated that "before going to meet his bride at the *Sompeas Phtim* ceremony [knot-tying ceremony], every groom must wear a *samlu* [sarong] and long shirt, and the bride must tie her hair in a chignon and cover her body with a *sbai* [scarf]." To this end, these traditions are still practiced today, as they are part of every traditional Khmer wedding,<sup>271</sup> and attests to the perseverance of long-held Khmer traditions and history in

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<sup>268</sup> Ysa, 2010, 21.

<sup>269</sup> Ysa, 2010, 82, 84.

<sup>270</sup> Ysa, 2010, 37.

<sup>271</sup> Ysa, 2010, 21.

Cambodia, as both the *samlu* and *sbai* originated from Cambodia's first kingdom, the Kingdom of Funan (as shown on the *apsara* bas-reliefs of Vat Phou in present-day Laos, a Chenla-era [550 A.D. - 802 A.D.] Hindu temple), and, judging from King Preah Bat Nearay Reameaso's edict, have been worn by the common people in Cambodia since at least the fourteenth century. Fascinatingly, the Baksei Chamkrong Temple, a Hindu temple in Siem Reap Province, was dedicated to both Shiva and Devi,<sup>272</sup> although King Preah Bat Nearay Reameaso was Buddhist and Devi was Muslim, which may have occurred because both the Khmer and Cham peoples practiced Hinduism long before they practiced Buddhism and Islam. Thus, the migrations made by Khmer and Cham peoples to marry each other from the eleventh century to the present time exemplified that they, though originally culturally different, learned to adapt to the differences between them, which hinted that Buddhists and Muslims can both marry and retain their own religious practices.

According to Tagliacozzo's interviews with Cham people in Cambodia between 2004 and 2009, the *Hajj*, or the annual pilgrimage to Mecca, tends to move local Muslims more toward a Sunni ideal than to an adherence to local traditions of syncretism. However, given that the type of Islam followed by the Cham people (and a few Khmer people) in Cambodia is an integration of beliefs and practices from Buddhism, Hinduism, and Islam, due to changes in the religious practices of its people over time, when they do go on the *Hajj*, Tagliacozzo hinted that it is less of a religious practice and more so a

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<sup>272</sup> Asian Historical Architecture. n.d. "Baksei Chamkrong Temple (947)." Baksei Chamkrong, Angkor, Cambodia. Accessed November 9, 2020. <https://www.orientalarchitecture.com/sid/890/cambodia/angkor/baksei-chamkrong>.

migratory duty, as two Cham women at the Kâmpóng Central Market told him on October 27, 2009 that there are many *Hajjis* and *Hajjas* in Kâmpóng Cham Province,<sup>273</sup> possibly because of their transnational connections to the Muslim world beyond Cambodia's borders, such as Malaysia and Indonesia. In her 2018 article titled "The Role of Muslim Organisations and Grassroots Activists in Rehabilitating Muslim-Buddhist Relations in Cambodia," So stated that Western media outlets on  *jihad*  and Islamic extremism have contributed to problems for the Cham people to define themselves as Muslims, as transnational groups such as Al-Quaeda and Hambali have called for "an absolute orthodoxy of Islam,"<sup>274</sup> although the type of Islam that is followed by the Cham people in Cambodia has been heavily influenced by Hinduism and Buddhism. Nonetheless, although both Tagliacozzo and So stated that the Muslim Cham people in Cambodia adhere to Muslim orthodoxy, as they pray five times per day in the direction of Mecca, try to live without what has been called accretions of "superstition" in their lives,<sup>275</sup> and that the Muslim community has sought to build peace, tolerance, and peaceful coexistence among Muslims and non-Muslims,<sup>276</sup> Tagliacozzo did not mention how many Cham people he spoke to in Kâmpóng Cham Province, how many of them had made the migration to Mecca, nor did he state if he had interviewed any Khmer Muslims. To this end, since Cambodia is a developing country where many of its people struggle daily to

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<sup>273</sup> Tagliacozzo, 2013, 243-244, 250.

<sup>274</sup> So, 2018, 5.

<sup>275</sup> Tagliacozzo, 2013, 243.

<sup>276</sup> So, 2018, 7.

make ends meet, this is most likely the reason why more Cham and Khmer Muslim peoples have not gone on the *Hajj*, as it is costly to fly to Mecca from Cambodia and reserve housing for the duration of the migration, despite that Tagliacozzo stated that some wealthy Cham people fund their own and others migrations to Mecca, though most of the money for it comes from Muslim-majority countries,<sup>277</sup> such as Malaysia, Indonesia, and those in the Middle East. Furthermore, a lack of funding for the migration to Mecca may also be why the *Hajj* is not only perceived as optional, but a migratory duty, rather than a religious obligation. Thus, despite that Tagliacozzo stated that the *Hajj* tends to move local Muslims more toward a Sunni ideal than to an adherence to local traditions of syncretism, for the Muslim Cham and the Khmer Muslim peoples in Cambodia, whether they have made the pilgrimage to Mecca or not, the *Hajj* seems to be less of a religious requirement and more of a migratory obligation for these believers of Islam in a Buddhist-majority country.

After the Khmer Rouge regime collapsed, the Khmer and Cham peoples of the Kingdom of Cambodia migrated to renew their cultures and faiths in Theravāda Buddhism and Islam, which were passed onto their descendants, whose educations, religions, work, and livelihoods parallel the lives of the Khmer and Cham peoples who lived in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. While this changelessness in culture and religion are, in part, what Cambodia has become known for since the end of the Khmer Rouge regime, concurrently, the descendants of the survivors have used modernization, which Pol Pot had sought to abolish all forms of, to their advantage, to improve both their

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<sup>277</sup> Tagliacozzo, 2013, 244.



own lives and those in their communities. For the Khmer and Cham peoples in Cambodia today, using the past as guidelines to determine their future perseveres, as the same ideology was used by their ancestors in ancient times, such as the building campaigns of Khmer kings like Jayavarman VII and the conversion to Islam and circumcision of King Preah Bat Nearay Reameaso. As exemplified by Kheng, Thorn, and Wath, migration is needed to become educated, pursue work opportunities, and learn about the history and culture of Cambodia, which has enabled them to learn more about themselves and their people. Thus, the perseverance of the past continues to guide the lives and the migrations of the Khmer and Cham peoples in the Kingdom of Cambodia today.

## Conclusion

The migrations of the Khmer and Cham peoples of the Kingdom of Cambodia from 400 B.C. to 2020 was impacted by locations, their languages, the movement of the capital city, wars, colonization, modernization, educational levels, occupations, their religions, the Khmer Rouge regime, deforestation, and the era in which they lived in the Cambodia. Although it is unknown how long the Khmer people have resided in Cambodia, and the Cham people have lived in the country since at least the fifteenth century, nothing was written about their collective migrations until now. The work of Aymonier, Ebihara, Vickery, Po Dharma, Kiernan, Wagner, Harris, Taylor, Bruckmayr, Ysa, So, and Tagliacozzo analytically chronicled the monkhood; the *Pchum Ben* Festival; the process of conversion to Islam; the work of the Cham people; Khmer Rouge death statistics; the issue of eating pork for Cham people; the migratory history of the Cham people in Panduranga; the treatment of Khmer and Cham prisoners under the Khmer Rouge regime; Buddhist monks victimized under the Khmer Rouge for retaining their faith; the continuation of Buddhist and Muslim religious rituals and the retainment of Buddhism and Islam by the Khmer and Cham peoples, despite their abolishment under the Khmer Rouge regime; the shared Buddhist and Hindu religious histories of the Khmer and Cham peoples; Khmer and Cham marriages and the conversion to Islam; the unique form of Islam practiced by the Cham people; and the *Hajj* undertaken by the Cham people. Furthermore, this thesis analytically synthesized the migrations of the Cham people within Vietnam; the migrations of the Cham people into Cambodia; the population growth and migrations of the Khmer and Cham peoples from 1941 to 1964;

the migrations of the Khmer and Cham peoples into the countryside under the Khmer Rouge regime; and the migrations of Wath's father, Kheng, Thorn, Wath, the Cham women who married Khmer men, and the ways in which they have undertaken the *Haji*, which depicted their lives during and after the Khmer Rouge regime. Although they have struggled in Cambodia, some eventually overcame their hardships. Therefore, their contributions to the Kingdom of Cambodia, such as teaching Khmer people from the countryside, teaching foreigners the Khmer language and about the Khmer and Cham cultures, replanting trees to combat deforestation, and building schools in Cambodia's countryside, cannot be understated, as they have worked in services that most people in Cambodia are not trained for. However, despite their successful ventures, much of their endeavors have been left out of Cambodia's history.

Collectively, the Khmer and Cham peoples of Cambodia have had a single unifying experience in which their migrations were connected, under the Khmer Rouge regime. Although their experiences were individual case studies, both the Khmer and Cham peoples were overworked, starved, and tortured for three years, eight months, and twenty days.<sup>278</sup> Despite generalizations and skepticisms made by historians, Religious Studies scholars, and anthropologists, about Khmer and Cham peoples during the Khmer Rouge regime, their forced migrations into the countryside and torture in the S-21 Prison cannot be sidestepped, as both groups were victimized for their cultures and religions, yet still retained their faiths in Buddhism and Islam. Therefore, while they were often acted upon, they were also privately agents to action. This thesis discovered that the migrations

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<sup>278</sup> Colm, Sara. "The Killing Fields." *The New York Times*. Accessed on October 15, 2020. <https://archive.nytimes.com/www.nytimes.com/books/first/c/colm-killing.html>.

of the Khmer and Cham peoples have depended upon their locations, their languages, the movement of the capital city, wars, colonization, modernization, their educational levels, occupations, their religions, the Khmer Rouge regime, deforestation, and the era in which they lived in the Cambodia; that modernization, such as the use of electricity and running water, caused the Khmer and Cham peoples to migrate to Kâmpóng Cham Province and Phnom Penh in the early 1960s; that both the Khmer and Cham peoples retained their religious faiths in Buddhism and Islam, and prayed privately under the Khmer Rouge regime; that Buddhist rituals were still performed by Khmer Rouge soldiers, despite that Pol Pot had abolished all religions; and that the schooling and marriages of the Khmer and Cham peoples who live in Cambodia today mirror the experiences of those who lived in the country in the fourteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries. However, none of these factors are mentioned in any history textbooks or historical journals, because very little is currently known about the ways in which the Khmer and Cham people have migrated throughout history. Further research beyond the scope of this thesis would be needed to tell their life stories and connect their migratory experiences in Cambodia from 1832 to 2020. This thesis has begun to fill that void.

Conclusively, the migratory history of the Khmer and Cham peoples in Cambodia from 1832 to 2020 needed to be written. Ultimately, the retainment of their long-held cultures and religious traditions for nearly two centuries enabled them to survive the Khmer Rouge regime, in which their descendants have remembered and have utilized as lessons to improve their own livelihoods, and forces us to think about the reasons for migration in Cambodia differently. Thus, for the Khmer and Cham peoples who lived in

and migrated within Cambodia from 1832 to 2020, to borrow from Karl Marx, it can be said that “[m]en make their own history, but they do not make it as they please; they do not make it under self-selected circumstances, but under circumstances existing already, given and transmitted from the past.”<sup>279</sup>

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<sup>279</sup> Marx, Karl. 1852. *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Napoleon*. Moscow: Progress Publishers, 5.

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