



THE SURVIVAL AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF CAMBODIAN  
BUDDHISM AFTER KHMER ROUGE REGIME UP TO 2000 C.E.

By

KIMPICHETH CHHON

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of  
The Requirement for the Degree of  
Master of Arts  
(Buddhist Studies)

International Master's Degree Programme  
Graduate School  
Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University  
Bangkok, Thailand  
B.E. 2555



**The Survival and The Development of Cambodian  
Buddhism After Khmer Rouge Regime up to 2000 C.E.**

By

KIMPICHETH CHHON

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of  
The Requirement for the Degree of  
Master of Arts  
(Buddhist Studies)

International Master's Degree Programme  
Graduate School  
Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University  
Bangkok, Thailand  
B.E. 2555

(Copyright of Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University)



The Graduate School, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, has approved this thesis, entitled “The Survival and the Development of Cambodian Buddhism after Khmer Rouge Regime up to 2000 C.E.”, as a part of education according to its curriculum of the Master of Arts in Buddhist Studies.

.....  
 (Asst. Prof. Dr. Phra Suthithammanuwat)  
 Dean of Graduate School

Thesis Examination Committee:

..... Chairman  
 (Dr. Phra Methithammaratanadhilok)

..... Member  
 (Asst. Prof. Dr. Phra Suthithammanuwat)

..... Member  
 (Assoc. Prof. Choosak Tipkesorn)

..... Member  
 (Dr. Doungkamon Tongkanraksa)

Thesis Supervisory Committee:

Asst. Prof. Dr. Phra Suthithammanuwat

Chairperson

Assoc. Prof. Choosak Tipkesorn

Member

Researcher:

.....  
 (Kimpicheth Chhon)

Thesis Title : The Survival and the Development of  
Cambodian Buddhism after Khmer  
Rouge Regime up to 2000 C.E.

Researcher : Kimpicheth Chhon

Degree : Master of Arts (Buddhist Studies)

Thesis Supervisory Committee : Asst. Prof. Dr. Phra Suthithammanuwat  
(Pāli IX, M.A., Ph.D.)  
: Assoc. Prof. Choosak Tipkesorn  
(B.A., M.A.)

Date of Graduation : 19 March 2013

### ABSTRACT

This thesis has three objectives, which are to study the structure and function of Buddhism in Cambodia, to study the survival and development of Buddhism in Cambodia in the post- Khmer Rouge regime (up to 2000 CE), and to examine findings from the research that can be used to promote Cambodian Buddhism in the future.

The research indicates that there are two Buddhist Orders in Cambodia; the *Mohanikay* and the *Thommayut*. The Supreme Patriarch holds the highest position in the Cambodian Buddhist community, and a group of high ranking monks (*Rajagana*) who form an inner cabinet act as a bridge between the Supreme Patriarch and the chief provincial monks, the head district monks, and the chief temple monks. Buddhism, under the constitution, is the national religion of Cambodia, and 95 percent of the population is Buddhist. The majority of Cambodians identify themselves as *Theravada* Buddhists. It is not uncommon to hear Khmer people suggest that being Khmer means being Buddhist.

The research suggests that the process of recovery of organized Buddhism in Cambodia that took place in the years that followed the darkness of the Pol Pot years was a slow and gradual one. The sluggish pace of Buddhism's reemergence was partly due to ideological manipulation by the new Vietnamese-backed government. The Buddhist system that reappeared in Cambodia in 1980, following the fall of the Khmer Rouge regime, was not the same as that of pre-war period. The new PRK government set age restrictions on ordination, prohibiting men less than 50 years of age from becoming monks. Buddhist activities in Cambodia did not undergo significant revitalization until the ordination

age restrictions were removed in 1989, and the numbers of monks and novices increased dramatically in that year. The next steps in the restoration and the development of public order occurred after the election in 1993, when democracy was restored and the country's name changed back to the Kingdom of Cambodia. Under the co-prime ministers Hun Sen and Prince Ranaridh, the government, in order to bolster its popular appeal, stepped up its support for Buddhism and further removed religious restrictions. These moves clearly contributed to the revitalization of various Buddhist activities in the country. *Saṅgha* education gradually opened again, and by 2000 C.E., the number of monks had increased, and religious activities were once again freely allowed.

Another research finding is that communism and the intervention of foreign powers resulted in political turmoil that had an adverse effect on Buddhism in Cambodia. The Communist world, with its political idealism, was hostile to religion, and the Khmer Rouge set out to destroy Buddhism in Cambodia. In fact, the political changes that the Khmer Rouge put in place affected every aspect of Cambodian life; those changes were inextricably linked to society, economy, and education. The 10 years-long civil war that followed the political upheavals of the Khmer Rouge and related severe economic hardship significantly slowed down the reemergence of the Buddhism. Furthermore, the communist and democratic regimes that followed the Khmer Rouge sought to stifle the influence of Buddhism.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This Thesis is submitted to Graduate School at Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the Master's Degree in Buddhist Studies. First of all, I would like to express my great appreciation to the Prof. Phra Brahmabandit the Rector of Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, and Dr. Phra Sithawatchamethi, Director of International Programme in Buddhist Studies. I am grateful and thankful to have the great opportunity to study there.

My deepest gratitude goes to the Chairman of my thesis Supervisory Committee and also my Pali lecturer, Assist. Prof. Dr. Phra Sutthithammanuwat (Phra Ajahn Thiab). I feel very appreciative and grateful for his incredible assistance and boundless of kindness over the year during my studies here, in particular I am really thankful for his kind help me, for his precious comments, main ideas and many suggestions in editing my thesis writing which are useful my research.

I am highly grateful to Assoc. Prof. Choosak Tipkesorn, Member of the Supervisory Committee, for his care, cooperation, checking English Grammar, and also giving useful information. For their critical comments, encouragement, and useful suggestion which have greatly contributed to this thesis. His assistance and kindness have been very much appreciated indeed and I also would like to say thank you to Dr. Doungkamon Tongkanraksa, one of my examination committees for her kindness and compassion given me the very value comments and good suggestions with the intention to correct and improve my research to be success in finally.

My thanks are also due to my other teachers, for beneficial information taken from their classes and discussion. And also I wish to express my deepest thanks to all International Programme staffs of MCU, especially Phra Mahanopparat Yamsang, Mae Chee Ampai Tansomboon, and all my dear Dhamma friends for helping and providing useful advice and encouragement to be the inspiration for me to complete my thesis.

I profoundly express my gratitude, deepest thanks and most respect to Phra Krusukhetvoradham, the abbot of Wat Sukhettaram, Surin province, who always supported me with the scholarship in this study and

I have really had a great chance to live a good life under his good governance and peaceful instruction. All of his teachings on loving-kindness, great compassion and peaceful way have been in my mind, remembered indeed, and are very much appreciated. Moreover, I would like to express my gratitude and thanks to Phra Rajphiphatkoson, the abbot of Wat Sisudaram, Bangkok, for giving me a kind permission to stay there for over the years of my studies at MCU.

Finally, I would like to say thank you to my mother that she always has been the inspiration for my studies as the most important person that I should not forget to mention here. This research work could not have been successfully completed without the kind help and generous assistance of all those mentioned above. Thank you.

Kimpicheth Chhon

March 19, 2013

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

A.D.	: Ammo Domini
AIDS	: Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
AFTA	: ASEAN Free Trade Area
ASEAN	: Association of Southeast Asian Counties
B.C.	: Before Christ
B.E.	: Buddhist Era
C.E.	: Common Era
CPK	: Communist Party of Kampuchea
CPP	: Cambodian People's Party
DK	: Democratic Kampuchea
DoCR	: Department of Cults and Religions
FUNCIPEC	: National United Front for an Independent, Neutral, Peaceful and Cooperative Cambodia
HBF	: Heinrich Boll Foundation
HIV	: Human Immunodeficiency Virus Infection
H.H.	: His Holiness
ICORC	: International Committee on the Reconstruction of Cambodia
JSRC	: Japanese Sotoshu Relief Committee
KNUFNS	: The National Front for the Liberation of Kampuchea
KR	: Khmer Rouge
MoCR	: Ministry of Cults and Religions
MoEYS	: Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport
NGOs	: Non Governmental Organization
PRK	: People's Republic of Kampuchea
UN	: United Nation
UNICEF	: United Nations Children's Fund
UNTAC	: United Nation Transitional Authority in Cambodia
WFB	: World Fellowship of Buddhist

## Other Abbreviations

ed.	: edited
ibid.	: ibid den / in the same book
Op. cit.,	: opera citato / as referred
P (p)	: Pages
tr.	: translated
Vol (s)	: Volume (s)



## COUNTENTS

<b>Approval Page</b>	i
<b>Abstract</b>	ii
<b>Acknowledgements</b>	iv
<b>List of Abbreviations</b>	vi
<b>Contents</b>	vii
<b>Chapter I: Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Background and Significance of the Problems	1
1.2 Objectives of the Study	5
1.3 Statement of the Problems	6
1.4 Scope of the Study	6
1.5 Definition of Terms used in the Thesis	6
1.6 Research Methodology	8
1.7 Review of Related Literature	8
1.8 Expected Benefits of the Study	15
<b>Chapter II: The Structure and the Function of Buddhism in Cambodia</b>	<b>16</b>
2.1 The Structure of Buddhism in Cambodia	16
2.1.1 Cambodian Saṅgha Orders	16
2.1.2 The Saṅgha Hierarchy	18
2.1.3 The Supreme Patriarchs	19
2.1.4 The Ministry of Cults and Religions	20
2.2 The Function of Buddhism in Cambodia	21
2.2.1 Buddhism and the Khmer Nation	22
2.2.2 Buddhism and Khmer Culture	23
2.2.3 Buddhism and Khmer Way of Life	25
2.2.4 Buddhism and Khmer Beliefs	27
2.2.5 Buddhist Temples and Khmer People	29
2.2.6 Buddhist Monks and Khmer Society	29
2.3 Concluding Remarks	31

<b>Chapter III: The Survival and the Development of Buddhism in Cambodia after the Khmer Rouge Regime</b>	<b>33</b>
3.1 Buddhism in the People' s Republic of Kampuchea: from 1979 to 1993 CE	33
3.1.1 Political changes	35
3.1.2 The PRK Government Policies toward Buddhism	36
3.1.3 Social Changes	41
3.1.3.1 The Revival of Buddhism after the Khmer Rouge Regime	43
3.1.3.2 The Changes of Saṅgha Status	45
3.1.3.3 The Re-Ordination of Buddhist Monks	47
3.1.3.4 Monks and Monasteries	50
3.1.3.5 The Revival of the Saṅgha Administration	53
3.1.3.6 The Roles played by Monks in Khmer Society	56
3.1.3.7 The State of the Khmer Saṅgha under the PRK	58
3.1.3.8 The State of Khmer Buddhist Communities under the PRK	59
3.1.3.9 Re-establishing Buddhism as the National Religion under the Constitution	61
3.1.3.10 The Rebirth of Saṅgha Institutions	63
3.2 Buddhism in Kingdom of Cambodia period in 1993 – 2000 CE	65
3.2.1 Political changes	67
3.2.2 The Government' s Policies Toward Buddhism	69
3.2.3 The Social Changes	72
3.2.3.1 The Changing Saṅgha Status	73
3.2.3.2 The Restoration and Development of Saṅgha Education	75
3.2.3.3 Upgrading the Saṅgha' s Role in Khmer Society	79
3.2.3.4 Monks and Political Legitimacy	80
3.2.3.5 Buddhism and Developing Partnerships	82
3.2.3.6 The State of Buddhism in the Present Time	86
3.3 Concluding Remarks	89

<b>Chapter IV: Findings from Research that can be used to promote Cambodian Buddhism in the Future</b>	<b>91</b>
4.1 Factors that Impact the Changing of Buddhism in Cambodia	91
4.1.1 External Factors	91
4.1.1.1. Political Idealism	91
4.1.1.2. The Foreign Interventions	93
4.1.2 Internal Factors	97
4.1.2.1. The Political Issues	97
4.1.2.2. Social Issues	99
4.1.2.3. Economic Issues	103
4.1.2.4. Educational Issues	105
4.2 The Future of Buddhism in Cambodia	108
4.3 Concluding Remarks	111
 <b>Chapter V: Conclusions and Suggestions</b>	 <b>112</b>
5.1 Conclusions	112
5.2 Suggestions	115
 <b>Bibliography</b>	 <b>116</b>
 <b>Appendix I</b> Interviewed Questions and Answers	 123
<b>Appendix II</b> Photos of Interviewees	169
<b>Appendix III</b> The Shaᅅgha Administration in Cambodia	175
<b>Appendix IV</b> The Supreme Patriarch of Cambodia	179
<b>Appendix V</b> Saᅅgha Higher Ranging In Cambodia	181
<b>Appendix VI</b> Statistic of Saᅅgha Education in Cambodia from 1993-2000 CE	183
<b>Appendix VII</b> Monks and Monasteries in Cambodia from 1969-2000 CE	185
<b>Biography</b>	187

## CHAPTER: I INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background and Significance of the Problems

Buddhism, in its early phase of development whilst the Buddha was still alive, spread rapidly through the great personality of the Buddha himself and through the spirit of renunciation, self-discipline and sacrifice of his disciples. After his passing away, the disciples continued to live according to his ideals, and they spread Buddhism far and wide.<sup>1</sup> Buddhism was introduced into Cambodia in the third century BC. This happened some time after the Third Buddhist Council, when nine missions of elders were sent to preach the *Dhamma* in various states and foreign countries. One of these missions, headed by Elders *Sona* and *Uttara*, was sent to *Suvarṇabhumi* (golden land) or Southeast Asia, a region that included what is modern day Cambodia.

Cambodia, Kampuchea, or Khmer as it is called in its native language, has existed as a geopolitical entity, in one form or another, since the early centuries of the Common Era (CE). Over the course of the first millennium CE, smaller principalities or enclaves were progressively united, and by around the period between the ninth and thirteenth centuries formed an empire that covered much of mainland Southeast Asia. This period is generally regarded as the golden age of Cambodian civilization, with regional political hegemony accompanied by an extraordinary flowering of cultural activity. With time, and notably as its neighbors Thailand and Vietnam each consolidated and expanded their power in the region, Cambodia gradually diminished in size and political reach. It was during this time of geopolitical retreat that Theravada Buddhism took hold across the land. The large majority of the country's more than ten million inhabitants actively practice Theravada Buddhism.<sup>2</sup>

From ruins and the art objects, it is evident that Buddhism was introduced into the great kingdom of *Funan* (modern Cambodia)

---

<sup>1</sup> Phra Rajavaramuni, **Thai Buddhism in the Buddhist World**, (Thailand: Amarin Printing Group Press, 1987), p. 29.

<sup>2</sup> Stephen C. Berkwitz, **Buddhism in World Cultures: Comparative Perspectives**, (USA: ABC-CLIO Press, 2006), p. 129.

somewhat earlier than 300 CE.<sup>3</sup> This early form of Cambodian Buddhism was distinctly Mahayana in flavor, and survived side by side with Hinduism, both creeds having been brought into Funan by Indian traders. Buddhism was however not widely adopted until the twelfth century when King *Jayavarman VII* declared it, and not Hinduism, to be the state religion. With the passing of King *Jayavarman VII*, Hinduism experienced a brief resurgence in the early thirteenth century, but it was soon in decline as Theravada Buddhism became the most popular faith. Even to this day, Theravada remains the principal faith of the land.<sup>4</sup>

Then, from first to the third centuries, and from the thirteenth century until the modern era, Buddhism was and remains an influential element in Khmer society. Traditionally in Cambodia, to be a Khmer was to be a Buddhist, and to be a Buddhist was to be a Khmer. Even the Cambodian State was linked to Buddhism. Until the last monarchy, senior monks were among the elite who selected king. Buddhism did indeed have a strong influence over many aspects of the Khmer way of life.<sup>5</sup>

However, Buddhism in Cambodia came to face with serious change when the Khmer Rouge came to power. Phnom Penh, the capital city of Cambodia, was attacked and surrendered to the Khmer Rouge on April 17, 1975 CE. The new regime was led by two French-educated Cambodian Communists, Saloth Sar better known as Pol Pot, and Ieng Sary. What followed were extremely dark years for Cambodians; the new order set out to destroy Cambodia's social political, social, religious and cultural systems. It was a period of murder and mayhem unlike anything that had occurred in the world before. The Khmer Rouge implemented one of the most radical and brutal restructurings of a society ever attempted; its goal was to transform Cambodia into a Maoist, peasant-dominated agrarian cooperative. Within two weeks of coming to power the entire population of the capital and provincial towns, including all those in hospitals, was forced to march out to the countryside and placed in mobile teams to do slave labor. They prepared the fields, dug irrigation canals for 12 to 15 hours a day. Disobedience of any sort often brought

---

<sup>3</sup>Phra Rajavaramuni, Op. cit., p. 30.

<sup>4</sup> Beverley Palmer, **The Rouge Guide to Cambodia**, (London: Rough Guides Press, 2011.), p. 324.

<sup>5</sup> Son Soubert, et al, **Buddhism and the Future of Cambodia**, Rithisen, (Thailand: Khmer Buddhist Research Center Press, 1986), p. 42.

immediate execution. The advent of Khmer Rouge rule was proclaimed “Year Zero.”<sup>6</sup>

Under Pol Pot, the CPK<sup>7</sup> devised a ferociously radical program of reform for Cambodia. The country was sealed off from the outside world. Phnom Penh and other urban centers were forcefully evacuated and left mostly to decay. All Cambodians were to become farmers under the direction of Angkor (Khmer Rouge Organization). Angkor dictated the people’s movements, activities, food allowances and dress. Markets, private trade and the use of money were abolished. Professional activity ceased. Books were forbidden and education, except for propaganda sessions, was abandoned. Angkor’s Communist leadership was clearly visible until September 1977 CE, when the existence of the CPK (Communist Party of Kampuchea) was announced. A new communist constitution was promulgated.<sup>8</sup> Religious freedom was recognized in the article which as follows:-

Every citizen of Kampuchea has the right to hold any belief in religion and has, as well, the right to have neither belief nor religion. Any reactionary religion interfering with Democratic Kampuchea and its people is strictly prohibited.<sup>9</sup>

In fact, in practice, the Khmer Rouge never allowed the people to practice religion of any sort, and Buddhism had to undergo a radical reorientation. This involved a change of the roles and functions of the teachings, the *Saṅgha* and the monastery. The Buddhist teachings had to be reinterpreted to support revolutionary causes and actions. The professional carriers of Buddhism, i.e., the monks, were not encouraged to continue their careers. Those who remained in the monkhood had to undergo reeducation (in effect this meant to be killed or disrobed) and were treated as badly as the lay people were. The monks were forced to do hard labor in the fields, and to construct roads and irrigation systems. Their former religious prestigious status and privileges were removed.

---

<sup>6</sup> Nick Ray, **Cambodia**, (New York: Lonely Planet Press, 2004), p.20.

<sup>7</sup> The Communist Party of Kampuchea (CPK), also known as Khmer Communist Party, was a communist party in Cambodia. Its leader was Pol Pot and its followers were generally known as Khmer Rouge.

<sup>8</sup> Peter Church, **Focus On Southeast Asia**, (Singapore: KHL Printing Co Pte Ltd Press, 1995), pp. 31-33.

<sup>9</sup> Somboon Suksamran, **Buddhism and Political Legitimacy**, (Bangkok: Chulalongkorn University Press, 1993), pp.116-117.

They were looked down on as burdens of society; they were seen as those who eat but do not produce. They were not by any means the only ones humiliated, but they were given zero support from either the government or by the Khmer Buddhist citizens. It was the policy of the Khmer Rouge to shrink the religion and finally eliminate it. The government made it impossible for the ordinary folk to support the monks; because of the extensive work assigned to them by the government, villagers no longer had time to tend to the monks' needs. Because of the shortage of food, the villagers themselves hardly survived. It was impossible for them to make merit by offering alms to the monks.<sup>10</sup> The outside world gradually also learned about the destruction of monasteries and the burning of religious texts and Buddhist statues.

The brutality of the Khmer Rouge against Buddhism and the *Saṅgha* became widely known throughout the world. Within the four year period of their rule, Buddhism almost disappeared. If there were any saffron robes left in Cambodia, they were just deformed symbols of the religion; genuine Khmer Buddhism no longer existed. An estimate of the number of monks in Cambodia prior to the ascension of the Khmer Rouge ranged between 65,000 and 80,000.<sup>11</sup> By the time of the Buddhist restoration in early 1980 CE, the number of Cambodian monks was estimated to be less than 3,000. The surviving monks had fled to neighboring countries, especially Thailand. Buddhism had been reduced to the lowest level in its two thousand years-old history.

The consequences of the Khmer Rouge's program were catastrophic. Conditions of life varied from province to province, but hardship was severe to extreme everywhere. While an estimated 500,000 Cambodians died during the war from 1970-75 CE, over one million more would die under Khmer Rouge rule; from brutality and callousness, mismanagement, malnutrition, diseases and the virtual abolition of medical services. More than 100,000 ethnic Vietnamese, 225,000 ethnic Chinese, 100,000 Cham (Muslims), and 12,000 Thais were also killed as a part of the Khmer Rouge's program of ethnic cleansing in Cambodia.<sup>12</sup>

---

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p.101.

<sup>11</sup> Harris, Ian, **Saṅgha Groupings in Cambodia**, Buddhist Studies Review, (UK: Association for Buddhist Studies, 2001), p.78.

<sup>12</sup>Stanley L. Kutler, **Encyclopedia of the Vietnam War** (New York: Scribners Publications Press, 1996), pp.265-266.

Pol Pot and other Khmer Rouge leaders such as Ieng Sary<sup>13</sup> (Minister of Foreign Affairs) and Son Sen (Defense Minister), not only killed many people, but also sought to rid Cambodia of Buddhism. They were the real genius devils of the “Killing Fields.” General Lon Nol said in his holy war against them that if they came into power there would be no place for Buddhism; his prophesy became true.<sup>14</sup>

Many of the great institutions that made up Khmer Buddhism were almost completely destroyed by the Khmer Rouge. Other religions suffered a similar fate. Fortunately, the regime did finally come to an end, and Cambodia and Buddhism did survive. Buddhism’s survival showed it to be religion of great strength and resilience. It should be appreciated that Buddhist *Sangha* and Khmer people have tried to preserve Buddhism as their national religion, even though all concerned suffered so terribly during those years. After the Khmer Rouge regime ended, a program of bringing Buddhism back to life began, and it was to be a long and difficult but ultimately rewarding challenge. In fact, inspired by the efforts of all to resurrect and rebuild Buddhism, I took up the challenge of studying the survival and the development of Buddhism in Cambodia from the time of the demise of the Khmer Rouge Regime in 1979 through to 2000 CE. I hope that my research findings can be used to promote a better future for Cambodia and Cambodian Buddhism.

## 1.2 The Objectives of the Study

1.2.1 To study the structure and function of Buddhism in Cambodia.

1.2.2 To study the survival and the development of Buddhism in Cambodia after the Khmer Rouge Regime and up to 2000 CE.

1.2.3 To study the research findings that can be used to promote Cambodian Buddhism in the future.

---

<sup>13</sup> Indeed, Ieng Sary and Son Sen are not the Khmer people. The original name of Ieng Sary is Kim Trang; he was born in Vietnam in 1930 and so was Son Sen. They are both Vietnamese.

<sup>14</sup> Preap, “A Comparative Study of Thai and Khmer Buddhism”, **Master’s Degree Thesis in Buddhist Studies**, (Graduate School: Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University Press, 2004), p. 102.



### **1.3 Statement of the Problems**

1.3.1 What is the structure and function of Buddhism in Cambodia?

1.3.2 How did Buddhism survive and develop in Cambodia after the Khmer Rouge Regime and up to 2000 CE?

1.3.3 What are the findings from research that can be used to promote Cambodian Buddhism in the future?

### **1.4 The Scope of Study**

1.4.1 Scope of contents: the collected data is about the structure and the function of Buddhism in Cambodia, and the survival and the development of Buddhism in Cambodia after the Khmer Rouge Regime and up to 2000 CE.

1.4.2 Scope of areas: Siem Reap and Banteay Meanchey provinces where the in depth-interviews were conducted with 10 key informants who had experienced the Khmer Rouge Regime.

1.4.3 Scope of time frames: from 23rd August, 2012 to 19th March, 2013 CE.

### **1.5 Definition of Terms used in the Thesis**

1.5.1 **Khmer Rouge** refers to the group of people who took power over Cambodia from 1975 to 1979 C.E. The regime was led by Pol Pot under his power. The official name of the country was changed to Democratic Kampuchea and at least, a million Cambodians, out of a total population of 8 millions died from executions, overworking, starvation and diseases.

1.5.2 **Pol Pot** refers to a leader of Khmer Rouge, he was one of the most ruthless dictators in modern history. Before known as Saloth Sar who led the Khmer Rouge from 1963 until his death in 1998. From 1963 to 1981, he served as the General Secretary of the Communist Party of Kampuchea. From 1976 to 1979, he also served as the prime minister of Democratic Kampuchea.

1.5.3 **The People's Republic of Kampuchea** refers to the former Cambodia's name that was founded by the Salvation Front. After the overthrow of Democratic Kampuchea, Pol Pot's government by an invasion from the Vietnamese forces and the People's Republic of Kampuchea was established.

1.5.4 **Theravada Buddhism** refers to one of the main Buddhist sects that adhere to doctrine of the elders that emerged in the first century of the Buddhist era. Today, Theravada Buddhism is the national religion under the constitution of Cambodia that is practised by 95 percent of the Cambodian population.

1.5.5 **The Survival of Cambodian Buddhism** is referred to revival of Buddhism after the Khmer Rouge regime (1975 to 1979 C.E.), that there were politics, society, economy and education in the country have been the important factors to be the variability for restoration of Buddhism in Cambodia.

1.5.6 **The Development of Cambodian Buddhism** refers to the development of Buddhism after the withdrawal of the Vietnamese army from Cambodia in 1989 C.E. The religious restriction which established by the pre-government was left out. Finally, the government provides the freedom for monk ordination, from then on, the number of monks increased rapidly in the country. This result leads to the development of *Saṅgha* administration, Buddhist education, and other necessary things in order to respond the development of Buddhism in the county.

1.5.7 **Mohanikay and Thommayut** are the Buddhist monastic orders that adapted from Thailand to Cambodia since the 1855. Now, in Cambodia the *Mohanikay* is the majority of monks population and the *Thommayut* is the minority of monks population in the country, and the *Thommayut Saṅgha* is generally patronage by the royal family and connects with *Dhammyut* order in Thailand.

1.5.8 **H.H. Tep Vong** refers to a Cambodian Buddhist monk, currently the Great Supreme Patriarch of Cambodia. He was the youngest of seven senior monks re-ordained under Vietnamese supervision in 1979 in order to the re-established the Cambodian *Saṅgha*.

1.5.9 **H.H. Bour Kry** refers to the seventh and current Supreme Patriarch of the *Thommayut* order of Cambodia. Bour Kry managed to flee during the Khmer Rouge regime and later in 1991 King Norodom Sihanouk appointed him to be the head of *Thommayut* order with the title of Supreme Patriarch.

## 1.6 Research Methodology

This is the qualitative research; my research methodology was carried out step-wise as follows:

1.6.1 Document research with primary and secondary sources, all the sources were based on English, Thai and Khmer scripts related to Buddhism in Cambodia. Journals, texts, magazines and general articles were used.

1.6.2 In-depth interviews with 10 key informants. In order to obtain reliable information, I chose particular informants who had really experienced life in the Khmer Rouge and post-Khmer Rouge regimes.

1.6.3 Analysis of data collected from documents and in-depth interviews with key informants.

1.6.4 Presentation of research findings, with detailed explanations, conclusions, and suggestion for further research.

## 1.7 Review of the Related Literature

1.7.1 Ian Harris, **Cambodian Buddhism: History and Practice**, USA: University of Hawaii Press, 2005. The gradual reemergence and recovery of organized Buddhism after the darkness of the Pol Pot years was slow, in part because of its ideological manipulation by the new Vietnamese-backed government but also because of the very high proportion of educated monks who had lost their lives under the Khmer Rouge. Nevertheless, the monastic order's importance in conferring legitimacy on the regime was recognized by the new authorities, and this helped the order gain a toehold within the political system that prevailed in the early years of the 1980s. Great changes following the breakup of the Soviet Union and the withdrawal of Vietnam from the country at the end of that decade, combined with the impact that preparations for the internationally monitored 1993 elections brought in their wake, meant that the *Saṅgha* was now able to restore its prerevolutionary institutional forms, even though the situation had become somewhat more complicated by the thoroughgoing politicization of the ecclesiastical hierarchy in the immediate post-DK period. Influential monks who had survived from the 1970s, admittedly little more than a handful, also felt unconstrained when it came to reigniting old controversies, especially those loosely clustered around the twin poles of modernism and traditionalism. Current factionalism within the monastic order needs be read in this light.

No form of Buddhism came so close to total extinction as that in Cambodia during the late 1970s, and given the recent histories of religious persecution in other regions of East and central Asia, that is saying quite a lot. Since that nadir, Khmer Buddhism has gradually learned to adapt and prosper as its social controls were first gradually relaxed and then finally disappeared. In fact, adaptation to a great variety of political contexts - colonial, monarchical, socialist, republican, or doctrinaire Marxist - has been a marked feature of its history over the last century and a half. On the evidence of this short survey, it may be no exaggeration to assert that an accommodating spirit has been an intrinsic feature of Cambodian Buddhism since its inception. The visible presence of the *Saṅgha* and its unique significance as the only institution able to operate effectively and with high levels of mass support throughout the whole of the country have ensured that almost all governments have felt the need to cultivate the Buddhist sector, whatever their political philosophy. There is little reason to assume that this situation will change in the near future.<sup>15</sup>

1.7.2 Ian Harris, **Buddhism and Politics: in Twentieth-Century Asia**, UK: British Library Press, 1999. When the Phnom Penh fell to the Vietnamese in January 1979 there were only 100 ordained Cambodian monks in existence; most of these in Vietnamese or Thai exile. The new government of the People Republic's of Kampuchea (PRK) was installed by the Vietnamese, and they needed to bolster legitimacy but, since Sihanouk quickly entered into an opposition Coalition Government of the Democratic Kampuchea (CGDK) with the Khmer Rouge and other anti-Vietnamese groups, it was unable to play the monarchist card. It therefore turned to the *Saṅgha*. The Vietnam-backed government made the partial restoration of Buddhism one of its first acts on coming to power. International approval for this policy was sought and a delegation of the pro-communist Asian Buddhist Conference for Peace visited the country at President Heng Samrin's invitation in April 1979.

Ordination in the early post-Khmer Rouge period proved difficult. Assembling a full quorum of monks for the valid rites was an impossibility. Some took to shaving their heads and wearing white and in

---

<sup>15</sup> Ian Harris, **Cambodian Buddhism: History and Practice**, (USA: University of Hawaii Press, 2005), pp. 229-230.

this way, Buddhist ceremonies, particularly those commemorating the dead, were performed. In September 1979, seven carefully chosen former monks were reordained with government approval at *Wat Unnalom* by a Vietnamese monastic contingent. Despite a more positive attitude to Buddhism, the PRK moved cautiously. It forbade the ordination of monks below the age of fifty, ostensibly to maximize economic production but actually to prevent any significant revival. However, a First National Buddhist Monk's Conference in May 1982 estimated that there were 2,311 monks in 1821 monasteries at that time, suggesting a decrease of 60,000 monks under the Khmer Rouge. The monastic order increased from around 7,250 in 1987 to 16,400 in 1990 when the previous religious restrictions were abolished. And much of this growth, plus a program of monastery reconstruction, was financed by overseas Cambodians.<sup>16</sup>

1.7.3 Yang Sam, **Khmer Buddhism and Politics from 1954 to 1984**, USA: Khmer Buddhist Institute, 1987. Under the pretext of saving the Khmer people from the hell of Pol Pot, Vietnam invaded Cambodia and took over Phnom Penh on January 17, 1979. A government backed by Vietnam with Heng Samrin as the President was installed. Despite encouragement from the Heng Samrin government, the process of restoring Buddhism has indeed been difficult. Although the current government seems to be concerned with rehabilitation, the development of Buddhism had been closely monitored. The state been directly involved in its planning to insure that religion will not impair national recovery. In order to control the growth of the monk population, the government issued a regulation forbidding male adults under 50 years old of age to enter the monkhood. The reason given was the drastic decrease in male population (40 percent of the total population); furthermore, if the number of monks swelled out of proportion, there would be a shortage of young active adults in the workforce. Also, the still weak economy would have difficulty in supporting an increased number of monks.

According to the report of the First National Buddhist Monk Conference, 1821 monasteries were opened in 1982, accommodating a total of 2,311 monks. Among these, 800 were believed to be former monks. This figure indicates that more than 60,000 monk had been eliminated under the Khmer Rouge period. However, old scriptures and religious books which remained in good condition have been gathered. A

---

<sup>16</sup> Ian Harris, **Buddhism and Politics: in twentieth-century Asia**, (UK: British Library Press, 1999), pp. 66-68.

number of foreign Buddhist organizations who visited the country have offered financial assistance and printing equipment for the reproduction of old materials. The Japanese delegation brought back to Phnom Penh a large quantity of Buddhist institute publications they had collected in the past. Part of these also consisted of a whole collection of the translated *Tipiṭaka*.<sup>17</sup>

1.7.4 Son Soubert, et al, **Buddhism and the Future of Cambodia**, Rithisen, Thailand: Khmer Buddhist Research Center Press, 1986. The invasion by Vietnam and takeover of Phnom Penh on 7th January 1979 marked the end of Khmer Rouge rule. A government backed by Vietnam with Heng Samrin as President was installed. The Heng Samrin Government's policy concerning Buddhism has been, on the surface, more positive than that of Khmer Rouge. It has shown its concern for the controlled restoration of Buddhism. But the development of Buddhism has been closely monitored and kept subservient to the State. The State has carefully planned and structured the size and growth of religion. Ordination is not directly discouraged but there are constraints by age that is a male adult under 50 years old is forbidden to enter the monkhood. The Heng Samrin Government has made extensive use of Khmer Buddhism and the *Saṅgha* for politically defined ends. Monks have been urged to join in revolutionary training course where they are indoctrinated in Vietnamese and Russian communism.

The monks have to adapt and adjust their role and reinterpret the teachings of the Buddha to suit the revolutionary beliefs, practices, programs and policies of the Government. Monks must keep strictly in line with the Government policy. The organization and administration of the *Saṅgha* is also tightly controlled by the Government. The *Thommayut* and *Mohānikāya* sects are now merged into one order. The high ranking administrative monks are political appointees and play an important role in revolutionary activities. However, the ordination is closely controlled by local authorities. Monks do not have much freedom of mobility. Religious rituals and ceremonies are also subjected to control.<sup>18</sup>

---

<sup>17</sup> Yang Sam, **Khmer Buddhism and Politics from 1954 to 1984**, (USA: Khmer Buddhist Institute, 1987), pp. 80-82.

<sup>18</sup> Son Soubert, et al, **Buddhism and the Future of Cambodia, Rithisen**, (Thailand: Khmer Buddhist Research Center Press, 1986), pp. 122-125.

1.7.5 Alexandra Kent & David Chandler, ed, **People of virtue: Reconfiguring Religion, Power and Morality in Cambodia Today**, Malaysia: Nordic Institute of Asian Studies Press, 2008. After the Khmer Rouge regime, the Buddhist practices that reappeared in Cambodia in the 1980s were not the same as those of the pre-war time. The socialist government set age restrictions for ordination, prohibiting men less than 50 years of age from becoming monks. Monks were not to be differentiated according to sect. The great majority of damaged temple buildings were not yet reconstructed because of the economic difficulties in the country at the time. Buddhist activities in Cambodia did not undergo significant revitalization until 1989. In this year, the post-socialist government declared Theravada Buddhism once again the state religion. The number of monks and novices increased dramatically after the abolition of the ordination age restriction in the same year. The re-establishment of the two sects of the national *Saṅgha*, the *Mohanikāya* and the *Thommayut*, took place upon the return of King Norodom Sihanouk to the country in 1991. The restoration of public order after the election in 1993 clearly contributed to the revitalization of various religious activities in rural areas. Finally, in mid 1990, with the improvements in security and the expansion of economic activities, the floodgates of temple reconstruction in rural Cambodia were opened. Cambodian people explain the construction of temple buildings as an act of merit making.<sup>19</sup>

1.7.6 Phra Raphin Duangloi, “A Study on the Status of the Cambodian Saṅgha, 1975-1989”, (*Kansueksa Sathanaphap Khong Phrasong Kamphucha Rawang Khoso 1975 - 1989*), **Master’s Degree Thesis in Asian History**, Graduate School: Srinakharinwirot University Press, 2002.

It is clear that communism was the cause of the decline of Buddhism in Cambodia during 1975-1989. The status of Buddhist monks changed unfavorably in the area of education, governance, teaching, and social welfare. Apparently, the Khmer Rouge’s harsh method of forcing monks to break their vows and lead a layman’s life was a big blow to the Buddhist institution. Monks had to take part in economic development as part of the labor force given the Khmer Rouge’s philosophy, “if one does

---

<sup>19</sup> Alexandra Kent, ed, **People of virtue: Reconfiguring Religion, Power and Morality in Cambodia Today**, (Malaysia: Nordic Institute of Asian Studies Press, 2008), p. 170.

not work, ones does not have anything to eat.” Although monks were eventually allowed to enter the monkhood under the Heng Samrin government, the situation hardly improved given the condition, set by the state that “monks had to support the revolution.” Communism and the intervention by foreign powers resulted in political turmoil and had an adverse effect on Buddhism, the monks and the society as a whole. Moreover, the political conflict ended in a civil war that lasted for 10 years, and the resultant economic hardship also contributed significantly to the decline of Buddhism in Cambodia. Although the two communist regimes treated monks differently, they both sought to wipe out the influence of Buddhism in Cambodia and, they undoubtedly tremendously undermined the Cambodian *Saṅgha*.<sup>20</sup>

1.7.7 Samsopheap Preap, “A Comparative Study of Thai and Khmer Buddhism,” **Master’s Degree Thesis in Buddhist Studies**, Graduate School: Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University Press, 2004. The invasion by Vietnam and the takeover of Phnom Penh on January 17, 1979 marked the end of the Khmer Rouge rule. A government backed by Vietnam with Heng Samrin as President was installed. The Heng Samrin government’s policy concerning Buddhism has been, on the surface, more positive than that of the Khmer Rouge. Ordination is not directly discouraged but there are constraints by age. That is, a male adult under 50 years old is forbidden to enter the monkhood. The government asserts that this is due to the 40 percent decrease in the male population. If the number of monks swelled out of proportion, there would be a shortage of young active adults in the work force. The devout Khmer Buddhists construe the government’s policy relating to the religion as a way to weaken Buddhism in the long run. In addition to allowing limited ordinations, the government has shown its intention to repair damaged monasteries and religious statues.

The condition of Buddhism under the Heng Samrin government seems more relaxed than it was under Khmer Rouge. The author is of the opinion that what the Vietnamese and the Heng Samrin government have been doing for Buddhism and the *Saṅgha* is just a stage play and a part of the regime’s political mobilization for mass participation of the Khmer

---

<sup>20</sup> Phra Raphin Duangloi, “A Study on the Status of the Cambodian Saṅgha, 1975-1989”, (*Kansueksa Sathanaphap Khong Phrasong Kamphucha Rawang Khoso 1975 - 1989*), **Master’s Degree Thesis in Asian History**, (Graduate School: Srinakharinwirot University Press, 2002), pp. 110-112.



Buddhists. Buddhism is struggling to re-establish itself, but the lack of Buddhist scholars and leaders and continuing political instability is making the task difficult. Khmer Buddhism is in the long process of rebuilding her own Buddhist institutions and developing the monks as national resources.<sup>21</sup>

1.7.8 Un Sovanny, “The Buddhist Monks’ Role in Development of Buddhist Education in Cambodia” **Master’s Degree Thesis in Buddhist Studies**, Graduate School: Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University Press, 2010. Historical obstacles that interfered in the development of Buddhist education were the French Colonial period and the Khmer Rouge Regime. The latter is known to almost every country in the world that. Cambodia faced tragic problems. During this period there was a great loss of human resource development and ancient heritage. However, after this regime was removed, Cambodia started to re-establish human resource development and the nations has been developing slowly but steadily.

Following the terrible period of the Khmer Rouge, *Theravada* Buddhism has gradually developed in Cambodia owing to the strenuous efforts of Buddhist monks and lay people who are attentively practicing it. To develop the society, Buddhist monks and lay people are actively observing the Buddhist teachings, which provide a fundamental basis for peaceful society. In addition, the monasteries are once again regarded as places for religious ceremonies, cultural centers, education centers, hospitals, libraries, national museums, and places for the storage of ancient Khmer literature. At present, Buddhist educational systems can be found in every Buddhist school or university. These systems are often run and managed by Buddhist monks who aim to teach people how to lead their lives in accordance with the Buddha’s teachings.<sup>22</sup>

From the results of reviewed literatures, it is found that after the defeat of the Khmer Rouge by the Vietnamese in 1979, and the establishment of the People’s Republic of Kampuchea, the Buddhist Saṅgha began its slow, halting recovery, with the number of ordained

---

<sup>21</sup> Samsopheap Preap, “A Comparative Study of Thai and Khmer Buddhism”, **Master’s Degree Thesis in Buddhist Studies**, (Graduate School: Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University Press, 2004), p. 103.

<sup>22</sup> Un Sovanny, “The Buddhist Monks’ Role in Development of Buddhist Education in Cambodia” **Master’s Degree Thesis in Buddhist Studies**, (Graduate School: Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University Press, 2010), p. 121.

monks and novices growing significantly after 1989. In April 1989, the National Assembly of the PRK amended the constitution to make Buddhism once again the national religion of Cambodia. Since the UN brokered settlement in 1991 between the PRK and three competing Cambodian factions, the withdrawal of Vietnamese forces, and the first elections in May of 1993, the conditions of Khmer Buddhism have continued to improve.

At the state level, the Ministry of Cults and Religion was re-established with purpose of reorganizing the pre-1970 ecclesiastical structure, developing a plan for monastic education, re-establishing the Buddhist Institutes, and engaging in the task of recovering and reconstructing the legacy of Buddhist literature lost or destroyed. As a result, Buddhism has once again resumed a central role in Cambodian social and political life. Politicians seek the blessing of high-ranking monks, much as they do in Thailand. Monks are invited to chant at large public gatherings, and customary religious practices have resumed their places in community life. According to my present research work on “the survival and the development of Cambodian Buddhism after Khmer Rouge regime up to 2000 CE.” it is the new work that never done by any researcher. Therefore, it has been the inspiration and the challenge for me to work on this matter.

## **1.8 Expected Benefits of the Study**

After doing this Research, the following benefits and outcomes can be expected.

1.8.1 To know and understand the structure and the function of Buddhism in Cambodia.

1.8.2 To know and understand the survival and development of Buddhism in Cambodia after the Khmer Rouge Regime and up to 2000 CE.

1.8.3 To know and understand the findings from the research that can be used to promote Cambodian Buddhism in the future.

## **CHAPTER: II**

### **THE STRUCTURE AND FUNCTION OF BUDDHISM IN CAMBODIA**

#### **2.1 The Structure of Buddhism in Cambodia**

*Theravada* Buddhism of the Sinhalese form probably began to penetrate into Cambodia during the thirteenth century, carried there mainly by Mons, and perhaps to a lesser extent by the encroaching Thai. The historical records are not altogether clear as to the exact processes or chronology involved in the gradual supplanting of *Mahayana*, but by the mid-fourteenth century, Cambodia had been converted to *Theravada* Buddhism and was even proselytizing its neighbor, Laos. At the present time, *Theravada* Buddhism is the state religion of Cambodia, and is practiced by the 95 percent or more of the population who are Khmer or Cambodians proper. At the national level, the king is the symbolic leader of the Buddhists and includes in his advisory Crown Council the heads of the two Buddhist Orders.<sup>23</sup>

There are two main institutions that steer Buddhist affairs at the national level in Cambodia: the *Saṅgha*, which can be translated as ‘association’ or ‘community,’ and refers to a monastic community of monks and nuns; and the Ministry of Cults and Religions (MoCR). The Cambodian *Saṅgha* structure has various functions, but among the most important one is its role in managing matters of monastic discipline. The MoCR is primarily responsible for the administrative dimensions associated with the managing of the country’s temple system and other Buddhist institutions, including the Buddhist educational system.

##### **2.1.1 The Cambodian Saṅgha Orders**

In Cambodia today, Buddhism is of two fraternal Orders, the *Thommayut* and *Mohanikay*. The *Thommayut* monastic order developed

---

<sup>23</sup> Ebihara, “Interrelations between Buddhism and Social Systems in Cambodian Peasant Culture”, in Manning Nash et al. (eds) **Anthropological studies in Theravada Buddhism**,(Yale University: Graduate School. Southeast Asia Studies Press, 1966), p. 175.

as a reform movement in Thailand, and the sect adopted a *Pāli* language canon and a renewed dedication to asceticism (adhering more strictly to the *Vinaya* monastic code). Introduced into Cambodia in 1855 CE, under the patronage of King Ang Duong, it is still associated with the monarchy and aristocratic elements in Cambodian society. The *Thommayut* is largely an urban phenomenon, with wats primarily located in Phnom Penh and provincial capitals. The *Mohanikay* order is based on much older Cambodian Buddhist traditions. In part because of its history and wider influence, the *Mohanikay* order comprises about 97 percent (54,861) of the country's ordained monks. The remaining 1,443 belong to the *Thommayut*.<sup>24</sup> There are only a few aspects of dress and behavior that superficially distinguished the monks of the two orders. The *Thommayut* robes are a mustard yellow color, while the *Mohanikay* robes range in shades from bright orange to dark red. There are currently 4,307 *Mohanikay* temples and 159 *Mohanikay* temples in the country.<sup>25</sup>

There is no real doctrinal difference between the *Mohanikay* and the *Thommayut*; only some variances as to specific rules of behavior for monks. According to the villagers themselves, the only distinction between the two lines is in some details of their everyday actions. The *Mohanikay* monks carry their alms bowls in their hands, recite *Pāli* with non-Cambodian pronunciation, will not accept objects directly from the hands of a woman, cannot go anywhere unaccompanied by another male, do not attend movies or the theater, and cannot carry money. The *Mohanikay*, on the other hand, carry their bowls suspended from the shoulder, recite *Pāli* with Cambodian pronunciation, and presumably can perform the other acts of behavior prohibited to the *Thommayut*. The villagers usually conclude that “they are really both the same,”<sup>26</sup> and a number of families often attend both Wats with equal frequency.

Each *Wat* has its own community consisting of (1) the monks (*look song*) themselves, designated by various terms according to their position in the temple hierarchy, (2) the temple boys (*Konsuh look*) ranging from about seven to twelve years of age, who are given by their parents to stay at the temple and assist the monks in various ways; (3) one or two *Achar*, a sort of lay priest who does not reside at the temple but

---

<sup>24</sup> Ministry of Cults and Religions (Cambodia), “National Religious Statistics 2010”, <<http://www.mocar.gov.kh>>, accessed August 13, 2012.

<sup>25</sup> Ebihara, Op. cit., p. 175.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., p. 176.

acts a liaison between the monks and laymen, and who leads the congregation in prayers and chants at ceremonies; and (4) several laymen, often elderly, who live temporarily at the temple to earn merit through performance of various tasks for the monks, and through prayer and meditation.

### 2.1.2 The Saṅgha Hierarchy

In the mid-20th century the ecclesiastic structure of Cambodian Buddhism was reformed and reorganized under the influence of modern bureaucratic arrangements imported from outside of Cambodia. This was done in part to bring the Buddhist structure in line with the new administrative units in the country. The hierarchy established in this era more or less remains today, despite the upheavals of the Khmer Rouge period. Each province has one provincial chief monk (*Mekun*) and each district within that province a District Chief Monk (*Anukun*). The head monks (*Chau atikar*)<sup>27</sup> of all the wats within a district vote for a District Chief Monk, and the District Chief monks in turn vote to elect a Provincial Chief Monk. Ultimately these appointees must be approved by the order's Supreme Patriarch. The positions of *Mekun* and *Anukun* within the national hierarchy depend on the importance of their constituent units. To be eligible for these senior appointments, a monk must have spent a minimum of 20 rainy season retreats in the monastic order.

A group of high-ranking monks (*Komnankhet*) form an inner cabinet and act as a bridge between the Supreme Patriarchs and the Provincial Chief Monks; their roles are similar to an inspector general's. Every January, the Provincial Chief Monks and the *Komnankhet* meet in Phnom Penh at the *Chaktomuk* conference hall.<sup>28</sup> The topics discussed usually pertain to administrative or disciplinary matters; if and when development activities become an issue, the matter is taken up in context.

---

<sup>27</sup> The head monk has two assistant monks (kru sot of the right and of the left) who are in the management of the temple and in the conduct of services, monks (piku), and novices (samne or nen).

<sup>28</sup> The Chaktomuk Conference Hall is primarily to provide international-standard facilities for conferences. Subject to programming it is still utilized from time to time as a theatre venue, but only for special programmes organized directly by the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts.

There is a system of Buddhist courts at the wat at the district, provincial and national levels. These bodies are headed by head monks, district chief monks, provincial chief monks and Supreme Patriarchs respectively. The Supreme Council at the national level is the ultimate authority in matters of monastic discipline and the only body that can defrock a monk.

### 2.1.3 The Supreme Patriarchs

At the top of the ecclesiastic hierarchy is the Supreme Patriarch. The Supreme Patriarch is the effective leader of the Buddhist community. He has legal authority to oversee the country's monastic clergy. Cambodia has had two Supreme Patriarchs since 1991 CE, when then King Sihanouk re-established the *Thommayut* order and appointed the Venerable Bour Kry as its Supreme Patriarch. The Supreme Patriarch of the *Mohanikay* order, the Venerable Tep Vong, was elevated in 2006 CE, to the status of Great Supreme Patriarch, giving him authority over both orders. The bestowing of this new title on the Venerable Tep Vong is viewed by some people as politically motivated, as it gives the CPP affiliated monk greater authority over the Cambodian *Saṅgha*.<sup>29</sup>

The Venerables Tep Vong and Bour Kry are each assisted by a director monk who liaises with the MoCR on many administrative matters. For example, the Supreme Patriarch and the Minister of Cults and Religions must sign and stamp their approval of a change in title of any monk, while Venerable Tep Vong, the Minister of Cults and Religions, and Prime Minister must approve the appointment of district or provincial chief monks.

For example, international development partners need to secure the approval of the Supreme Patriarchs in order to involve monks in development programs, especially when they are to be involved in controversial topics (such as HIV and AIDS issues,<sup>30</sup> land rights, and environmental monitoring, as opposed to more routine and accepted activities like education). While all development initiatives that involve

---

<sup>29</sup> Harris Ian, **Cambodian Buddhism: History and Practice** (Chiang Mai: Silkworm Books Press, 2005), p. 215.

<sup>30</sup> Human immunodeficiency virus infection / acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS) is a disease of the human immune system caused by the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).

monks must be approved by the MoCR, on certain topics, the Ministry will defer to the Supreme Patriarch before making a decision.

#### **2.1.4 The Ministry of Cults and Religions**

Cambodia's Ministry of Cults and Religions is the government body responsible for administrative management of religious affairs. While the Ministry is involved in advising and regulating all major religions in Cambodia, its focus is more directed to the administration of the *Theravada* Buddhist structure. The Ministry structure mirrors the *Sangha* hierarchy, with offices at the district, provincial and national levels. The provincial and district offices of the MoCR are often located on wat grounds.<sup>31</sup> The National Ministry Office is located in Phnom Penh and has 55 permanent staff, while there are over 600 employees at the provincial Departments of Cults and Religions and district offices.

The Ministry does not finance wats directly, but does provide training to wat committees on basic financial management skills and fundraising strategies. The Ministry and its provincial Departments also organize regular training sessions for monks and collaborate closely with the Great Supreme Patriarch Venerable Tep Vong, the Supreme Patriarch of the *Mohanikay*, the Venerable Ngon Net, and the Supreme Patriarch of *Thommayut*, Venerable Bour Kry on issues related to monk ordination and monastic elections.

The MoCR has worked directly with multilateral development partners in the past, notably UNICEF, in the area of HIV prevention, care and support. In 2002 CE, the MoCR was the first ministry in Cambodia to officially adopt a sector policy on HIV/AIDS, a document known as the Policy on Religious Response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Cambodia. Since then only two other ministries have adopted similar policies: the Ministry of Women and Veterans Affairs and the Ministry of Social Affairs, Labor, and Youth Rehabilitation. The Policy on Religious Response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Cambodia was developed by the MoCR in conjunction with UNICEF and a group of the country's most

---

<sup>31</sup> World Faith Development Dialogue, "Buddhism and Development: Communities in Cambodia Working as Partners", <<http://berkeleycenter.georgetown.edu/wfdd/publications/buddhism-and-development-communities-in-cambodia-working-as-partners>>, accessed August 13, 2012, p. 17.

senior monks. UNICEF has supported policy implementation in selected communes in 10 provinces, and in these provinces Provincial Department of Cults and Religions offices have appointed staff specifically to help coordinate the Buddhist response to HIV at the sub-national level. The MoCR also manages the country's Buddhist education system in which monks study, and mandates its curriculum.

Each Provincial Department of Cults and Religions (DoCR) facility has four offices; the Office of Religion, the Office of Education, the Office of Administration and the Library. Each Provincial DoCR has one director and two deputy directors, one responsible for the offices of Religion and Administration and the other for Education. The Provincial DoCR library houses works that are related to religion and other subjects, which are provided for the public's reference.

## 2.2 The Functions of Buddhism in Cambodia

The *Theravada* Buddhism temple, in prerevolutionary Cambodia, was a central fixture in the Khmer village where it functioned not only as a religious shrine but also as a school, refuge, and social center. Buddhist holy days and life-cycle ceremonies punctuated the Khmer calendar and gave religious meaning to the stages of life. The Buddhist norms of conduct were the important guides for daily behavior.<sup>32</sup>

Moreover, the Buddhist teachings can be understood and tested by anyone. Buddhism teaches that the solutions to our problems are within us, not outside of us. The Buddha asked all his followers not to take his words as true, but rather to test the teaching themselves. In this way, each person can decide for themselves and take responsibility for their own actions and understanding. This makes Buddhism less of a fixed package of beliefs that is to be accepted in its entirety, and more of a teaching that each person learns and uses in their own way. The function and importance of Buddhism in Cambodia is explained in the following section.

---

<sup>32</sup> Smith-Hefner, **Khmer American: Identity and Moral Education in Diasporic Community**, (U.A.S: University of California Press, 1990), p. 21.



### 2.2.1 Buddhism and the Khmer Nation

Cambodia<sup>33</sup> is a Southeast Asian country that borders Thailand, Laos, and Vietnam. Her official name is “Kingdom of Cambodia.” The name of the country has often been changed over the last three decades due to changes in the form of government. Cambodia was a monarchy from ancient times until 1970 CE, when she became a republic. It was only in 1993 CE, that Cambodia could become a Kingdom again by following the adoption of a constitutional parliamentary system. Cambodia is also known as a Buddhist country. In 1960 CE, about 95 percent of the total population was Buddhist. This fact shows that the Cambodian political culture is at heart a combination of Buddhist culture, monarchism and republicanism.

According to the 1993 CE constitution of the Kingdom of Cambodia, “Buddhism shall be the State Religion.” Because of this article, most people identify themselves with the words: “To be a Khmer is to be Buddhist.”<sup>34</sup> As Buddhism is the state religion, the government promotes national Buddhist holidays, provides Buddhist training and education to monks and others in *wats*, and modestly supports an institute that researches and publishes materials on Khmer culture and Buddhist tradition.

Over 95 percent of the populations are *Theravada* Buddhists. The Buddhist tradition is widespread and active in all provinces, with an estimated 4,060 *wats* throughout the country. Virtually, all ethnic Cambodians are Buddhist, and there is a close association between Buddhism, Khmer cultural traditions, and daily life. Adherence to Buddhism is generally considered intrinsic to Cambodian ethnic and cultural identity. Most of the remainder of the population is made up of ethnic Cham Muslims, who are generally located in Phnom Penh and in rural fishing villages in Kompong Cham, Kampong Chhnang, and Kampot provinces. A small Christian community constitutes less than 1 percent of the population. Over 1000 separate Christian organizations or denominations operate freely throughout the country and include over 700 congregations.

---

<sup>33</sup> In the Khmer language “Cambodia” is pronounced as “Kampuchea”. This term comes from the Sanskrit word, “Kampu” which means gold and “Chea” which means birthplace therefore, Kampuchea means the Land of Gold (Sovannaphum).

The Constitution stipulates the freedom of religion and the government respects this right in practice. The law requires all religious groups, especially the Buddhists, to submit applications to the Ministry of Cults and Religion in order to construct places of worship and to conduct religious activities.<sup>35</sup>

However, *Theravada* Buddhism has been part of the traditional Cambodian heritage since the 13th century CE.<sup>36</sup> When it was first practiced in Cambodia, some people kept images of the Buddha that were like images of *Indra*, and they prayed to those images expecting to receive peace, happiness, prosperity and power. It still can be argued that some people in Cambodia still pray to the Buddha in this way. Others however believe that the Buddha is a Great Master (philosopher) and Buddhism is the philosophy of life. Therefore, Buddhism in Cambodia can be seen as philosophy, religion and native belief.<sup>37</sup>

Buddhism plays a secular role in order to lead all humankind to live in equality, justice, peace, and freedom. According to the Buddhist tradition, the *wat* was not only the sacred place but also a school for education. In the past, most Cambodians got their education in the Buddhist temples. The more one was educated, the more one became a Buddhist. Without knowledge, one might stay away from Buddhism.

### 2.2.2 Buddhism and Khmer Culture

The roots of Cambodian culture can be traced back to India. India never colonized Cambodia but its influence there came through diplomatic relations, traders and travelers between the two countries, intermarriages between the Khmer and Indians, and Brahman advisers to the Khmer king at the beginning of the Christian era. Over a thousand years, Cambodia incorporated several aspects of Indian culture in its own.

---

<sup>35</sup> Annual report on international religious freedom, “Department of State in Accordance with section 120 of the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998”, (USA: Joint Committee Print, 2000), pp.161-162.

<sup>36</sup> This is a traditional heritage form the Angkor period (802-1431 A.D) when the King Jayavarman VII (1181-1220 A.D) remodeled the capital of Angkor as a Buddhist kingdom.

<sup>37</sup> Donny Gahril Adian, **Relations between Religions and Cultures in Southeast Asia: Indonesian Philosophical Studies**, Vols. 6, (Jakarta: University of Indonesia, 2009), p. 86.

During this time, the traditional tribal culture was replaced by the Indian monarchic system. The Khmer also borrowed from India a vocabulary for the social hierarchy, a system of codified law, a writing system, meters for poetry, Buddhist concepts and religious teachings which emphasize reverence for life, architecture, iconography, and astronomy.<sup>38</sup> For over 2,000 years, Cambodian history and ideology evolved around Indian cultural concepts and Buddhist teachings that emphasize reverence for all life, nonviolence, an egalitarian outlook, and guidance in secular and spiritual matters by priests.

Buddhist precepts and practices pervade the values and behavior of the populace who have for many centuries accepted Buddhism sincerely and devoutly.<sup>39</sup> Even though the peasantry was divided into distinct classes based on economic worth, people were respected not for social class or material wealth but for displaying, both in action and in word, the good characteristics advocated in Buddhist teachings.<sup>40</sup> These characteristics included generosity and selfless concern with others, warmth and a good-natured temperament, abhorrence of fighting, drinking, fornication, and other sins, devotion to family, industriousness, religious devotion, cooperation with others, and honesty.

This refers to a distinction between good people and bad people. The latter were those who displayed qualities such as selfishness, bad temper, quarrelsomeness, drunkenness, or even worse sins such as thievery, the breaking of the Buddhist precepts, disregard for familial obligations, or dishonesty. Cambodian society also emphasized respect particularly for monks who were the educators and spiritual leaders, learned people, grandparents and parents, and other elders. Personal or community problems were resolved not by legal mean but by monks, elders, or leaders of the community.<sup>41</sup>

---

<sup>38</sup> Urakorn Khajornwit Fuderich, "Beyond Survival: A Study of Factors Influencing Psychological Resilience among Cambodian Child Survivors" **Doctor's Degree Dissertation**, (USA: University of Massachusetts Amherst Amherst Press, 2007), p. 23.

<sup>39</sup> Ebihara, "Interrelations between Buddhism and Social Systems in Cambodian Peasant Culture", p. 68.

<sup>40</sup> Usha Welaratna, **Beyond the Killing Fields: voices of nine Cambodian Survivors in America**, (California: Stanford University Press, 1993), p. 29.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 41.

Legal and cultural duties to family members were based on Buddhist principles and covered such things as parental authority, arrangement of proper marriages for the youths, provision of support in the event of divorce and in old age, inheritance, adoption, guardianship, and provision for proper funeral arrangements. The ideals were passed down through generations via folklore and Buddhist *Jātaka* stories depicting the lives of the Buddha in his earlier incarnations. These ideals were especially strong in the villages because of the subsistence economy which required cooperation among peasants, and because villagers looked to the monks for guidance in secular as well as spiritual matters. They were generally upheld in urban areas, too.

The important of Buddhism in Khmer cultural life is as follows:- Buddhism has deep roots in Khmer traditional society, not only in artistic and cultural life, but it also shapes the personality and mentality of the Khmer people. The *wat* (the temple), the supreme and sacred place of Buddhism, is considered as the pillar of Khmer Society. Everybody spends their life around it. The Khmer *wat* is truly the social, medical, spiritual and artistic center of the Khmer people. All private or socio-economic problems in the community are usually solved in the *wat*. Therefore, during the three-day New Year celebration,<sup>42</sup> Khmers go to the *wat* and bring with them food and other offerings to the Buddhist monks. They ask the monks to recite and preach the Buddha's doctrines. On the third day of the New Year, they give an annual bath not only to Buddha images, but also to the monks, the elderly people and the teachers.<sup>43</sup>

### 2.2.3 Buddhism and the Khmer Way of Life

Buddhism is very important for Cambodian people. Buddhism, as practiced by the majority of Cambodians, has been a unifying force in its creation of a strong sense of national identity. It is one of the basic institutions of society. To most Cambodians, Buddhism is more an expression of the Cambodian way of life than a separate institution of faith. In other words, Buddhism is a system of thought; a way of understanding life. Most Cambodians are *Theravada* Buddhists. The fundamental teaching of the Buddha is that suffering is unavoidable. This 'suffering,' according to the Buddha, is largely caused by the desire to

---

<sup>42</sup> Choul Chnam (Khmer New Year): The Khmer New Year typically falls around April 13-15, at the end of the harvest season and before Cambodia's rainy season begins.

<sup>43</sup> Usha Welaratna, Op. Cit., p. 42.

possess or dominate. In order to alleviate suffering, one has to accept the Four Noble Truths and follow the Eightfold Path.

The Buddhist teachings generally promote a sense of both individual and social responsibility. The aim is to not cause harm to others through one's conduct. Thus, the Buddhist way of life that most lay Khmer people practice starts with the first five precepts of the code of conduct, which are the avoidance of: killing living being, stealing, immoral sexual conduct, lying, and consuming intoxicants. Another important Buddhist guiding principle is the concept of the Middle Way. Simply put, this can be described as acting in non-extreme manner, and pursuing all that life has to offer in moderation.<sup>44</sup>

Moreover, the Khmer people look to the “*Ratana Thrai*,” or the Three Jewels for their spiritual refuge. The Three Jewels are the Buddha, the *Dhamma*, and the *Saṅgha*. The Buddha was not a divine god, but a human being. Though he learned from other teachers, he finally attained enlightenment through his own individual effort.

The *Dhamma* is the teachings of the Buddha. The teachings describe a certain way of life, but there are no mandatory rules and regulations such as attending the temple, giving alms, or even following the precepts. Based on the Buddha's own individual achievements, much importance is attached to individual learning, leading to understanding and conviction that the teachings provide the correct lifestyle.

The *Saṅgha* are the clergy who disseminate Buddha's teachings to laypeople. They reside in temples, and follow rules of honesty and sobriety that are more exacting than those expected of the laypeople. Cambodians hold the *Saṅgha* in the highest esteem, and regard them as exemplars of Buddhist values and as educators.

Women are not ordained, but many women, especially widows, become nuns in their advanced years. They shave their heads and eyebrows, wear white robes, and may live in the temple or in their own homes. They generally follow the precepts given by monks and play an important role in everyday life at the temple.

---

<sup>44</sup> Urakorn Khajornwit Fuderich, “Beyond Survival: A Study of Factors Influencing Psychological Resilience among Cambodian Child Survivors”, pp. 23-24.

At a secular level, the Buddhist teacher tries to promote a sense of both individual and social responsibility; such teachers encourage their students to avoid causing harm or fear to in others through their conduct. The Buddhist way of life for laypeople starts at a young age with the first five precepts. Cause and effects and other key concepts important to daily life are taught to children by the monks, the teachers, and the elders. Children are guided to develop nonviolent, nonaggressive, cooperative, and tolerant habits through an emphasis on “the avoidance of causing suffering, self-discipline and improvement, humility, temperance, non-accumulation of wealth, and harmonious relations with others.” Although social expectations exert a certain pressure on people to live according to the teachings, people vary in their behavior depending on their individual commitment and their effort in living according to the precepts.<sup>45</sup>

#### **2.2.4 Buddhism and Khmer Beliefs**

The majority of Cambodians or Khmers identify themselves as *Theravada* Buddhists. It is not uncommon to hear Khmer people suggest that being Khmer means being Buddhist. The ideas and practices of Buddhism are fundamental to the definition of Khmer culture. Buddhist ideas underlie history, art, literature, education, shared moral values, and ritual practices. The exercise of political power, too, remains at least symbolically link to Buddhism.<sup>46</sup> Buddhism is described as a system of thought, a way of understanding life, an analysis of mental processes, and a series of well constructed arguments which point towards the adoption of certain attitudes, values and practices that may create the conditions for a new vision of human life and purpose.

The Khmer people believe in *Kamma*; the idea that human action has consequences. The law of *Kamma*, a basic Buddhist doctrine, states that each individual has free will and can act in a virtuous or an evil way; in addition, the universe operates according to a law by which virtue is rewarded and evil is punished, whether in this, previous, or subsequent life. Acts committed in previous lives affect one’s situation in this life

---

<sup>45</sup> Usha Welaratna, **Beyond the Killing Fields: Voices of Nine Cambodian Survivors in America**, p. 34.

<sup>46</sup> Marshall Cavendish, **World and Its Peoples: Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam, Eastern and Southern Asia**, (China: Marshall Cavendish Corporation Press, 2008), p. 776.

and acts committed in this life will affect one's situation in a future life.<sup>47</sup> Therefore, past actions (good and bad) determine the current life circumstances (*kamma*), and proper behavior, humble attitude and merit-making can improve one's path in this life and subsequent rebirths. Human life is explained as essentially social in character, connected through these interlocking and reciprocal relationships.

In a way, social inequalities in Cambodia are accepted as the consequences of the "load of merits or demerits" of previous lives. One was born poor because of the bad deeds he or she committed in a previous life. As the life in the present birth cannot be changed, the measure of man's emotional development is his reaction to his circumstances. Such an attitude stifles the desire to succeed at the expense of another and encourages the Cambodian to accept his situation, whatever that may be. Because of this somewhat passive resignation, Buddhism in Cambodia has become very tolerant of all religions.<sup>48</sup>

Buddhism is a part of Khmer life that never vanished from the hearts of the Cambodian people even during the dark years of Khmer Rouge. There are parallels between modern ideas like democracy, human rights, and good governance and the ancient teachings of the Buddha on treating other people with respect and kindness. The principle of non-violence (*Avihimsā*) means to do no harm to others. Besides the initial five Buddhist precepts to not kill, steal, lie, commit sexual immorality and ingest intoxicants, four other Buddhist principles of interpersonal behavior are relevant: loving-kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy and equanimity. These ideas, which are integral parts of Buddhism, are familiar and acceptable to all Cambodians, including the nation's leaders. The Buddhist teachings are much loved by Khmers, and they are an indispensable component of the fabric of daily life.<sup>49</sup>

---

<sup>47</sup> May Mayko Ebihara, **Cambodian Culture Since 1975: Homeland and Exile**, (USA: Cornell University Press, 1994), p. 79.

<sup>48</sup> Gerard Ravasco, "Towards a Christian Pastoral Approach to Cambodian Culture", **Master Degree of Theology in Missiology**, (Africa: Sa Theological Seminary Press, 2004), pp. 75-76.

<sup>49</sup> John Witte, **Religion and Human Rights: An Introduction**, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), p. 104.

### 2.2.5 The Buddhist Temple and Khmer People

Traditional Cambodian culture is centered on the daily activities of the *wat*, the Khmer word for Buddhist temple. The *wat* was not only the religious center, but also the social and educational center of village life. The Buddhist monks served laypeople in many ways, including providing psychological support and relief. The establishment of *wats* was critical for the emotional and mental health of all Cambodians.<sup>50</sup>

The temple serves obviously as a moral-religious focal point, integrating the villagers within its congregation into a religious community through the shared norms and common participation in rituals. The temple also reinforces or creates bonds between individuals in the course of performing other functions for Khmer people. For example, while attendance at Buddhist festivals is a way to earn merit, these events and the temple are also the primary centers for social gatherings and entertainment in the countryside. The major annual ceremonies are eagerly anticipated months in advance as they punctuate the drab cycle of rice cultivation, and they bring together people from many different villages; they bring together people from near and far. For many, these festivals are of the few reasons for travel to other regions.

The adults thus have an opportunity to visit and gossip with acquaintances not usually encountered in the ordinary course of daily life. The festival is also a chance for adolescent boys and girls to see and to be seen by one another, and the overtly casual disdainful glances exchanged at temple festivals often lead to marriage offers and village exogamy. The temple schools are another means whereby individuals from different villages may be drawn together into friendship.<sup>51</sup> Then, the temple not only serves as a major focus of loyalty, but also offers opportunities for actual assemblages of and interactions among the individuals within its orbit.

### 2.2.6 Buddhist Monks and Khmer Society

The main task of Buddhist monks in a community is to preserve and practice the teachings of the Buddha. The Buddha himself had indicated that the survival of the teachings depended upon the existence

---

<sup>50</sup> Susan Needam, **Cambodians in Long Beach**, (U.S: Arcadia Publishing Press, 2008), p. 33.

<sup>51</sup> Ebihara, "Interrelations between Buddhism and Social Systems in Cambodian Peasant Culture", p. 187.



of the *Saṅgha* community, whose members can devote all their time and energy to this important task. Having accomplished this, they can use their learning and wisdom to help societies as a whole. As the Buddha stated, “Go ye forth, monks, for the benefit of the many folk, for the happiness of the many folk, out of compassion for the world, for the welfare, the benefit, the happiness of gods and men.”<sup>52</sup> This instruction was given by the Buddha to the 60 *Arahants* when he sent them out on their *Dhamma* mission. These words of the Buddha should be heeded by civil servants whose mission is to render service ‘for the benefit of the many folks, for the happiness of the many folks, out of compassion for the world.’ Cambodian monks play many important roles and perform various functions in Khmer society, and I will discuss some of their roles and functions in the next section.

**1. The Monks as Spiritual Leaders:** The monks maintain close day-to-day relationships with all sorts of people. They are the refuges and meritorious fields of the lay people. They can give good advice and find ways to solve the problems in the Khmer society. As the monks are devoted to spiritual development, their duties and responsibilities are centered on the spirituality.<sup>53</sup>

**2. The Monks as Social workers:** The monks often act as social workers; they work for the promotion and propagation of Buddhism in order to help people and society find peace and happiness.<sup>54</sup> They have been also working towards the development of a peaceful society and the benefits of the lay people. Most of the time, they look for new ways to enhance the Cambodian society by establishing various projects to help the Cambodian people. They are especially focusing on the poor, the sick and orphans. This tradition is said to have originated at the time of the Buddha and in the course of time, the monasteries have become places where the destitute, the orphans, and students live, obtain sufficient food, and receive moral and educational training from the monks.<sup>55</sup>

---

<sup>52</sup> I. B. Horner (tr.), **The Book of the Discipline**, (Vinaya Pitaka), Vol. 1., (London: Oxford University Press, 1938), p. 20.

<sup>53</sup> Un Sovanny, “The Buddhist Monks Roles in Development of Buddhist Education in Cambodia” **Master’s Degree Thesis in Buddhist Studies**, (Graduate School: Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya Press, 2010), p. 58.

<sup>54</sup> Phra Rajavaramuni, **Vision of the Dhamma, A Collection of Buddhist Writing in English**. (Bangkok: Wat Nyanavesakavan Press, 2007), p. 22.

<sup>55</sup> Un Sovanny, Op. cit., p. 62.

3. **The Monks as Educators:** The monks have been playing significant roles in promoting, developing and solving of social problems by following the Buddhist teachings. Actually they have their own duties to do at their temples, but beside this they are also involved in helping the laity. Nowadays there are many Buddhist projects which are performed by the monks in order to educate the people to understand the Buddhist teachings.<sup>56</sup>

4. **The Monks as Doctors:** There has been a strong Cambodian tradition, at some monasteries, of monks as healers. One example of this is senior monk Chao *Athikar*,<sup>57</sup> who has been helping sick people, from local and other areas, using traditional healing methods. This has usually happened in the country side, because there are not many clinics or hospitals there. Most of the methods that the monks use to cure people are traditional methods. The people seek treatment at the temple because it is cheap and they trust the monks who are of pure and good morality, and do not harm or do evil to others.

5. **The Monks as Social Developers:** In the past and at present, the Cambodian Buddhist monks have played very important roles as social developers by creating new ideas or projects for the people to come and work with them. Monks are very respected by the people as they lead them to develop projects like roads in the rural areas, hospitals and schools and religious buildings. When people see the monks working with them and for them, they develop more faith and respect. To develop human society is a very important task that everyone should take part in.<sup>58</sup>

### 2.3 Concluding Remarks

A number of conclusions can be drawn from the research. Buddhism as we know it really began at the time of the Buddha's Enlightenment, and it underwent a period of growth and development during his post-enlightenment life. He was a great leader, and he was ably assisted by two of his most talented disciples; the Venerables

---

<sup>56</sup> Ching Hsin, **Buddhist Education: Continuity and Progress**, (Vietnam: Culture and Information Press, 2008), p. 115.

<sup>57</sup> The Chief of the monastery who, together with his two assistants known as Kru Sot Sdam (Right assistant) and Kru Sot Chhveng (Left assistant), looks after all the monks in each monastery.

<sup>58</sup> Un Sovanny, Op. cit., pp. 69-71.

*Mahamoggallana* and Venerable *Sariputta*, both of them helped the Lord Buddha look after the *Saṅgha community*.

However, as time passed, Buddhism was restructured and reformed, and this process continued right up to the time of the formation of complex societies and nation states. Buddhism in Cambodia has seen times of tremendous change, and has experienced great up and downs. There are now two sects in Cambodia: the *Mohanikay* and the *Thommayut*. The clerical administrative structure of Buddhism in Cambodia stretches from national level (headed by Great Supreme Patriarch) down to the lowest level (temple head monk). This structure was reform and reorganized under the influence of modern bureaucratic arrangements within the nation. This was done in part to bring the Buddhist structure in line with the new administrative units in the country and also to improve cooperation between the country's administration and religious organizations.

When we looked at the function of Buddhism in Cambodia, we saw that it plays a very influential role in the lives of Cambodians. In fact, the way that Buddhism has contributed, and continues to contribute life and society is captured by those powerful words of the Buddha when he told his monks: "Go ye forth, monks, for the benefit of the many folk, for the happiness of the many folk, out of compassion for the world, for the welfare, the benefit, the happiness of gods and men." Despite the tumultuous changes that Cambodian Buddhism has seen over the Khmer Rouge and post-Khmer period, the function of Buddhism in Cambodia is these days, in my opinion, much as in the old days. The forms and structure may have developed and been adapted to the new social and political landscape, but the essential function of the religion remains intact.

The physical and spiritual function of Buddhism in Cambodia can be summed up as follows: Buddhism provides a framework that lies at the very heart of the Khmer beliefs, culture, traditions, and way of life. The monks play various roles in Khmer society; they are spiritual leaders, social workers, educators, traditional doctors, and social developers. The monks, through the many and varied roles they perform, are deeply influential figures in Khmer Society.

**CHAPTER: III**  
**THE SURVIVAL AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF BUDDHISM**  
**IN CAMBODIA AFTER THE KHMER REGIME**

**3.1 Buddhism in the People's Republic of Kampuchea: 1979-1993**

When the war ended on April 17, 1975 C.E., everyone hoped that peace had finally come. No one ever expected that the aftermath would turn into a holocaust.<sup>59</sup> The government, known as Democratic Kampuchea under Pol Pot, attempted to create a “racially pure” society that was purged of its past. In their effort, the Khmer Rouge killed nearly one-fifth of Cambodia’s population of eight million people, targeting not only ethnic minorities, such as the Chinese, the Vietnamese, and the Muslim Chams, but fellow Khmers as well. All traces of the pro-American Lon Nol government and the earlier rule of Prince Norodom Sihanouk were eradicated, as were institutions associated with the French colonists. Pol Pot’s soldiers also attacked Khmer institutions from the pre-colonial past, including the *Saṅgha*, the Buddhist order of monks. The Khmer Rouge systematically attempted to obliterate Buddhism from Cambodian society, destroying more than 3,300 *wats* and killing thousands of monks and nuns.<sup>60</sup>

In the immediate aftermath of its takeover in 1975 C.E., the Khmer Rouge did not immediately move to ban Buddhism, but by the end of the year, Buddhism had been declared to be a “reactionary religion.” Monks and novices, including even those who had been in the base areas that Khmer Rouge controlled before April 1975 C.E., were compelled to disrobe and sent for reeducation. Some were sent to be killed, and others to work as laborers.<sup>61</sup> In 1980 C.E., it was estimated that five out of every eight monks were executed during the Pol Pot

---

<sup>59</sup> Yang Sam, **Khmer Buddhism and Politics from 1954-1984**, p. 67.

<sup>60</sup> R. Scott Appleby, **The Ambivalence of the Sacred: Religion, Violence, and Reconciliation**, (USA: Littefield Publishers Press, 2000), p. 125.

<sup>61</sup> Interview with the Most Venerable Mahā Vimaladhamma, the Second level of the Royal Order and Saṅgha Governing of Cambodian Buddhism, November 11, 2012.

regime. Major temples were destroyed and lesser ones were converted into storage centers, prisons, and extermination camps. The former cremation grounds at *Wat Choeung Ek* on the edge of Phnom Penh became a major site for mass executions. Images of the Buddha were often decapitated or desecrated in other ways; copies of the Buddhist scriptures were burned or thrown into rivers.<sup>62</sup>

Ironically, the Communist movement in Cambodia had its origins in the Buddhist nationalism that developed around 1940 CE; there were a number of monks and former monks prominent in that movement during the 1950s. However, the party began to distance itself from Buddhism in the 1960s. The Pol Pot regime demonized the Buddhist tradition as a prelude to executing over half the monks in Cambodia. Although the Khmer Rouge vilified the monks as “worthless parasites” whose doctrine of *Nibbāna*, or self-extinction, undermined economic productivity, Pol Pot’s campaign against Buddhism cannot be explained merely by reference to Marxist slogans about religion being the opiate of the people.

Buddhism was again singled out in the post-Khmer Rouge era, but it was then seen as a means of overcoming loss through the renewal of tradition along with a promotion of democracy. Buddhist practices were gradually allowed by the Vietnamese-controlled regime installed in Phnom Penh after the fall of the Khmer Rouge to the invading Vietnamese army in early 1979 CE. Initial restoration of *Saṅgha* order appears to have been aimed at establishing the legitimacy of a government controlled by Heng Samrin, a former member of Khmer Rouge, and at ensuring that public activities took place in accordance with communist ideals.<sup>63</sup>

It had taken centuries to build and strengthen Buddhism, but it took only a few years for the Khmer Rouge to destroy it. When Khmer Rouge rule collapsed in 1979 CE, people thought that the destruction was over, and they felt relief. Many believed that the Khmer Rouge had

---

<sup>62</sup> . Interviewed with Ven. Chuek Tun, Wat Sama Thi Phon, November 14, 2012.

<sup>63</sup> Stephen C. Berkwitz, **Buddhism in World Cultures: Comparative Perspectives**, (USA: ABC-CLIO Press, 2006), p. 137.

received retribution for their bad deeds. The Law of *Kamma* was indeed still valid.<sup>64</sup> Another period of history began.

### 3.1.1 Political changes

From 1976 until the end of 1978 CE, the political situation of the Khmer Rouge regime was unstable. Internally, they faced rising opposition among the cadres at high levels who apparently disagreed with radical policy. Confronted with this insecurity, they launched a severe internal purge which forced a number of members formerly trained in Hanoi to escape to Vietnam, including Heng Samrin, Chea Sim, Pen Sovann, and Hun Sen. In foreign affairs, the Khmer Rouge had been unhappy with the dominant attitude of Vietnam. The differences between the two countries worsened daily, until border conflict escalated into full scale war by 1977 CE. In early 1978 CE, the war intensified and no agreement could be formulated. Under the pretext of saving the Khmer people from the hell of Pol Pot, Vietnam invaded Cambodia and took over Phnom Penh on January 7th, 1979 CE. A government backed by Vietnam with Heng Samrin as President was installed, and became known as “The People’s Republic of Kampuchea.” The new government led by Heng Samrin signed an agreement with Vietnam that legitimized itself, and stated its opposition to the Khmer rouge. Many Cambodians, however, believed that Vietnamese had intervened so they could take power in Cambodia permanently.

Soon after the invasion, the people returned to their home towns and villages with the mixed emotions of joy and fear. To many of them, the return home provided at least temporary relief, although they were uncertain about the presence of the Vietnamese, who they feared might repeat the horrible history of the past.<sup>65</sup>

Even when Khmer Rouge (KR) troops were flushed from the capital city by Vietnamese armies and Cambodian opposition forces, the torment continued. Pol Pot and his cadres retreated to the mountain jungles along the border with Thailand where they built guerrilla camps. By the end of 1979 CE, most of the country was under the control of an occupation force of 225,000 Vietnamese troops. What followed was a protracted low-intensity conflict between the regrouped Khmer Rouge

---

<sup>64</sup>Yang Sam, Op. cit., p. 75.

<sup>65</sup> 17<sup>th</sup> century Khmer history contains numerous conflicts with Vietnam. The Khmers had passed on from one generation to another the story of atrocities and suffering they received from the Vietnamese neighbors who annexed their lowlands.

forces and the occupying Vietnamese. The occupation army also had to fend off separate resistance mounted by Cambodian nationalists who were largely based in camps across the border in Thailand. Cambodians were divided in their views on the Vietnamese occupation; some accepted it as an effort to liberate their country from an oppressive regime, while others simply considered Vietnam as invader bent on making the country into a client state.

Even though the Vietnamese had overthrown the Khmer Rouge leaders, and brought to an end the DK,<sup>66</sup> they continued to suppress religion as they followed the policies of the new socialist government, People's Republic of Kampuchea (PRK),<sup>67</sup> which placed an emphasis on rationality, science and the dignity of work. However, in spite of initial signs of mass support, the new regime rapidly lost its popularity and was required to look for additional support to bolster its legitimacy.

It was in mid 1988 CE, that an abrupt change in the policy of the PRK toward Buddhism occurred. Just before this, the PRK and Vietnamese government announced an agreement for the withdrawal of Vietnamese forces from Cambodia.<sup>68</sup>

### **3.1.2 The PRK Government Policies toward Buddhism**

The new PRK government promised to respect human rights, freedom, and the people's stated desire to re-construct the institutions Buddhism. In 1979 CE, they reopened schools nationwide, and got the currency operative again. They created a new Cambodian constitution, basing it on the Vietnamese one. This constitution gave more rights to people than they had had under the Khmer Rouge, but at the same time, it urged the people to follow the line of the government. They then established new ministries, inaugurated the People's Revolutionary Party

---

<sup>66</sup> Democratic Kampuchea (DK) was the name of the Khmer Rouge-controlled state that, between 1975 and 1979, ruled the Southeast Asian country of Cambodia..

<sup>67</sup> Despite an initial feeling of euphoria popular opinion soon turned against the Vietnamese-backed regime; not surprisingly given the fact that Vietnam is regarded as Cambodia's traditional enemy.

<sup>68</sup> Charles F. Keyes, **Asian Visions of Authority: Religion and the Modern States of East and Southeast Asia**, (USA: University of Hawaii Press, 1994), p. 63.

of Cambodia,<sup>69</sup> and certified that the new national assembly was certified by the Constitution. Remarkably, the policies of the Cambodian government in this period were similar to those of Vietnam, although they were not following orders from Vietnam. But what is clear is that the Heng Samrin government was beholden to Vietnam, and still dependent on the help of the Vietnamese.

The policies of this government towards Buddhism were more relaxed than those of the Khmer Rouge. Monks who had been forcibly disrobed during Khmer Rouge regime were now allowed to re-ordain, with the restriction that only men over 50 years of age (in some places over 60 years of age)<sup>70</sup> could do so. The ruling party justified this restriction on the grounds that the country had just finished a civil war and many young people were needed to re-construct and protect the country. The Khmer Rouge was still active in the jungle areas along border with Thailand.<sup>71</sup>

The people at this time certainly had more rights than they had had under the Khmer Rouge, and many of their basic freedoms were guaranteed under the new constitution. They were generally allowed to go about their daily religious activities, and celebrate Buddhist holy days, but it all had to be done with the permission of official authorities, who often had a say in the timing and time span of such events. For example, some Buddhist ceremonies that really took three days were reduced down to one day. This was considered a suitable by the government as the country had just emerged from such troubled times. The PRK followed a form of communist idealism that was similar to that of the DK, but gave more freedom in case of the religious activities. For example, the Constitution of the People's Republic of Kampuchea (1979-1989 CE), article 6 says the following;

---

<sup>69</sup> The Kampuchean (or Khmer ) People's Revolutionary Party continued to be the ruling Marxist-Leninist party of the PRK, it is an offshoot of the Indochinese Communist Party which played a dominant role in Cambodia resistance against the French and the Japanese.

<sup>70</sup> Interview with Ven. Rai Vimal, the abbot of Wat Phra Pun Lia, November 13, 2012.

<sup>71</sup> Interview with the Most Venerable Mahā Vimaladhamma, the Second level of the Royal Order and Saṅgha Governing of Cambodian Buddhism, November 11, 2012.



The freedom of religious beliefs is respected. Religious activities in conformity with the constitution and laws are guaranteed by the State. All acts taking advantage of the religion to undermine security, public order and the people's interests are prohibited.<sup>72</sup>

The Heng Samrin government publicly announced that they welcomed the re-establishment of Buddhism and Islam, and that no person would be deprived of their religious rights. This policy proclamation meant that monks who had ordained before 1975 CE were once again able to enter the monkhood, and Khmer Buddhists could make merit by bringing food to offer to the monks or conducting Buddhist activities as they had done so before Khmer Rouge regime. Buddhism was back.<sup>73</sup>

Heng Samrin reminded all that, "Religion has been reborn because the country has been reborn. If the fatherland (a term widely used by the Vietnamese; the Khmer use the term motherland) is attacked and oppressed by enemies, and perishes, religion will also be destroyed." Monks were thus urged to join the fight in order to ensure the existence of the state, which subsequently provided the opportunity for Buddhism to exist. The government asked monks to look out for enemies who might want to use the *Saṅgha* for subversive activities. During the purge of the Khmer Rouge in 1979 C.E, the government issued a memorandum warning of such the activities:

Buddhist monks must strictly observe religious regulations and abide by the provisions of the constitution and follow the guidelines of the PRK. Anyone who use Buddhism and the beliefs of our people to carry out activities to sabotage the correct lines, subvert national and international solidarity and destroy the fruits of the Kampuchean people's revolution will be punished.

The Heng Samrin government set up ways and policies for dealing with religious practices through a committee that they installed in each temple. The committees were created to oversee religious activity at

---

<sup>72</sup> Raoul M. Jennar, **The Cambodian Constitutions**, (Bangkok: White Lotus Press, 1995), p. 95.

<sup>73</sup> Interview with Mr. Son Sut, the president committee of Wat Phnom Chon Chiang, November 16, 2012.

the ground level and were known as *ranase*, or religious direction offices. The Buddhist *Saṅgha*, *wats*, and the *Saṅgha* administration were all monitored. The following rules that were to be followed by the temples, monks and lay devotees:<sup>74</sup>

1. Only monks who are 50 years of age or older, and who have been monks before can ordain.
2. Monks have to study principle theories of communism and propagate those ideals to people.
3. The committee must be informed of the contents of the religious ceremonies performed, and the money donated for the performance of the ceremony must be given to the committee installed by government.
4. The monks must pay for a tax to the government of 10 Reils per month (30 Reils in some places).<sup>75</sup>
5. Each temple must pay 100 Reils tax to the government per month,
6. Each temple must have a donation box and give all the monthly donations to the committee.
7. A temple must have not more than 5 monks,
8. The people should not encourage some ceremonies like *Kathina* and robe offering ceremonies that might cause misappropriation of funds, because both the *Saṅgha* and lay people will get less usefulness from the money and have to pay more attention to the entertainment during the ceremony.

The first regulation of government above that stated that people who wanted to be ordained had to be more than 50 years old was enacted because the government needed young people to develop the country; the country needed agricultural laborers and soldiers. Evidence of this policy found in documents signed by Chea Chim was unearthed by the researcher Lee Suvee. It was written that “After the Religious Direction Office were installed, many villages, districts, and provinces met and considered the regulations. They decided that monks who lacked the qualities required should be disrobed and sent for army and revolutionary service.” Another factor that the government considered was that if the

---

<sup>74</sup> Son Soubert, et al, **Buddhism and the Future of Cambodia**, (Rithisen, Thailand: Khmer Buddhist Research Center Press, 1986) p. 75.

<sup>75</sup> Interview with Mr. Son Sut, the president committee of Wat Phnom Chon Chiang, November 16, 2012.

number of monks increased, then the number of the young workers would decrease and economical problems would arise. Such policies reduced the strength of various Buddhist institutions because monks who ordained were too old to work, and lacked the academic and administration skills to benefit Buddhism in the longer term.

In response to the government's urgent appeals and insistence, the *Saṅgha* has set up two national congresses to discuss their lines of conduct, the first one in 1982 CE, the second in July 1984 CE. At these congresses, Heng Samrin proposed eight conditions for the Buddhist monks. The monks were to:<sup>76</sup>

1. learn the significance of the political line
2. educate the laity with regard to party ideas
3. model themselves on the Buddha's teachings and fight the enemy
4. preserve and cultivate the patriotic and revolutionary spirit, exemplified by monks like Ven. Hem Chieu and Achar Mean<sup>77</sup>
5. preserve the cultural heritage
6. promote and improve production among the people so that their living standards may be enhanced
7. assist in building social service establishments
8. carry out all of the above to achieve victory

These conditions impacted upon the *Saṅgha's* status, and forced the monks to get involved in politics and economics. At the first *Saṅgha* conference in 1982 CE, the assembly set up the conditions for the monks to promote solidarity in the economy and also endeavor to learn about politics and problem solving. They were required to create a unified state, be loyal to the nation, and fight the enemy by educating the people at every level. They were to persuade youth to join revolutionary organizations and study particular subjects in the social and economic fields. Therefore, the government policies toward Buddhism were aimed at creating a *Saṅgha* that was a supporter of the government. Some scholars observed and commented that while the policies of Heng Samrin

---

<sup>76</sup> Yang Sam, **Khmer Buddhism and Politics from 1954-1984**, pp. 84-85.

<sup>77</sup> Hem Chieu (1898 - 1943) was a Buddhist monk and a prominent figure in the development of Cambodian nationalism and Achar Mean (Son Ngoc Minh) was the communist activists.

government appeared to offer freedom of religious belief, they were in fact attempts by the government to use Buddhism in a way that gave legitimacy to the government.

The government saw the monks as the centre of community. The monks were close to local people and respected by them. The government therefore tried to secure the cooperation of the monks. In a way then, the government tried to involve the monks in a partnership that could evoke the revolutionary spirit of the people, and motivated them to fight the enemy (the Khmer Rouge).

### 3.1.3 Social Changes

During the Khmer Rouge period, the Khmer people were oppressed both physically and mentally. Many people welcomed the arrival of the Vietnamese army. But the people who made up Cambodian society lacked confidence in government and politics. Many Cambodian people migrated and others tried to escape to the border with Thailand and seek refuge there and in other countries. Some people searched for relatives who had struggled during the Khmer Rouge years, and others went back to their homelands and started their lives anew in areas such as agriculture and trading.<sup>78</sup>

It is important to note that the Vietnamese military control did not actually end the conflict with Khmer Rouge, but rather converted the entire country into a series of war fronts with escalated fighting in many locations. The military build up led to the creation of massive stocks of all kinds of weapon. Perhaps the worst consequence of this was the laying of many millions of landmines by conflicting parties.<sup>79</sup> Today, it is thought that about 8 million landmines remain in Cambodia. Since 1979 CE, the official records have recorded more than 55,000 victims of landmines and unexploded ordinance, and the total amount still grows at the rate of about 75 persons per month.

---

<sup>78</sup> Thira Nutpiam, **Indochina under Communist Political Changing Since 1975-1991**, (*Indocheen Phaitai Rabop Khommionit Kwam Plianplaeng Thangkanmueang Tangtae 1975-1991*). (Bangkok: Chulalongkorn University Press, 1991), pp.108-109.

<sup>79</sup> Isaac A. Blankson, **Negotiating Democracy: Media Transformations in Emerging Democracies**, (USA: University of New York Press, 2007), p. 81.

However, the schools were opened around Cambodia in 1980 CE, and a currency system was put in place again; the Khmer Rouge, had abolished the currency system even though that move created mass instability.<sup>80</sup> Hinton notes that:

1. Due to volatility in Cambodia, most Cambodian people were still unsure and lacked confidence in a communist government. The people remained fearful of political system that was like the one that had been used by Khmer Rouge before. The Heng Samrin government was backed by the Vietnamese government, which was communist.

2. Society was still experiencing terrible shortages and other economical problems that had arisen as a result of Khmer Rouge regime. The country was in famine as a result of the long war that had impacted on agriculture. Furthermore, drought was another factor furthering the shortages. Rice, in particular, was scarce.

3. The civil war the government forces and the old power clique of Khmer Rouge who resided along the border of Cambodia and Thailand was ongoing. The people felt that their lives and property were very insecure. Another enormous problem was that the DK was still accepted by the international community as being the legitimate government. The DK therefore still had the power and the right to fight with the PRK by any means it could, and it did so militarily and diplomatically (in international arena). Insecurity in the political and economic spheres made the Khmer people confused, and the situation unstable.

Sadly, despite the Khmer people's admirable accomplishments in rebuilding their lives and overcoming the trauma of genocide, the Cambodians were still forced to continue living in an atmosphere of uncertainty and terror.<sup>81</sup>

---

<sup>80</sup> Pinthong Chaisutthi, "Thai's Foreign Policies toward Cambodian Issue during 1975-1991", (*Nayobai Tangprathet Khong Thai To Panha Phrateth Kampuchar Rawang 2518-2534*), **Master's Degree Thesis**, (Bangkok: Graduate School of Srinakharinwirot University Press, 1995), p. 27.

<sup>81</sup> Alexander Laban Hinton, **Annihilating Difference: The Anthropology of Genocide**, (USA: University of California Press, 2002), p. 24.

### ***3.1.3.1 The Revival of Buddhism after the Khmer Rouge Regime***

At the time of the early Buddhist restoration, when Phnom Penh fell to the Vietnamese in January 1979, there were only 100 ordained Cambodian monks in existence, and most of them had fled to Vietnam or Thailand.<sup>82</sup> After the defeat of the Khmer Rouge by the Vietnamese, the People's Republic of Kampuchea was established and Buddhism began its slow, halting recovery.<sup>83</sup> Soon after the Vietnamese invasion, many former monks, particularly elderly ones, rushed back to visit their old monasteries. On the journey back, many were moved by the sight of the unimaginable destruction of the monasteries along the way. The sight of unsheltered Buddha statues amidst the debris of the destroyed temples was a shock to all who passed by.<sup>84</sup> However, Buddhism was partially restored around August 1979 by the Heng Samrin government in one of its first acts on coming to power.

Monastic ordination in the aftermath of Democratic Kampuchea proved difficult for a number of reasons. On the practical level, it was impossible to assemble the necessary quorum of fully ordained monks to perform the valid rite. Nevertheless, it is clear that sixty-eight monks were already residing at Wat Sansam Kosal, Phsar Doeum Thkao District, Phnom Penh. Other ex-monks took to shaving their heads and wearing white. Such individuals began to form a core of organized Buddhists, and their services were sought for the performance of ceremonies to commemorate the dead. Another major constraint was the authorities' desire to keep a tight reign on the monks. On September 19, 1979, the central committee of the Kampuchea National United Front for National Salvation, and the Kampuchea People's Revolutionary Council assembled the seven "carefully chosen" former monks, all with between twenty and sixty years of former service. They were reordained with government approval at Wat Unnalom, Phnom Penh.

Despite the encouragement from the Heng Samrin government, the process of restoring Buddhism was indeed difficult. In the early period, those who wanted to be re-ordained could not find monks to perform the ordination, since the *Saṅgha* had totally vanished. While waiting for a solution, they shaved their heads and wore white clothes. It

---

<sup>82</sup> Ian Harris, **Buddhism and Politics in Twentieth Century Asia**, p. 66.

<sup>83</sup> Donald K. Swearer, **The Buddhist World of Southeast Asia**, p. 125.

<sup>84</sup> Yang Sam, **Khmer Buddhism and Politics from 1954-1984**, pp. 79.

was with this type of religious person that the fervent Buddhists came back to the monastery to set up ceremonies commemorating the death of their family members.<sup>85</sup> As time passed by and the solution to the problem of proper ordination could not be solved, many began to accept the saffron robes from lay Buddhists, and started to live the monastic life without formal ceremony.

Although the government at the time seemed to be concerned with rehabilitation, the restoration of Buddhism was closely monitored. The state was directly involved in planning to insure that Buddhism would not impair national recovery. In order to control the growth of the monk population, the government issued a regulation forbidding male adults less than 50 years of age to enter the monkhood. The reason given was the drastic decrease in male population (40 percent of total proportion); furthermore, if the number of monks swelled out of proportion, there would be a shortage of young active adults in the workforce. Despite this restriction, the number of monks increased. In rural areas, young monks were frequently seen, but apparently their ordination was not reported to the “Office of Religious Affairs.”

According to the report of the First National Buddhist Monk Conference, 1821 monasteries were opened in 1982, accommodating a total of 2,311 monks. Among these, 800 were believed to be former monks. This figure indicates that more than 60,000 monks had been eliminated in the Khmer Rouge period, resulting in the significant loss of a generation of educated monks.<sup>86</sup> Besides the restoration of the monk population, there were two other major goals to be accomplished: repairing the damaged monasteries and religious books. Among the 1,821 monasteries opened, some were recently rebuilt on the former ground of destroyed temples. In such case a temporary building with thatched roof and no walls was erected to house the main statue of Buddha. New statues of Buddha were brought in to replace the broken ones.

Many scriptures and Buddhist books that remained in good enough condition were assembled. A number of foreign Buddhist organizations who visited the country offered financial assistance and printing equipment for the production of materials. A Japanese delegation

---

<sup>85</sup> Interview with Ven. Rai Vimal, the abbot of Wat Phra Pun Lia, November 13, 2012.

<sup>86</sup> Yang Sam, **Khmer Buddhism and Politics from 1954-1984**, pp. 80-81.

brought back to Phnom Penh a large quantity of Buddhist institute publications they had collected in the past.<sup>87</sup> Furthermore, after the Vietnamese withdrawal and further removal of religious restrictions in 1989, the numbers of temples increased dramatically and over 4,000 *wats* were restored. A lot of this was made possible by villagers' lay offerings. By the end of Heng Samrin's time in power, there were more than 50,000 monks.<sup>88</sup>

### 3.1.3.2 *Changes of the Saṅgha Status*

The Buddhist monk is one of the four Buddhist components that are responsible for preserving Buddhism that was destroyed during the Khmer Rouge regime. When Heng Samrin became the president, he restored this Buddhist institution but gave it a function that was different from its role in ancient times or before the Khmer Rouge regime. Monks now had to serve the government rather than society. Monks were now involved in politics whereas they were traditionally teachers of the Dhamma. Although the new conditions were less than ideal, the monks did at least exist again, and the yellow robe as the symbol of Buddhism reappeared. The people were allowed to perform Buddhist ceremonies by the official government;<sup>89</sup> they were able to perform the Buddhist Lent, *Vesakh*, *Magha Puja*, and *Pchum Ben* days.<sup>90</sup>

However, analysis of the policies of PRK suggests that although Buddhism and *Saṅgha* seemed to get encouragement from the government, the new role of the monks was different - the monks now had to promote revolution and their main duty was to support the government. The government issued orders through Buddhist *Saṅgha* and these orders were passed down to the people in order to create stability. As Heng Samrin said:

“The monk has to be strict in the Buddhist regulations as normal and depend on policies and ways of People's Republic of

---

<sup>87</sup> Ibid., p. 82.

<sup>88</sup> Harold G. Coward, **Religion and Peacebuilding**, (USA: University of New York Press, 2004), p. 196.

<sup>89</sup> Interview with Ven. Chuek Tun Dhammaramo, of Wat Sama Thi Phon, November 14, 2012.

<sup>90</sup> Pchum Ben (Ancestors' Day) is a 15-day Cambodian religious festival, culminating in celebrations on the 15th day of the tenth month in the Khmer calendar, at the end of the Buddhist lent, Vassa.



Kampuchea. Whoever uses Buddhism and its belief in the wrong way to sabotage and overrule the ruling of the country, the solidarity of nations and to destroy the revolution of the country will be punished”.

This focus meant that one role of monks was collecting the support from people and sending it on to government army. Things such as food were collected and sent to the soldiers who were battling the Khmer Rouge.<sup>91</sup> Finally, Cambodian *Saṅgha* and monasteries became places to propagate the ideology of People’s Republic of Kampuchea. So, we can conclude that the status of monks under Heng Samrin’s government was as follows:<sup>92</sup>

1. The monks who practice according to the monastic rules have to abide by government directions of government as well. This limited the freedom of the monk’s to perform their *Saṅgha* activities. They were merely the power base of government.
2. It was found that even though the Khmer people were very poor after Khmer Rouge regime, they still had to pay tax to support the government. The monks lived with difficulty, because they had to depend on the people for alms. The research, however, suggests that even by around 2000, poverty still raged in Cambodian society. Even in the capital city, monks could not get enough to eat, and most brought rice and food from their families to survive during their studies in Phnom Penh.
3. The government limited the number of monks in the country, and therefore the monks more or less depended on the government’s policies and the monk’s roles were based on its conditions. At this time there was no Buddhist organization, because there were too few monks, and most of them were

---

<sup>91</sup> Interview with Mr. Son Sut, the president committee of Wat Phnom Chon Chiang, November 16, 2012.

<sup>92</sup> Phra Raphin Dualoi, “A Study on the Status of the Cambodian Saṅgha, 1975-1989”, (*Kansueksa Sueksa Sathanaphap Khong Phrasong Kamphucha Rawang Khoso 1975 - 1989*), **Master’s Degree Thesis in Asian History**, (Graduate School: Srinakharinwirot University Press, 2002.), pp. 56-57.

elderly. Moreover, there was little support and care from the government. Therefore the Buddhist *Saṅgha* had great difficulty in supporting the stability of the *Saṅgha* community.

4. The monks who were ordained at first were mostly elderly people who could not work and develop the *Saṅgha* community. They lacked education and ability. So it seems that the government just put them in place to look after monasteries and be symbols of Buddhism in Cambodia.
5. There was a lack of educated and able leaders owing to the fact that most of them had been killed during the Khmer Rouge regime. It was a policy of the Khmer Rouge to kill educated people, and they killed a number of Buddhist scholars like H.H. Hout That, who was one of the greatest Buddhist scholars in Cambodia.

### ***3.1.3.3 The Re-Ordination of Buddhist Monks***

In September, 1979 CE, the central committee of the Kampuchean National United Front for National Salvation,<sup>93</sup> and the Kampuchean People's Revolutionary Council organized a re-ordination ceremony of seven former Buddhist monks at the *Unnalom* monastery (formerly the main monastery for the *Mohanikay*) in Phnom Penh. A Vietnamese Buddhist delegation of *Theravada* Buddhism, headed by a senior monk, Thich Bou Chon (advisor to the Central Commission of Vietnamese *Theravada* Buddhism) presided over the ceremonies. The ordination, which lasted the whole day, was performed by Ven. Thita Silo, Ven. Koralo and Ven. Kosala Chetta. All of the seven monks had served in the monkhood from twenty to sixty years. The five of them were:<sup>94</sup>

- |                        |    |           |
|------------------------|----|-----------|
| 1. Ven. Koeut Vay      | 82 | years old |
| 2. Ven. Chot Park Dith | 67 | years old |
| 3. Ven. Noun Nget      | 55 | years old |

---

<sup>93</sup> The Kampuchean (or Khmer) United Front for National Salvation (KUFNS), often simply referred to as Salvation Front or by its French acronym FUNSK, was the nucleus of a new Cambodian regime, that would topple the Khmer Rouge and later establish the People's Republic of Kampuchea (PRK).

<sup>94</sup> Phra Raphin Dualoi, Op. cit., p. 53.

4. Ven. Den Srum	55	years old
5. Ven. Ed Sum	55	years old
6. Ven. Ken Vong	54	years old
7. Ven. Tep Vong	47	years old

Among these elderly monks, Tep Vong who was the youngest, later was elected as the head of the *Saṅgha*, and made Vice President of the central committee for the National United Front for the Salvation of Kampuchea at the second congress of the Front.

Venerable Tep Vong mentioned that the monk who served as the preceptor (*Pāli upajjhāya*; Khmer *Oppachea*) for this ordination was a Khmer who had been in the monkhood for at least fourteen years, served as a preceptor in Cambodia before 1975 C.E., and escaped to Vietnam after the arrival of the Khmer Rouge. The qualifications of the preceptor were critical, since the major schisms in *Theravada* Buddhism are traceable to the non-recognition by some monks of the ordination genealogy of other monks.

Venerable Tep Vong said that seven carefully chosen former monks were re-ordained at *Wat Unnalom* in Phnom Penh in September 1979 CE. By “carefully chosen” he meant that they were men who had had good reputations as monks before 1975 CE, and the seven had all been in the *Saṅgha* for twenty to sixty years. These monks were then able to constitute the chapter required to meet the rules of the *Saṅgha* for an ordination. It would appear that seniority in the Khmer monkhood now is traceable to the order in which monks were re-ordained rather than to the order in which they were originally ordained. Venerable Tep Vong is the ranking monk, because he was the first to be re-ordained.

From late 1979 to late 1981 CE, the monks who had first been re-ordained reestablished the Khmer *Saṅgha* by ordaining other former monks, first in Phnom Penh and then in each province. The goal, he said, was the creation of chapters each of seven monks, which could reestablish the ordination genealogy in each province. It should be noted that those chosen for re-ordination had all previously been preceptors or abbots, that is, the senior monks.<sup>95</sup>

---

<sup>95</sup> Charles F. Keyes, *Asian Visions of Authority: Religion and the Modern States of East and Southeast Asia*, pp. 60-61.

Although the government seemed to be concerned with rehabilitation, the development of Buddhism was being closely monitored. The state had direct involvement in planning that religion would not impair the national recovery. In order to control the growth of the monk population, the government issued a regulation forbidding the male adults less than 50 years of age from entering the monkhood. The reason given was the drastic decrease in male population (40% of the total population); furthermore, if the number of monks swelled out of population, there would be a shortage of young active adults in the workforce. Also the still weak economy would have difficulty in supporting an increased number of monks. Those who maintained some skepticism felt that this policy would weaken Buddhism in the long run.

They argued that in becoming a monk at old age, a person would have trouble in learning and would not have enough time to grasp the vast knowledge of the *Dhamma*. Despite this restriction, the number of monks gradually increased. In rural areas, the young monks were frequently seen, but their ordinations were apparently not reported to the “Office of Religion Affairs.” Clearly the authorities were not been able to enforce the law all over the country. According to the report of the First National Buddhist Conference, 1,821 monasteries were re-opened in 1982 CE, accommodating a total of 2,311 monks. Among these, 800 were believed to be former monks. This figure indicates that more than 60,000 monks were eliminated under the Khmer Rouge period, resulting in the significant loss of the generation of the educated monk.<sup>96</sup>

In the first years of the PRK, the government, or, more precisely, the Party, allowed the *Saṅgha* to only reemerge very slowly. By 1981 CE, according to a report by Michael Richardson, 500 monks had returned to the *Saṅgha* and about 1,500 novices had been ordained, and about three thousand *wats* had been restored “with official encouragement.” An official report in 1982 CE put the figure at 2,311 monks, of whom 800 were former monks.

The restriction of men to be admitted into the *Saṅgha* was not the only concern of the government; women who wanted to be nuns were also closely screened. The Monk Congress issued a statement that a nun in the strictest sense of the term was an older woman of good character, one loyal to religion and the revolution. In order to be accepted as nuns,

---

<sup>96</sup> Yang Sam, **Khmer Buddhism and Politics from 1954-1984**, pp. 80-82.

women had to prove that they had no means of support; otherwise they were not authorized for acceptance.<sup>97</sup>

The restriction on ordination of men under the age of fifty was finally removed in May 1989 CE. The consequences of the change were soon evident in. There had been very few monks previous years, and they had been over fifty. Soon after the regulation change, the number of monks grew, especially in the countryside, and many of those who were young.<sup>98</sup> The number of members of the *Saṅgha* grew significantly after 1988 CE, and in 1990, the total membership of the *Saṅgha* was 16,400, of whom about 40 percent were novices.<sup>99</sup> The government also removed a detested tax on temple and has even contributed money for the construction of some shrines.

Number of Buddhist Temples and Monks in Cambodia 1969-1989 CE.

Year	Numbers of Temples	Numbers of Monks
1969	3,369	65,062
1970–75	n.d.	n.d.
1975–79	n.d.	n.d.
1979–81	n.d.	n.d.
1982	1,821	2,311
1983–87	n.d.	n.d.
1988	2,799	6,497
1989	2,892	9,711

Notes: The number of monks includes novices; no data is available for the period of 1970–1981 and 1983–87 CE

#### ***3.1.3.4 Monks and Monasteries***

According to a PRK policy statement published in a circular of August 19, 1979 CE, monks were to have the same rights and duties as all

<sup>97</sup> Ibid., p. 88.

<sup>98</sup> Interview with the Most Venerable Mahā Vimaladhamma, the Second level of the Royal Order and Saṅgha Governing of Cambodian Buddhism, November 11, 2012.

<sup>99</sup> Charles F. Keyes, **Asian Visions of Authority: Religion and the Modern States of East and Southeast Asia**, p. 63.

other persons. They had to possess identity cards and respect government regulations.<sup>100</sup> They were not permitted to engage in mendicancy and, in contravention of the norms of monastic discipline (*Vinaya*), They were also expected to engage in agricultural labor. As “state employees,” they were expected to cultivate vegetables in the grounds of the monasteries for their own consumption. The authorities clearly preferred that they cultivate the soil, thereby avoiding the cultivation of potentially disruptive mental states. However, as things began to relax, monks were allowed to go out of their monasteries for one hour every morning for alms collection, and older members of the laity were permitted to visit the local *wat* in the evenings after the day’s work had been completed. Even so, alms giving was discouraged.<sup>101</sup> The laity was expected to focus their limited resources on more explicitly social benefits.

Management committees were set up for individual monasteries at this time. They consisted of a majority of lay members who represented the secular authorities. In this way, the government was able to outmaneuver uncooperative senior monks. Lay members also ensured that a proportion of donations to the monastery was redirected to the building of hospitals, roads, and schools. A few foreign observers who visited during the period reported that portraits of Marx and Ho Chi Minh were prominently displayed alongside the Buddha images in the few functioning *wats*.

A report prepared for the August 1979 C.E., trial of Pol Pot maintained that “several principal temples of 26 *wats* in Phnom Penh were sacked” during Democratic Kampuchea. So the repair of all of the country’s *wats* was incorporated into the Salvation Front’s program. Work proceeded slowly. The reestablishment of *wats* was closely supervised, and new foundations could not be started willy-nilly. However, by 1981, some were being rebuilt, and a number of *kathen* (*kathina*) ceremonies had taken place, presumably against a background of growing influence. Although the state did not allocate funds for such undertakings (they were largely financed by local communities), sympathetic officials sometimes helped *wat* building committees acquire

---

<sup>100</sup> One source asserts that monks were expected to pay higher taxes than most other workers (Kesston College staff 1988, 169).

<sup>101</sup> Ian Harris, **Cambodian Buddhism: History and Practice**, p. 193.

inexpensive materials.<sup>102</sup> There was also some evidence of the pruning of religious structures that had survived DK intact. Wealthy urban areas, for instance, had sometimes accommodated several closely grouped monasteries, but even by the mid-1980 CE, only one of these monasteries had generally been granted permission to function. Many of the rest, particularly in the Phnom Penh area, were used as military barracks, offices, housing, and the like, although this type of use was not always a restriction on the freedom of religion, for, given the economic devastation of the time, the local resources to support more than one monastery must have been severely restricted.

Provincial ordination commissions were established early on, and prospective monks were obliged to make formal applications, including curriculum vitae, to the nearest office. Although the state recognized traditional ordination practices, the receipt of Buddhist teachings from other countries was not permitted.<sup>103</sup> A reduction of the quorum from ten to five monks for a higher ordination was also introduced. This was perfectly valid from the *Vinaya* perspective. However, the requirement that no male under the age of fifty could be ordained, a measure ostensibly designed to maximize the forces of production, was not. Temporary ordinations were also forbidden, although the authorities appear to have actively encouraged the ordination of the handicapped men on the grounds that they were not economically active and could best be cared for in a monastic setting. As time went on, the ordination became somewhat easier, although local authorities still retained the right of veto.

From April to June 1981 CE, a national gathering of 400 monks in Phnom Penh celebrated the revival of Buddhism and the victory of January 7, 1979 CE. However, it is difficult to be certain about the rate of the growth of monasticism in the early PRK period. In September 1981 CE, Ven. Tep Vong claimed a total of 3,000 monks, and 700 *wats* were under construction, nationwide. However, a scholarly estimation in the same year concluded that 500 monks had been re-ordained and 1,500 had entered the novitiate. A year later, Cambodian officials computed a total of 2,311 monks in 1,821 monasteries,<sup>104</sup> an overall decrease of around

---

<sup>102</sup> Vickery, **Politics, Economics, and Society. Marxist Regimes Series.** (London: Pinter; Boulder, and CO: Rienner Press, 1986), pp. 162–163.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 161.

<sup>104</sup> Yang Sam, **Khmer Buddhism and Politics from 1954-1984**, p. 81.

60,000 monks since the Khmer Rouge seized power. This averages out to less than 2 monks per monastery, a figure well below the limit of 4 imposed by the government. There were some exceptions to this rule, particularly in Phnom Penh. The 20 monks residing at *Wat Unalom* in 1980 were complemented by a further 8 the following year. Indeed, a total of 170 monks officially occupied monasteries in the capital during 1981 CE.<sup>105</sup>

However, in only two years, over seven hundred *wats* had been restored. While there was a heavy investment from local people of labor, time and resources, much reconstruction was heavily sponsored by overseas Khmer or by wealthy and powerful people in Phnom Penh.<sup>106</sup>

Many temples were reopened during this period not only to accommodate the members of the *Saṅgha* but also to make possible the resumption of traditional ritual life. Ben Kiernan, who visited Cambodia in mid 1980 CE, reported seeing festivals at Buddhist temples at that time, and the government allowed a factory manufacturing Buddha images to open. The new government allowed the people to reclaim some ritual landscapes.<sup>107</sup> It permitted the restoration of *wats*. By 1989 CE, according to official figures, there were twenty-four hundred temples in the country, or about two-thirds of the number that had existed before 1970 CE. Many *wats* were restored in and around Phnom Penh, and many new images of the Buddha were created. It should be noted, however, that while the government permitted reconstruction of religious structures and the casting of new images, it did not, at least until later, allocate any government money for such projects.<sup>108</sup>

### ***3.1.3.5 The Revival of Saṅgha Administration***

During the Khmer Rouge period, the *Saṅgha* administration essentially vanished, as Buddhism was officially suppressed by the Khmer Rouge. But when Vietnamese backed People's Republic of Kampuchea came to power, it began to reverse its stance in order to gain

---

<sup>105</sup> Ian Harris, **Cambodian Buddhism: History and Practice**, pp. 193-194.

<sup>106</sup> Alexandra Kent, "Recovery of the collective spirit: The role of the revival of Buddhism in Cambodia", (Sweden: Goteborg University Press, 2003), Unknown Pages.

<sup>107</sup> Charles F. Keyes, **Asian Visions of Authority: Religion and the Modern States of East and Southeast Asia**, p. 61.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 62.



wider popular support for its rule. As part of this effort, a new *Saṅgha* administration was restored, but its pattern was changed to the form of *Saṅgha* Assembly, or in Khmer “*Saṅgha Sannipāta*.” No supreme patriarch was appointed, but Ven. Tep Vong was chosen as the *Saṅgha* president and the deputy of the national assembly by the Heng Samrin government.

The monk leaders and the state felt that the *Saṅgha* had to work in unity at this difficult time. For this reason, they unified the *Thommayut* and the *Mohanikay* into one order. The leading reason for this unification, as expressed by Ven. Tep Vong, was that the *Thommayut* which was supported by the royal family and high class people brought no benefit to the *Saṅgha* and created disunity. Tep Vong stated that : “Now we make no difference between the two orders; there is at present only one *Saṅgha* as we, the Buddhists, call our monastic community” Venerable Oum Soum, known as an expert in the interpretation of the *Pāli* Canon, asserted that “our monks are neither *Mohanikay* nor *Thommayut* but we are Nationalist monks.”

The *Saṅgha* hierarchy seemed to change as well. The titles of the dignitary monks used in the past were apparently no longer used. For example Venerable Tep Vong, the head of the *Saṅgha* in the country did not hold any clear official title and he refused to take a title such as king of the *Saṅgha* (traditionally known as *Samdech Saṅgharāja*), which would have been inappropriate in a Socialist society. At the provincial and district levels, the elected monks who serve as members of the political bodies appeared to be the heads of the local *Saṅgha*.<sup>109</sup>

The *Saṅgha* provincial administration leader was now as “*Saṅgha* provincial president” and his subordinates as ‘*Saṅgha* district president and abbot. The monks were chosen to be responsible for the public service and acted as political members of government. However, at the beginning the functions were not clear, because the number of monks was limited and most were the elderly persons.

According to the department of government, the national assembly was the most supremacy body administering the country. This assembly included people from every field, such as police, soldiers, general people and monks. Organized down to the provincial, district,

---

<sup>109</sup> Yang Sam, **Khmer Buddhism and Politics from 1954-1984**, pp. 86-87.

sub-district and village level, the assembly was headed by the governors of each level and the committees were chosen from general people in such villages. The committees worked at the lowest levels and followed the government orders used in the temples or communities and reported to higher government agencies. They also had the duty of looking after the temples in the villages and tried to put in place strategies and activities in the monasteries by attending to the wishes of the people who donated the money to the temple. The committee would bring the money to be used for building schools, hospitals, official places, roads, bridges and so on according to the policies of government. The committee would control and be strict in using the money of the temple. It did not allow the monks to use the money for purposes other than government policy. Yang Sam noted that “even the income that got from selling fruits of temple’s orchard also required the decision from committee.” The research suggests that the *Saṅgha* administration under the Heng Samrin government was subject to control and supervised by the government.

The two traditional schools of Buddhism in Cambodia were the two *Nikaya*: the *Mohanikay* and *Thommayut*. These were merged. This situation led the monks who used to be the *Thommayut* monks before 1975 CE to be ordained as *Mohanikay* monks. For example, the Ven. Put Pon is at present the abbot of *Wat Kessraram* in Siemp Reap province. He was a former *Thommayut* monk, but he ordained again with *Mohanikay*.<sup>110</sup>

However, in 1991, King Sihanouk returned to the country after years of uncomfortable exile in China and North Korea. In 1993, he became king again, and resumed his role as supreme patron of the *Saṅgha*,<sup>111</sup> re-established *Thommayut* order and appointed Venerable Bour Kry as its Supreme Patriarch and Venerable Tep Vong as the Supreme patriarch of the *Mohanikay*. The full official title of the Supreme Patriarch of the *Mohanikay* is Samdech Preah *Sumedhādhipati*, while the full official title of the Supreme Patriarch of the *Thommayut* is Samdech Preah Sugandhādhipati.<sup>112</sup> The two fraternities are now officially equals. As in Thailand, there are the *Thommayut* and the *Mohanikay*, but unlike

---

<sup>110</sup> Phra Raphin Dualoi, “A Study on the Status of the Cambodian Saṅgha, 1975-1989”, p. 45.

<sup>111</sup> Alexandra Kent, **People of Virtue: Reconfiguring Religion, Power and Moral Order in Cambodia today**, (Malaysia: Nordic Institute of Asian Studies Press, 2008), p.9.

<sup>112</sup> Ian Harris, **Cambodian Buddhism: History and Practice**, p. 74.

Thailand, in Cambodia each of these orders has a separate hierarchy of dignitaries with a Supreme Patriarch at the top of each order.<sup>113</sup>

The ecclesiastical structure of Cambodian Buddhism was reformed and reorganized under the influence of modern bureaucratic arrangements. This was done in part to bring the Buddhist structure in line with the new administrative units in the country. The hierarchy established in this era more or less remains today, despite the upheavals of the Khmer Rouge period. Each province has one provincial chief Monk (Mekun) and each district within that province a district chief Monk (Anukun). The head monks of all the *wats* within a district vote for a district chief monk, and the district chief monks in turn vote to elect a Provincial Chief Monk. Ultimately these appointees must be approved by the order's Supreme Patriarch. Moreover, a group of high-ranking monks (Komnankhet) form an inner cabinet and act as a bridge between the Supreme Patriarchs and provincial chief monks; their role is similar to an inspector general's.<sup>114</sup>

Moreover, there are two main institutions that steer Buddhist affairs at the national level in Cambodia: the *Saṅgha* Assembly and the Ministry of Cults and Religions (MoCR). The Cambodian *Saṅgha* structure has various functions but among the most important is its role in managing matters of monastic discipline. The MoCR is primarily responsible for the administrative dimensions associated with managing the country's wat system and other Buddhist institutions, including the Buddhist education system.<sup>115</sup>

### ***3.1.3.6 The Roles played by Monks in Khmer Society***

The roles and duties of monks were restored again, but they were not as they had been traditionally. The monks were required to be essentially supporters of the government, and to assist in the fight with against the Khmer Rouge. Despite that fact, the monks still gave *Dhamma* talks to the people as normal, and led them in traditional merit

---

<sup>113</sup> David J. Banks, **Changing Identities in Modern Southeast Asia**, (London: The Trinity Press, 1976), p. 60.

<sup>114</sup> World Faith Development Dialogue, "Buddhism and Development: Community in Cambodia", pp. 15-16.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13.

making and Buddhist ceremonies.<sup>116</sup> Moreover, the monks and temples were at the heart of cooperation between the government and people in the reconstruction of schools, roads, government buildings and were also pivotal in the collection of materials needed for the ongoing war effort.

We can say that the Buddhist monk still performed their traditional social aid activities, but now there was an emphasis change – they reported to the communist government. The political changes in Cambodia during 1975-1989 CE, impacted on the whole of society; in the areas of politics, economy, society, religion, culture, and tradition. Under such changes, Buddhism and the monks were also affected. This was simply unavoidable. The policy of communist Khmer Rouge caused the Buddhist monks to lose their position in Khmer society.

Even after 1979 CE, Heng Samrin's policy, which was more relaxed than that of the Khmer Rouge, did not return the situation to normal. The government policies were more aimed at building up the legitimacy of the government and furthering its acceptance by the Khmer people and also by the international community. The new *Saṅgha* derived its power from the government; it was a case of religion controlled by state.

The drastic changes that took place in the Khmer Rouge and Heng Samrin regimes were the result of policies that were aimed at destroying religion and its rituals and ceremonies. The Khmer Rouge almost succeeded in Buddhism in Cambodia, but they could only wipe out its external forms. They were unable to remove it in its internal forms. They could not excise it from the hearts of the people. The people kept on believing in the Triple Gem.<sup>117</sup> The research makes it clear that when the Khmer Rouge were swept into the dustbin of history, and the Vietnamese backed regime liberalized the ordination procedures, Buddhism re-emerged strongly in Khmer society.

---

<sup>116</sup> Interview with Most Venerable Mahā Vimaladhamma the Second level of the Royal Order and Saṅgha Governing of Cambodian Buddhism, November 11, 2012.

<sup>117</sup> Interview with Most Venerable Mahā Vimaladhamma the Second level of the Royal Order and Saṅgha Governing of Cambodian Buddhism, November 11, 2012.

### ***3.1.3.7 The State of the Khmer Saṅgha under the PRK***

Buddhism was revived under the state control. The newly-emerged hierarchy simplified and placed it under the authority of the semi-governmental United Front for National Construction and Defense. The previous division of Cambodian Buddhism into two orders was abolished, and everyone then followed the same form of *Theravada* Buddhism. Candidates for ordination as monks still needed the approval of the local authorities, although the age restriction was lifted. About 2,800 *wats* were reopened, but they but they struggled to regain their dominant social positions. Schools attached to *wats* were rebuilt after local fundraising drives by teachers appointed by the Ministry of Education which also set the curriculum. *Wats* did not resume their traditional social welfare programs. The attendance at *wats*, except at major festivals, was reported to have been poor.

The situation that the Buddhist *Saṅgha* faced changed from almost total destruction under the Khmer Rouge to operation under the control of the PRK, although all religious practices had to conform to appropriate Buddhist traditions that reflected the true teachings of the Buddha. The monks and their followers had to avoid all superstitions. The Venerable Oum Soum confirmed that the Khmer *Saṅgha* did modify the Buddha's teachings and the 227 regulations were strictly obeyed in the country. These who traveled across the country in many provinces including Buttambang, Kampong Chchnagn, Pusat, Takeo, Kampong Cham, Prey Veng and Svay Reing have witnessed the religious celebrations such as New Years, *Phum Ben*, *Chol Vassa*, *Visakha Bochea*, and *Meakha Bochea*, and such special days were observed as national holidays.

Monks in the PRK had more rights and freedom to organize all religious rituals, but they had to do so under the close watch of the authorities. Ordination had to be carried out in accordance with the Buddhist regulations and had to be approved by local authorities as well. This issue was discussed during the Second National Congress of Monks. So men who fulfilled all the requirement for ordination, but who were rejected for some reason, were able to have their cases reviewed, and in some cases, able to enter the monkhood. The ceremonies were organized by the principle municipal district councils. The Congress suggested that all cases of illegal ordination had been brought to an end by the end of 1989 C.E.

For few years, monks had difficulties in traveling due to government restrictions. The government feared that the spies could disguise themselves as monks. This problem was resolved when Monks' Congress asked the government to issue travel documents for monks who needed to go to many places. The restriction on men's entry into *Saṅgha* was not the only concern of the government; women who wish to be nuns were also closely screened. The Monks' Congress issued a statement that a nun in the strictest sense of the term was an older woman of good character; one loyal to religion and revolution. In order to be accepted as nuns, women had to prove that they had no means of support. Otherwise they are not authorized for acceptance. The Congress recommended that each monastery should instruct the nuns to keep records of their incomes and expenses.

The monks' education shows little sign of improvement. The former Buddhist schools were not yet been reopened due to a lack of competent experts and financial resources. Unused buildings in the monasteries were converted into classrooms for the children. As well as trying to educate themselves, the monks were involved in a variety of activities, such as teaching children, and helping orphans, the aged and the needy.

In the area of foreign relations, the *Saṅgha* in Cambodia contacted a few Buddhist organizations abroad. After the Khmer Rouge collapsed, the Association of Asian Buddhists (Sri Lanka, USSR, India, Japan, and Bangladesh) and the Buddhist Association from Japan visited the country, bringing with them the financial aid and material aid such as books and printing equipment. The Venerables Tep Vong and Oum Soum led several delegations to participate in conferences abroad. They attended the conference of Religious Representatives of the Asian Socialist Countries<sup>118</sup> and Buddhist Conferences in India, Sri Lanka and Mongolia.

### ***3.1.3.8 The State of Khmer Buddhist Communities under the PRK***

In 1989 CE, constitutional reform began to reverse some of the restrictions on religious practices that had existed throughout the People's Republic of Kampuchea period. During this period, there had been no

---

<sup>118</sup> Yang Sam, **Khmer Buddhism and Politics from 1954-1984**, pp. 87-88.

Ministry of Religion, and Buddhism (as well as other religions, such as Islam) had been administered through the Front. That is to say, it was considered a mass organization structurally parallel to the labor unions and the women's association. The highest ranking Buddhist monks were in some sense under the administrative direction of Front officials and subject to their direction which is to say, ultimately, to the direction of the Party.<sup>119</sup> *Wat* lay committees had great power over the direction of the *wat*. Donations to *wat* were not to be used exclusively for the *wats* themselves; a portion was to be passed on for larger projects of service to the community at large.

During the PRK period, the decision was made to have only one monastic order in Cambodia. While it was not initially called the *Mohanikay*, most observers saw it as representing a continuation of the *Mohanikay* tradition rather than *Thommayut* tradition. Some who tried early on to restore the *Thommayut* Order were suppressed. In 1980 CE, a group of Theravada monks came from Vietnam to re-establish the monastic lineage, ordaining seven Cambodian monks, including the current *Mohanikay* Supreme Patriarch, Tep Vong, and from that time on, only the monks who had been ordained within that lineage were recognized. The young men were not allowed to enter the monkhood, primarily because of the fear that they would use the monkhood as a mean of escaping military service. However, in rural areas, many young men were able to ignore this restriction and became novices or full-fledged monks.

While these restrictions were profound, one should not forget that this was a period of the revival of Buddhism after it had been virtually eliminated by the Pol Pot regime. Despite all these restrictions, it was a period of the rebuilding and restoration of *wats*, and a return to the country of basic ritual practices that were very deeply seated in the culture. The socialist government did not particularly value the religion, but it recognized that it had a place in society and was willing for it to reaffirm itself as a social institution.

At the time Buddhism was declared, the national religion and mechanisms were put into place to allow young men to be ordained

---

<sup>119</sup> Joakim Ojendal, **Beyond Democracy in Cambodia: Political Reconstruction in a Post-Conflict Society**, (Malaysia: Nordic Institute of Asian Studies Press, 2009), p. 225.

again. There was initially a careful screening process, and the young men had to sign an agreement that after three years of being the monks they would be available for three years of military service. Subsequently, the political developments before the first three years meant that none of these young men were actually obliged to enter military service.<sup>120</sup> An important Buddha relic, closely associated with Sihanouk, which could be described as a cosmological symbol of the kingdom, was returned ceremonially to its customary place in a *Stūpa* in front of the railway station.

### ***3.1.3.9 Re-establishing Buddhism as National Religion under the Constitution***

Among the changes to the Cambodian constitution adopted at the extraordinary session of the National Assembly in Phnom Penh on 30 April 1989 CE was a clause reestablishing Buddhism as the state religion. Article Six of Part I declares: ‘Buddhism is the religion of the state. Religious activities which conform to the Constitution [are permitted]. Activities which use religion to infringe upon security, public order and the people’s interests are prohibited.’ Other changes to the constitution included the re-adoption of the name Cambodia for the country and the re-establishment of a market economy. These constitutional amendments were made just before the resumption of negotiations on the country’s future, in Paris.

The Cambodian government displayed a new attitude to the practice of Buddhism, the majority religion among the country’s population. After July 1988 CE, Buddhist prayers were broadcast over state radio. In January 1989 C.E., in what appeared to be an improvised speech, the prime minister Hun Sen apologized for mistakes which his regime had made in its treatment of religious believers. Speaking to about 200 monks and old people at the Chum Kriel Wat in a suburb of Kampot City, he said that these mistakes had led people to believe that his government was hostile to religion. ‘It was also used by our enemies,’ he said, in a significant reference to the guerrilla factions fighting his Vietnamese backed government. ‘I can assure you,’ he told the group that government respects Buddhism.’ Government leaders even worshipped in public on occasion.

---

<sup>120</sup> Ibid., pp. 225-227.



The danger to the government's existence presented by the Khmer Rouge resistance seemed to have led to this change of attitude. The government needed all the support it could get and did not want the Buddhists to support the resistance. Hun Sen's apology was far-reaching: he was apologizing for the mistakes his regime had made since taking power in 1979 CE, without referring to the even harsher measures, including execution, used by the Khmer Rouge regime between 1975 CE, and their down-fall.

The government used its new approach to Buddhism in its propaganda campaign for the hearts and minds of the Cambodian people. Reports were issued stressing the government's insistence on the policy of freedom of belief. This contrasted with the years of Khmer Rouge's rule. The celebration of Buddhist festivals, the publication of Buddhist calendars, the repair and rebuilding of wats and the participation of Buddhist monks in relief work were all been trumpeted. The participation of monks in the Asian Buddhist Conference for Peace shows that the government recognized the propaganda benefits of the involvement of the religious believers in international bodies.

It seemed unlikely that the Hun Sen regime's new espousal of Buddhism would allow it to function outside government control and regain its former dominant position in society. However, its position as a state religion gave Buddhism a public profile, and therefore a degree of protection; it could only help the Buddhists to expand their activities.

Article 31 of Cambodia's Constitution guaranteed equality regardless of religion. Article 43 declared Buddhism as the state religion but guarantees religious freedom and provided that it "does not affect other religious beliefs or violate public order and security." Article 68 states that "the State shall disseminate and develop the *Pāli* schools and the Buddhist Institutes." There were several symbolic mentions of religion in the constitution.

The government provided the training for Buddhist monks and the modest funds for an institute that researched Khmer culture and Buddhist tradition. All religions, including Buddhism, were required permits in order to build places of worship and conduct religious

activities.<sup>121</sup> These permits were generally granted but there were occasional reports of delays in granting them to minority religions that the government suspected of engaging in illegal political activities. In 2003 CE, the Ministry of Cults and Religions published a directive banning proselytizing.

### 3.1.3.10 *The Rebirth of Saṅgha Institutions*

When Samdech Norodom Sihanouk returned from exile to Cambodia in November 1991, one of his first acts was to resume his traditional king's duty as a supreme patron of the *Saṅgha*. During the People's Republic of Kampuchea (PRK) era, a single unified *Saṅgha* had been created to administer the Buddhist monks. In December 1991 CE, this unified *Saṅgha* under PRK was dissolved and Samdech Norodom Sihanouk appointed the *Sanghareach* for each of the two pre-1975 CE, monastic fraternities (Nikayas).<sup>122</sup> Venerable Tep Vong, the old president of Buddhist *Saṅgha*, became patriarch of the *Mohanikay*, the largest and most influential of the two groups, while Venerable Bour Kry, was given the charge of the *Thommayut*,<sup>123</sup> a small reformist order of Siamese origins, created during the reign of Ang Duang (r. 1841–1844 and 1845–1860 C.E.).

The reestablishment of the two old *Nikaya* seemed to imply that the *Mohanikay* and *Thommayut* would once again enjoy theoretical equivalence, and this was likely to have been *Samdech* Norodom Sihanouk's intention. The Ven. Bour Kry had crossed into nearby Thailand, home of the *Thommayut* order, during the civil war period. In due course, he moved to France, living throughout the DK and PRK periods at *Wat Khemararam* in the eastern suburbs of Paris.

This was where, one of Sihanouk's sons, the present king, Norodom Sihamoni, was temporarily ordained under his tutelage in late 1980 CE. On his return to Phnom Penh, Bour Kry naturally took up

---

<sup>121</sup> Jonathan Fox, *A world Survey of Religion and the State*, (USA: Cambridge University Press, 2008) p. 205.

<sup>122</sup> After the end of Khmer Rouge era, the new government led by Heng Samrin mixed again into single order of Buddhist Sangha. This led to Buddhism during PRK (1979-1989) having only one Nikāya not Mahanikāya nor Thommayut, but it was Theravada Buddhism.

<sup>123</sup> Pou Sothirak, *Cambodia: Progress and Challenges Since 1991*, (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies Press, 2012) p. 322.

residence at *Wat Botum Vaddey*, previously the headquarters of the *Thommayut* in Cambodia.

In any case, the *Thommayut* Sect, which since its foundation in the nineteenth century had served the royal household, was re-established. It had been dissolved during the time of the People's Republic of Kampuchea. This re-establishment not only created organizational problems, but also led to many great conflicts. The *Thommayut* tried to regain monasteries it had previously owned and which had been occupied in the 1980 CE, by the *Mohanikay* sect. Many monasteries were full to overflowing because of increased influx of new monks and this fact led to bitter struggles among the monastery-dwellers.

Norodom Sihanouk who was re-appointed again as the head of the two Buddhist sects, became the member of the six-member Royal Council of the Throne. The very fact of restoration of the monarchy testifies indirectly to the distinctive renaissance of Buddhism, as in the Khmer political tradition the monarchical principle is inseparable from the Buddhist worldview, in which the concept of the 'righteous ruler' is an important component. Buddhism has always been the foundation of the monarchic system of values: a statement of the basic policies of the royal government in Cambodia included the sentence 'Khmer Buddhism serves to strengthen the basis of royal power'. The monarchy and Buddhism in tandem effectively legitimized the traditional system.

The re-established of a union between the monarchy and Buddhism was the most important feature of the political process in Cambodia in the 1990 C.E., The association of the monarchy with Buddhism made the throne a symbol of spiritual continuity and national consensus, laying upon the monarchy the significant function of stabilizing the political situation in the country. The religious foundation provided the monarchy with incontrovertible legitimacy, which extended to all elements of the contemporary political system in the country: the constitution, the legislative and executive organs, the army and so on. It was precisely this foundation which allowed the Cambodian monarchy to once again call itself a legitimate, morally and religiously empowered entity.

Meanwhile, the Buddhist *Saṅgha* once again sanctified through the institution of the monarchy the secular programs of socio-political and

economic development, and this resulted in the forming of forming a social and political climate in which they were achieved more easily.<sup>124</sup>

### 3.2 Buddhism in Kingdom of Cambodia period: 1993-2000

When the UN organized elections in 1993 CE, it declared that monks and prisoners would be allowed to vote, a decision doubtless based on electoral philosophies current within the UN with little reference to its implications in the cultural terms of a specific location. After that, there was a debate about whether monks, even though they had the vote, should actually. Some prominent monastic leaders in 1993 CE discouraged monks from voting.<sup>125</sup> This issue continued to be debated, with the issue especially hot at the time of the 2003 CE elections, when monastic authorities declared that monks should not vote, whereas opposition parties insisted on the legal right to do so and encouraged them to defy the injunction that refused to allow monks to vote (despite their constitutional rights). Some *wats* threatened to expel monks if they voted.<sup>126</sup> In 2006 CE the *Mohanikaya* Patriarch, *Samdech* Tep Vong reversed this earlier position and said that monks could vote.

With the establishment of a legitimate Cambodian government in 1993 CE, the revival of institutional Buddhism in Cambodia paralleled the revival of the Cambodian state. To be sure, there were other aspects of the revival of Buddhism in Cambodia.<sup>127</sup> But, from this point on, and especially after general election, Cambodian Buddhism accelerated its engagement with the external world. During the PRK era, the government had ensured that such links only occurred with Buddhism in other socialist contexts, but the massive influx of foreign aid workers during the UNTAC period meant that the floodgates were definitively breached. NGOs, both international and local, were soon active, and by the early 2000 CE, it was estimated that around US\$ 80 million of international aid flowed through these organizations to the Cambodian economy every

---

<sup>124</sup> Nadezhda Bektimirova, “The Religious Situation in Cambodia in the 1990s”, **Religion, State & Society**, Vol. 30, No. 1, 2002, p. 64.

<sup>125</sup> San Phonla, **The History and Practice: Buddhism in Cambodia**, I Vols, (*Prawattisat nurng kar patibat: Phraputtasana nao khnong protest kampuchea*), (Cambodia: Nakorwat Press, 2011), p. 425.

<sup>126</sup> Joakim Ojendal, **Beyond Democracy in Cambodia: Political Reconstruction in a Post-Conflict Society**, p. 237.

<sup>127</sup> Donald K. Swearer, **The Buddhist World of Southeast Asia**, (USA: State University of New York Press, 1995), p. 104.

year. Their work began to impact on all levels of Cambodian life including medicine, human rights, banking, art and culture, the rewriting of laws, and urban planning. Buddhism was also significantly affected because many NGOs felt the need to channel their activities through reliable partners with influence throughout the country, and as always, the *Saṅgha* was well-placed to perform such a role, but this came at a cost.<sup>128</sup>

Given its almost total destruction during the DK era, the Buddhist monastic order was only just emerging from its chrysalis. With little money available inside the country, it became reliant on sources of patronage emanating from outside. The Khmer Diaspora community tended to support the rebuilding of individual *wats* while international organizations focused more on the re-establishment of institutions.

In 1992 CE, a peace march or *Dhammyietra* took place with the aim of restoring Buddhism in Cambodia. It was led by the Ven. *Mahaghosananda* (known to some as the Cambodian Gandhi), a monk from *Wat Sampeou Mea*, in Phnom Penh. He led a further march in 1994, but the march came under armed attack. Fortunately all participants, both laity and monks, had been trained in meditational techniques, particularly the four *Brahmavihāra*, as a way to overcome the fear. The *Dhammyietra* movement was non-partisan and all banners, undisciplined monks, military uniforms and weapons were forbidden on the march.<sup>129</sup> However, this march called for peace and reconciliation in the country. From this point, Cambodian Buddhism accelerated its engagement with external world.

The monks who joined in this *Dhammyietra* told me that this march led to the further strengthening of Buddhism in Cambodia. After the general election in 1993 CE, the government did not want to see any further Buddhist,<sup>130</sup> but this movement seemed to be the rebirth of Buddhist social engagement in Cambodia. From then, on the fact is that Buddhism developed quickly: there were 27,467 monks in 1993 CE, and over 50,873 of monks and novices by 2000 CE. The number of temples had also returned to pre-war levels, with nearly 4000 nationwide, and

---

<sup>128</sup> Pou Sothirak, **Cambodia: Progress and Challenges Since 1991**, (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies Press, 2012), p. 322.

<sup>129</sup> Ian Harris, **Buddhism and Politics in Twentieth Century Asia**, p. 70.

<sup>130</sup> Interview with Ven. Chuek Tun, of Wat Sama Thi Phon, November 14, 2012.

there was a great revival of *Saṅgha* education. Buddhist social services grew strongly. Moreover, the Buddhist Institute, the center for the study of religion was reestablished, libraries were reconstituted, and a publications program was restarted again.

Number of Buddhist Monks and temples in Cambodia: 1990-2000 CE.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Numbers of Temples</b>	<b>Numbers of Monks</b>
1990	2,900	19,173
1991	n.d.	n.d.
1992	2,902	25,529
1993	3,090	27,467
1994	3,290	39,821
1995	3,371	40,218
1996	3,381	40,911
1997	3,512	45,547
1998	3,588	49,097
1999	3,685	50,081
2000	3,731	50,873

Notes: The number of monks includes novices; no data is available for the period of 1991 C.E.

### **3.2.1 Political Changes**

In 1993 CE, Cambodia held competitive elections under the supervision of UNTAC. The elections were for a constituent assembly, but after adopting a new constitution, the assembly transformed itself into a parliament and ratified the formation of a new national government. The royal party, The National United Front for an Independent, Neutral,

Peaceful and Cooperative Cambodia (FUNCINPEC), won a clear electoral victory, with 46 percent of the vote and 58 of the 120 available seats. The former communist ruling party, the Cambodian People's Party (CPP), won 38 percent of the vote and 51 seats. Despite its earlier agreement in Paris, the Khmer Rouge rejected the process, and violence blamed on both the Khmer Rouge and the CPP marred the election campaign.

Despite its perceived success, the United Nations-supervised election in 1993 CE, failed to bring either democracy or political stability to Cambodia. Hun Sen and other CPP leaders rejected the election results, claiming that the United Nations had "rigged" the process, and threatened the insurrection. UNTAC and foreign governments stood by the election results, but the CPP forced its way into a power-sharing agreement, with Prince Norodom Ranariddh and Hun Sen as co-prime ministers.<sup>131</sup>

The formation of the coalition government in the aftermath of the 1993 CE, elections led to the promulgation of a new constitution, re-establishing the monarchy, on 24<sup>th</sup> of September 1993 CE. In line with most previous Cambodian constitutions, Buddhism was enshrined as the religion of the State again and the freedom of belief was guaranteed (Article 43). The Kingdom's motto was 'Nation, Religion and King', (Article 4). Among other provisions, Article 68 stated: 'The State shall disseminate and develop the *Pāli* schools and Buddhist Institutes.'

Not surprisingly, the coalition of royalists and former communists proved dysfunctional. Each government ministry had co-ministers, which gave both parties a full veto on all government action. This was particularly significant for the CPP, as its long-standing, continuing control of the country gave it a strong incentive to maintain the status quo and its role in government enabling to slow the reforms that threatened the interests of party insiders.

With Ranariddh's agreement or acquiescence, the coalition government purged popular FUNCINPEC reformers. In August 1995 CE, the National Assembly expelled the popular finance minister, Sam Rainsy, after he publicly criticized government corruption. In November 1995 CE, Prince Norodom Sirivudh who was the foreign minister and FUNCINPEC secretary general as well as a half-brother of King

---

<sup>131</sup> Eric C. Bjornlund, **Beyond Free and Fair: Monitoring Elections and Building Democracy**, (Washington: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2004), p. 164.

Sihanouk and the uncle of Prince Ranariddh was removed from the government, expelled from the National Assembly, and forced into exile on the implausible grounds that he was plotting to assassinate Hun Sen.

The uneasy coalition of Prince Ranariddh's royalist party and the former communist CPP of Hun Sen eventually unraveled.<sup>132</sup> In July 1997 CE, forces loyal to Hun Sen and Ranariddh clashed in Phnom Penh. The battle lasted for two days with many casualties. Hun Sen's forces won, and he was accused of carrying out a coup, but Ranariddh had been negotiating with Khmer Rouge leaders for their support in the upcoming election, and he had secretly imported several tons of weapons into Cambodia to strengthen his private army. Major aid donors and members of ASEAN responded to the clash by threatening the withholding of aid, delaying Cambodia's membership in ASEAN, and declaring Cambodia's UN seat vacant. The same countries also insisted that Hun Sen allowed an election to be held in 1998 CE, with Ranariddh and his party taking part

The CPP was able to win the 1998 CE election without resorting to wholesale cheating, because its tight control of the state enabled it to reward or punish the members of the electorate. After the election, the coalition with FUNCINPEC was re-established, with Hun Sen serving as Prime Minister and Ranariddh accepting the reduced status of president of the National Assembly. Most foreign aid donors resumed providing aid, and Cambodia was admitted to ASEAN while its representatives regained their seats in the UN General Assembly.<sup>133</sup>

We have seen that even after Cambodia had general elections and became a democracy, the political situation in the country was still unstable. However, this change was for the better as it was a change from communism to democracy.

### **3.2.2 The Government's Policies toward Buddhism**

The September 1993 CE, Constitution included the motto "Nation, Religion, King" (Article 4). Buddhism was established as the state religion (Article 43). It has been argued that, by renewing the old association of *Theravada* Buddhism and Khmeritude, the drafters were able to underline the sharp cultural boundary between Cambodia and

---

<sup>132</sup> Ibid., p. 166.

<sup>133</sup> Peter A. Poole, **Politics and Society in Southeast Asia**, (USA: British Library Cataloguing Data Press, 2009), p. 55.



Vietnam, the latter being Communists, Catholics, or Mahayanists.<sup>134</sup> Article 43 also ensures that “Khmer citizens of either sex shall have the right to freedom of belief.”<sup>135</sup> However, “freedom of religious belief and worship shall be guaranteed by the state on the condition that such freedom does not affect other religious beliefs or violate the public order and the security.” There are echoes of PRK and DK thinking in the need for strong control here. One can only speculate that the CPP, given its previous history, was the most likely group to have argued for the inclusion of such restrictions. Another section of the Constitution that is relevant to a Buddhist perspective is Article 13, which charges that “within a period of not more than seven days [of the death of the previous king], the new King . . . shall be chosen by the Royal Council of the Throne,” comprising six persons, including the two *Sanghareachs*.<sup>136</sup>

The Ministry of Cults and Religious Affairs was reestablished in 1992 CE, taking over responsibility for religious policy from the Khmer United Front for National Construction and Defense (KUFNCD).<sup>137</sup> Hean Vanniroth, a FUNCINPEC member, became its first secretary of state. Its main aims were to reestablish the ecclesiastical structures that existed before 1970 CE, to develop and consolidate the monks’ education, and to reestablish the Buddhist Institute and reissue its previous publications. Article 68 of the Constitution had in fact asserted that the “State shall disseminate and develop the *Pāli* schools and the Buddhist Institute.” The institute itself restarted in June 1992 CE, and was funded by ongoing grants from two non-Khmer nongovernmental organizations (NGOs): the Heinrich Böll Foundation (HBF) and the Japanese Sotoshu Relief Committee (JSRC). The institute’s quarterly journal, *Kambuja Suriya*, resumed publication in 1994 CE. Originally based in *Wat Unnalom*, the Buddhist Institute now moved to a purpose-built center in Phnom Penh funded by the Japanese *Rissho Koseikai* Fund for Peace in

---

<sup>134</sup> Martin, **Cambodia: A Shattered Society**, (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1994), p. 260.

<sup>135</sup> The equivalent Thai slogan, “Chat, Satsana, Phramahakasat,” was created by Rama VI (Vajiravudh; r. 1910–1935). Wyatt (1984, 229) refers to it as a “Trinitarian mystery.”

<sup>136</sup> By comparison, on the death of Norodom in 1904, a similar council comprised the resident superior, five ministers, the chief of the palace Brahmins, and the two *sanghareachs*.

<sup>137</sup> Since its reestablishment, the Ministry of Cults and Religious Affairs has always been led by FUNCINPEC officials.

commemoration of the ninetieth year of the movement's founder, *Nikkyo Niwano*.<sup>138</sup>

The New Political Platform of the CPP stated: "The citizens' honor, dignity and life must be protected by laws. The death penalty is abolished. Buddhism is the state religion with the *Tripitaka* as a basis of laws. All religious activities are allowed in the country. The traditions, customs and cultural heritage of the nation must be preserved and glorified, as well as the traditions of all the nationalities living in the Cambodian national community."<sup>139</sup>

The results of these policies were an increasing number of monks and the development of *Saṅgha* education. The *Pāli* school for monks was established for first time in 1997 C.E, in Phnom Penh and later spread out to other provinces. Schools were situated only in each provincial city, but eventually some were established in rural areas, too.<sup>140</sup> Some financial help came from the government and other from non-government organizations. The government gave freedom to the monks to propagate Buddhism. It seemed that Buddhism was on up again, because many Buddhist activities progressed and developed.<sup>141</sup> Buddhist social engagement developed particularly strongly, with a Buddhist radio broadcast preaching and propagating Buddhism in almost every province. Moreover, in some areas, usually in the provincial cities, monks and government officials cooperated well, and monks were given the chance to teach Buddhism in schools and persuade students to participate in *Dhamma* course in the temples.

Some of the keys participants told me that even though the government has proclaimed freedom of religious belief and practice, monks were still afraid to undertake any Buddhist projects.<sup>142</sup> For instance, monks were reluctant to get involved in summer camps that

---

<sup>138</sup> Ian Harris, **Cambodian Buddhism: History and Practice**, pp. 205-206.

<sup>139</sup> Kampuchea, no. 623, October 21, 1991, 3–4, quoted in Frings 1994, p. 363.

<sup>140</sup> Interview with Ven. Rai Vimal, the abbot of Wat Phra Pun Lia, November 13, 2012.

<sup>141</sup> Interview with Most Venerable Most Ven. Mahā Vimaladhamma Sirisuvanna, the Second level of the Royal Order and Saṅgha Governing of Cambodian Buddhism, November 11, 2012.

<sup>142</sup> Interview with Ven. Son Sa Ruet Khunavatto, the abbot of Wat Phra Narin, November 12, 2012.

required the permission of local government official because they knew that the local officials were suspicious that the monks might use the camps for preaching against the government and its policies. Monks were, in general, were afraid to answer questions about government and its policies.

### 3.2.3 Social Changes

The Khmer Rouge withdrew its support for the coalition government in 1992 CE, and resumed its insurgency from its stronghold in the countryside. Real change finally occurred in 1998, when Pol Pot died, and the remnants of his brutal army either surrendered or were integrated into the Cambodian army. After late 1990 CE, many overseas Khmers, and especially many Khmer refugees along the Cambodian-Thai border, were able to visit their old homeland, some even choosing to return after many years of exile in other countries.<sup>143</sup>

When the Khmer Rouge had been forced to retreat to the Thai border in 1979 CE, the Cambodian people who remained in the country worked very hard to put their family lives back together. The newly formed government propped up by Vietnam tried to govern in a way that was not very effective, given the circumstances. The work by the people and government from 1979 to early 1990 CE did lead to some progress and rehabilitation. They went through many stages of reform with little success in the areas of economy, agriculture, state control, semi-state control, and joint ventures of state and private agencies. Faced with international isolation, trade embargoes and meager resources, the Cambodians tried to survive.<sup>144</sup> However, painstakingly slow and ineffective that was, for the Cambodian people and the government, it was a period when they came together to revive the country from “Year Zero”

In October 1991 CE, there was the signing of the Agreements on the Comprehensive Political Settlement of the Cambodia Conflict which foresaw a major role for United Nations planning as well as the implementation. In addition to peace building, the mandate of the UN

---

<sup>143</sup> Barbara A. West, “Khmer” **Encyclopedia of the Peoples of Asia and Oceania**, (USA: An Imprint of Infobase Publishing Press, 2009), p. 396.

<sup>144</sup> Nassrine De Rham-Azimi, **UITRA Hiroshima Series in Post-conflict Reconstruction in Japan, Republic of Korea, Vietnam, Cambodia, East Timor and Afghanistan**, (United Nations Press, 2003), p. 121.

comprised (1) military, including disarmament and nine education, (2) civil administration, including free and fair elections, foreign affairs, defense, finance, information and including public security, (3) law and order, including human rights protection, (4) the whole process of general elections, (5) human rights, including education, oversight, investigation and human right violations, (6) repatriation of some 360,000 refugees living along the Thai border, and (7) rehabilitation and reconstruction. UNTAC (United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia) was tasked with fulfilling the seven mandates.

It is true that a tradition of patron-client relationship had had long history in Cambodian society. It has been observed that the post-1993 CE, Cambodia accentuated this informal patron-client relationship. This is because the newly founded state with its elected government had not been able to provide security and protection for its citizens. Under such circumstances, where there exists gross disparities of power and control over resources, people have devised other mechanisms, which result in dividing society into two classes; those who seek protection and those who provide protection.<sup>145</sup>

Land tenure, employment, access to education, and access to health services were still areas of deep concern, and people who were reluctant to place their faith in government were more willing to do so in the non-formal institutions of governance building around patron-client relationships. In situations like this, the poor are very susceptible to abuse by powerful people. The elections brought about a parliament that did not live up to the expectations of a liberal democratic institution in fulfilling its duty of governance. This served as a barrier to equitable development, and to the development of civil society. People simply did not trust formal government institutions.

### ***3.2.3.1 The Changing Saṅgha Status***

The state of Cambodian Buddhism improved markedly after 1988.E, when the government announced a withdrawal of Vietnamese forces and Hun Sen, the PRK Primes Minister (and former Khmer Rouge officer), agreed in principle to the creation of a new government that would include the PRK and Prince Ranariddh. In order to bolster its popular appeal, the PRK stepped up its support of Buddhism, and Hun

---

<sup>145</sup> Ibid., p. 122.

Sen publicly apologized for the government's previous "mistakes" towards religion. By 1989 CE, there were 2,400 temples in the country, or about two-thirds of the number of *wats* that had existed before 1970 CE.<sup>146</sup> In April of that year, the National Assembly voted to restore Buddhism as the national religion of Cambodia, apparently with the hope that Buddhist leaders would help create the stability needed for the rebuilding of the country's agriculture and economy. The government removed restrictions on the ordination of men under fifty, and the *Saṅgha* grew dramatically, so that by 1990 CE, there were 16,400 Cambodian monks, 40 percent of whom were novices. The government also removed a tax on *wats* and contributed money for the construction of shrines, some of which were dedicated to those who were killed by the Khmer Rouge. The shrines were built in the form of traditional *Theravada* Buddhist funerary structures, or *Stūpa*; memorials in which the relics of the dead were preserved. The enduring appeal of Buddhism, in short, ensured its central role in any successful reconstruction.

Moreover, when peace accords were finally signed in Paris in 1991 CE, under the auspices of the United Nations, Hun Sen recognized Sihanouk as king and head of state. Buddhist monks performed important rituals in the festivities, enthroning the king, who resumed his royal role as supreme patron of the *Saṅgha*.<sup>147</sup> Hundred of monks and novices ordained outside Cambodia returned from exile in Thailand and other countries. It was possible that the monks ordained in Thailand would raise serious questions about the legitimacy of the ordinations of those monks who were re-ordained in the PRK in 1979 CE. According to one interpretation the ordination of almost all the monks in Cambodia would have been in doubt. A question could also have been raised as to whether a rupture in service makes re-ordained monks less senior than those few Khmer monks who were outside Cambodia in 1975 C.E.<sup>148</sup>

The dramatic changes in Cambodia during the 1990 CE, democratization propelled the elements of the *Saṅgha* more deeply into

---

<sup>146</sup> William Shawcross, "Tragedy in Cambodia," *New York Review of Books*, October 18, 1996, p. 47. See also Steve Heder and Judy Ledgerwood, eds., *Propaganda, Politics and Violence in Cambodia: Democratic Transition under United Nations Peacekeeping* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1996).

<sup>147</sup> Thomas Banchoff, **Religious Pluralism, Globalization, and World Politics**, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), pp. 132-133.

<sup>148</sup> Charles F. Keyes, **Asian Visions of Authority: Religion and the Modern States of East and Southeast Asia Today**, p. 65.

the political processes. The universal adult suffrage ensured by the 1993 CE, constitution meant that monks were included in the electorate for the first time. In Thailand, by contrast, monks and even mae chees to this day forgo the right to vote, upon ordination, thus ritually demonstrating that the ordained state is beyond the reach of politics. Politicization and fragmentation have bedeviled the *Saṅgha* in Cambodia throughout its existence. These problems took on a new guise as the *Saṅgha's* politicized leadership and absorption into the electorate deeply entangled the monks in the tensions of the emerging political system.

This occurred largely at the expense of their moral autonomy, moral credentials, popularity and possible support for the opposition. The CPP government tried to woo them with hefty donations that were delivered with a dose of surveillance and menace, or to control their political activities by force. The groups of monks could be roughly identified as allied to particular parties. No matter how they were intended, religious statements were often interpreted as politically edged. For instance, just prior to the 2003 elections, the supreme patriarch Ven. Tep Vong argued that it was inappropriate for monks to use their vote.<sup>149</sup>

### ***3.2.3.2 The Restoration and Development of Saṅgha Education***

In 1975 CE, *Saṅgha* education ceased. It was resumed after the restoration of Buddhism in 1980 CE, but at a very low level and slow pace because most of new monks were too old to work and lacked Buddhist knowledge. Another factor was that most of the educated monks or Buddhist scholars had been killed by the Khmer Rouge. The deplorable state of *Saṅgha* education continued until 1982. Heng Samrin's government then published books and offered them to monks for reading, but the covers of the books had pictures of the revolutionary group with Heng Samrin as the head and leader of the other members. The government was trying to use the monks to control the people.

During the period 1979-1989 CE, there was no management of education in the temples but some temples had monks with considerable knowledge and teaching skills. Such monks sometimes taught the young monks and novices who had been illegally ordained, but few dared to do

---

<sup>149</sup> Alexandra Kent, **People of Virtue: Reconfiguring Religion, Power and Moral Order in Cambodia Today**, (Malaysia: Nordic Institute of Asian Studies, 2008), pp. 9-10.

this because the rules stated that both the teachers and the ordained persons might be punished. At this time, the government did not support *Saṅgha* education. Thus, there were no monks to study because at the time most of the monks were elderly persons who could not study at all.<sup>150</sup> This situation went on for a decade under the Heng Samrin government.

However, today's Buddhist education in Cambodia began with the official re-opening of Buddhist primary school on December 1989 CE, by Chea Sim, then a member of the Central Bureau of Kampuchea People's Revolutionary Party, the president of the National Assembly and the Chairman of the Kampuchean United Front for National Salvation, at *Wat Tuo Tum Pong* in Phnom Penh.<sup>151</sup> In his speech at the opening ceremony he said:

The renaissance of the monastic school will be the ground in which to plant Buddhist knowledge, to ensure the revival of our national culture and soul. It will contribute to the strengthening of pure morality, the spirit of solidarity, national unity, and the international solidarity for our nation.

As mentioned, from the fall of the Khmer Rouge regime on January 7, 1979 up to 1988 C.E., young men were not allowed to be ordained, although some young men were secretly ordained and led clandestine monastic lives in certain monasteries. Towards the end of 1988 CE, the state issued a circular permitting the young candidates to become monks. After this, the ordination ceremonies were led in many monasteries in all of the provinces. Within a short time, the number of monks, especially young monks in particular provinces, increased so rapidly that by 1989 CE, it was necessary to open monastic schools for them. Prior to the officially opening of the Buddhist schools, there had been some *Pāli* and Buddhist studies operating unofficially in a few monasteries in the provinces.

Cambodia reopened the Buddhist primary schools again for monks but she faced many difficulties in organization owing to the fact

---

<sup>150</sup> Phra Raphin Duangloi, "The Status of the Cambodian Saṅgha 1975-1989", p. 64.

<sup>151</sup> From a report of the Official Opening Ceremony of the Buddhist Primary School obtained from Tuol Tum Pong monastery, Phnom Penh.

that not enough educated monks were available to be the teachers, and other factors such as school buildings and supplies were insufficient. The schools still needed money from the government to help in employing teachers. This meant that the newly ordained monks and novices who lived in the rural areas were unable to get a proper education. Most of them did not get a chance to study as did their brothers in the city. They only learned how to chant in *Suttas* for ceremonies and follow the monastic rules. Phra Ra Phin Duangloi made the following helpful observations about the conditions of the *Saṅgha* during the Khmer Rouge time:<sup>152</sup>

1. The Khmer Rouge prohibited the monks from conducting any Buddhist activities and destroyed the Buddhist Institute. Therefore the Buddhist educational system which was laid down prior to the French protectorate disappeared too. For the first decade, the lack of interest that resulted from the previous government negated encouragement from the later government of Hun Sen.

2. There were not enough Buddhist teachers, monks and novices to organize education in the schools and temples. A further problem was age restriction on those who wanted to ordain.

3. The monks who had had good education and were knowledgeable about Buddhism were executed following the Khmer Rouge coup. This left the Heng Samrin government with a lack of religious teachers who could restore the *Saṅgha* community to its former condition.

4. Heng Samrin, despite his efforts and learning on the job, was a political and ideological person, and this fact in itself limited the development of *Saṅgha* education.

5. The Heng Samrin government used the monks to indoctrinate people with government policy. They were to hand down the information and skills. The Buddhist temples became cooperation centers between the government and the local people. This forced the monks during this period to get involved in politics, and thus *Saṅgha* education was neglected.

---

<sup>152</sup> Phra Raphin Duangloi, Op. cit., p. 65.



All of the above factors slowed down the restoration of *Saṅgha* education in Cambodia. However, following the official opening of the first Buddhist primary school, many such schools followed suit, both in the capital and in the provinces. In 1992 CE, the Buddhist secondary education began with the re-establishment of *Suramrith* Buddhist High School on the premises of the former *Preah Sihanouk Rāja* Buddhist University. In 2004 CE, the high school was relocated to its original, pre-1975 C.E., location. When the first batch of monk students had completed their Buddhist upper-secondary education, the *Preah Sihanouk* Raja Buddhist University was re-opened at its former location in Phnom Penh to provide higher education to monks. The Buddhist Institute was reborn in 1992 CE, and began distributing scriptures to libraries and *wats*.<sup>153</sup> The first Buddhist high school for monks was reopened in 1993 CE. The Buddhist University reopened in 1997, and Japan donated a million copies of Khmer Buddhist scriptures for monks who could read.<sup>154</sup>

However, the international divisions in the *Saṅgha* meant an increased ability of political players to manipulate the religion. All the political parties sought the *Saṅgha* approval by inviting the monks to bless events and by visiting and donating to *wats*. Poor education, institutional weakness, divisions, and political alignments meant the *Saṅgha* was not well positioned for strong roles in government, conflict resolution, nor the teaching of ethics to the leaders or the populace. Nevertheless, the Buddhist institutions were back in demand, and political people try to co-opt, manipulate and control them.

The present system of Buddhist education largely follows the structure that was in place prior to 1975 CE. The curriculum consists of both religious and secular subjects, and has been reproduced with some adaptations to modern conditions. The Buddhist monastic education is divided into three levels of studies:<sup>155</sup>

1. Buddhist primary education
2. Buddhist secondary education
3. Buddhist higher education

---

<sup>153</sup> Chheat Sreang, **The Buddhist Institute: A short History**, (*Puttasana bhorndhit: provat doisangkhep*), (Phnom Penh: The Buddhist Institute, 2005), 40.

<sup>154</sup> Harold G. Coward, **Religion and Peacebuilding**, p. 197.

<sup>155</sup> Alexandra Kent, **People of Virtue: Reconfiguring Religion, Power and Moral Order in Cambodia today**, p. 259-260.

However, many monks at the present time have little education or experience and the novices often have only primary education. Most monks are young men and teenagers ordained temporarily for education or as part of traditional expectations that the males serve some time as monks.<sup>156</sup>

### ***3.2.3.3 Upgrading the Saṅgha's Role in Khmer Society***

After the general election in 1993 CE, and the increase in the number of monks in the country, the role of monks underwent considerable change. The traumatic Khmer Rouge period of three years very nearly obliterated Buddhism from Cambodia. During the period of restoration of over nearly a decade, Buddhism was reborn, but the *Saṅgha* remained relatively weak and powerless. The lack of trained personnel and resources personnel Buddhist resources hindered development and caused development of Buddhism during the regime of PRK to be so unremarkable.

It was in this new period that the shape of Buddhism changed, and the roles of monks in society progressed more than before. One result of the constitution of 1993 CE was the establishment of Buddhism as the state religion and the freeing up of many religious activities. The monks at this time were then able to contribute in many significant roles in partnership with the government in order to develop the country. There are now more than fifty-thousand monks teaching, training, and propagating Buddhism in Cambodia. Moreover, the roles of monks now are not restricted to just teaching in temples or performing Buddhist ceremonies. They engaged more in the real world often doing social work. They give *Dhamma* talks on TV and do radio broadcasts that are popular and can attract the interest of the people.<sup>157</sup> Some temples have set up their own radio stations in order to propagate Buddhism. In some places the monks have the chance to teach Buddhism in secular schools, and some temples have established Buddhist meditation centers. Moreover, some temples have established Buddhist Associations and publish books, or teach and publish via the internet. Their programs deal with the news in general and Buddhist events in particular.

---

<sup>156</sup> Harold G. Coward, **Religion and Peacebuilding**, p. 197.

<sup>157</sup> Interview with Most Venerable Most Ven. Mahā Vimaladhamma Sirisuvanna, the Second level of the Royal Order and Saṅgha Governing of Cambodian Buddhism, November 11, 2012.

We can conclude from the discussion above that monks have been afforded new roles in Khmer society. They have come a long way from the dark days of the PRK regime when they could really only just survive. However, the role of monks as mentioned is more developed in the cities and provincial cities, but there is still a great need for development in the rural areas. *Pāli* schools both primary and secondary are only available in provincial cities. Although monks in rural areas can still study the *Dhamma* (three levels, *Tri*, *To* and *Eka*), it is difficult to improve their that relate to working in the societies as well. On the other hand, the rural monks are in tune with the way of life in the country, and close to the people in their communities.

Although the monks seem to be free to get involved in any activity, many of their activities are still observed and considered by the authorities. This has been a real feature of life for the monks since the time of the Heng Samrin regime. Monks have always been required to inform the authorities of their activities and movements.<sup>158</sup> This means, that the government still uses its powers to control Buddhism, but indirectly.

The government in Cambodia has for some time been afraid of the Buddhists and their activities, and it has tried to control the monks and indeed use them for its own ends. Monks have not been free to involve themselves in the secular world in any way they wished. Indeed the government has seen the control of the monks as one of its own important activities. However, some projects are not strictly controlled or supported by the government, and the monks are able to get involved and work in some projects with relative freedom.

#### ***3.2.3.4 Monks and Political Legitimacy***

The Cambodian government often encouraged monks to play ‘traditional’ roles as religious and moral educators of the people and to uphold the ethical foundations of society – indeed the role of the *Saṅgha* in government policies for national development and integration was a planned move ‘granted’ by the government. The government did not openly encourage the monks to participate in secular affairs, claiming that

---

<sup>158</sup> Interview with Ven. Son Sa Ruet Khunavatto, the abbot of Phra Narin monastery, November 12, 2012.

these were the government's responsibility. Personal involvement by monks in politics such as to campaign for law enforcement or policy implementation were labeled as 'non-traditional' (*khos-tumneam-tumop*).

In later years, however, Khmer Buddhism changed in significant ways and the monks became increasingly involved in politics. This recent political activism of the Khmer *Saṅgha* was similar to the role that it played in social and political affairs in 1940s, and in 1950s CE, when monks protested against the French colonial regime, demanding freedom, independence and the preservation of Khmer culture and language. Monks were officially granted the right to vote in election in the constitution of 1993 CE, which was the first time in Cambodia that monks could vote. Interestingly, many of them then participated in the 1998 CE protests against election irregularities, claiming also that the ruling party practiced 'poor governance, corruption, and associated social ills.'<sup>159</sup> While this did not result in any large-scale mobilization of the *Saṅgha* as a political force, it encouraged some young monks to participation in parliamentary politics. Many of these young monks were associated with opposition figure Sam Rainsy and his political party, the SRP.<sup>160</sup>

Many monks, however, did not agree with giving the right to vote to monks, because it was thought that this would cause problems and fighting problem within the *Saṅgha* community.<sup>161</sup> Many lay people too were unhappy with the decision to give monks the vote. The political parties attempted to get the monks to vote for them; but they never carefully thought out the consequences of all this politicking on the institutions of Buddhism. Their aims were only to get the profit from the monks during the election periods. They considered the monk to be Khmer citizens who had equal voting, but they failed to see that that the monks were of special status and morality.<sup>162</sup>

---

<sup>159</sup> Ian Harris, **Cambodian Buddhism: History and Practices**, p. 220.

<sup>160</sup> The Sam Rainsy Party (SRP) is a personalist liberal party in Cambodia. The party is a member of the Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats, Liberal International, and the Alliance of Democrats. The name of the leader, Sam Rainsy, is pronounced in Khmer as "Sam Rangsee".

<sup>161</sup> Interview with Ven. Son Sa Ruet Khunavatto, the abbot of Wat Phra Narin, November 12, 2012.

<sup>162</sup> Huk Savann, **The strengthening of Buddhism in Cambodia**, (*Kar bongrerng phraputtasana nao protest kampuchea*), (Cambodia: Phnom Penh, 2008), p. 22.

The participation of Buddhist monks in the general elections in 1993 CE, and their involvement in political activities became extremely sensitive issues for the *Saṅgha* and the country at large. Participation resulted in subsequent imposition of restriction upon monks, and limitation of their rights in the political arena, and this in turn tended to fuel opposition to the government within the *Saṅgha*. The monks who did not agree with the government's actions were labeled as 'illegal' or 'false' monks<sup>163</sup> and this led to the polarization of the two viewpoints 'traditionalist' and 'modernist' regarding the role of Buddhist monks in present day Cambodia.

The supporters of the 'traditionalist' view of monks claimed that Buddhism was about the teaching ways to end suffering and to attain spiritual liberation and happiness by cultivating one's peace of mind. They claimed that the monks, with their spiritual expertise and religious authority, should therefore educate people to live in accordance with the principles of Buddhist teachings, especially 'the Four Noble Truths and the Noble Eightfold Path'. The monks were not like ordinary people. Upon ordination, they detached themselves from mundane life and adopted a neutral, compassionate stance, like the disciples of Buddha, and they should act as the symbols for people. Any involvement in worldly matters, it was held, would cause attachment and craving, which were hazardous to the monks' spiritual achievements.<sup>164</sup> Furthermore, the monks would also be disturbed by politicians seeking their support and the popularity.

### ***3.2.3.5 Buddhism and Developing Partnerships***

Buddhism for development has been operating in Cambodia since 1990 CE. It was established by a monk named Heng Moychenda at a refugee camp along the Thailand and Cambodia border, and its purpose was to draw on the spiritual teaching of Buddhism to aid the reconciliation and reconstruction required following many years of civil conflict during the bloody reign of the Khmer Rouge.<sup>165</sup> Monychenda

---

<sup>163</sup> Nadezda Bektimirova, "The Saṅgha in Politics: Challenges and Consequences", (Phnom Penh Post, November 21 December, 4), p. 6.

<sup>164</sup> Alexandra Kent, **People of Virtue: Reconfiguring Religion, Power and Morality in Cambodia Today**, p. 242.

<sup>165</sup> Matthew Clarke, **Development and Religion: Theology and Practice**, (USA: Edward Elger Press, 2011), p. 81.

termed this approach as socially engaged Buddhism and encouraged Buddhist monks and nuns to work closely with their communities to promote peace and material development.

Engaged Buddhism in Cambodia received more general support from a massive influx of foreign NGOs in the run-up to the 1993 CE elections.<sup>166</sup> The Khmer *Saṅgha* participated in social and economic development programs in rural areas. The *Saṅgha* liked to talk about its work in mobilizing the population to build irrigation works. Monks were ecological activists, protesting destruction felling of forests, and they also took part in programs to clear the country of landmines. Under the honorary patronage of the Venerable Samdech Moha Ghosananda, a dozen Cambodian nongovernmental organization led by the Venerable Nhem Kim Teng, Cambodia's 'ecology monk,' endeavored to help save Cambodia's environment through the network of Buddhist temples in the country. The aim of their program was to train hundreds of monks in provincial temples to mobilize the people to learn about, protect and improve their local environment while also putting moral pressure on the country's leaders to stop the environmental plundering of the country. Some of the monks' activities were new for Cambodia. For instance, the monks came up with the initiative of founding monastery-run development banks to alleviate the peasant poverty and to help the monasteries themselves to refuse the services of moneylenders.<sup>167</sup> Buddhist-oriented nongovernmental organizations, in cooperation with the *Saṅgha*, sought to renew the historical forms of self-help development which benefited the people, and in particular, the neediest ones, at the community level.

The ecology groups developed and used training modules and worked with monks and laypeople in two northwestern provinces in temple-connected community development. The three training cycles for these modules were 'community health, water and sanitation,' village economics and social development, and preservation of nature and cultural development. Monks initiated the 'marches for peace' which were held across the country every year from 1992 CE, under the slogan of 'Down with weapons, long live the *Dhamma*.' During the marches, the monks would explain the policy of 'national reconciliation' to the people.

---

<sup>166</sup> Ian Harris, "Sangha Groupings in Cambodia", *Buddhist Studies Review*, (UK: Association for Buddhist Studies), (2001), p. 81.

<sup>167</sup> Rosmey Kampuchea (a newspaper), 31 July 1996; 13February 1994.

Moreover, ‘extra’ marches were sometimes organized. Immediately after the forcible removal of Princes Ranariddh from power in summer 1997 CE, for example, when tanks entered Phnom Penh, 700 monks held marches for peace in the city under the slogan ‘May peace come to the home of every Cambodian.’<sup>168</sup> In July 1998 CE, the monks organized a pre-election march calling for nonviolent elections, and over 2000 male and female members of the *Saṅgha* took part. These were becoming ever more orientated to social issues. Later marches raised awareness of such issues as landmines and deforestation. In 1996 CE, 2000 trees were planted along the route of the march.

The *Saṅgha*, however, found it hard to come to terms with all modern challenges. Its attitude to the HIV/AIDS problem provides an example. Cambodia was facing an AIDS crisis, to the extent that the government warned that the rapid spread of the sickness might become a threat to national security. At the end of May 2000 CE, the national AIDS authority held a conference with the Ministry of Cults and Religious Affairs to map out a strategy on how to make use of Buddhist monks in the areas of HIV prevention and caring for those sick with AIDS. After the conference ended it became clear that the leading Buddhist monks had totally different views on the problem. The Venerable Samdech Tep Vong, the leader of the majority *Mohanikāya* Sect, believed that official figures on the prevalence of HIV had been massively inflated, and he strongly opposed any involvement by the *Saṅgha* in combating it. In his view, it was inappropriate for Buddhist monks to talk to women about sexual matters. He thought that that AIDS was a punishment for the sins of those with loose morals and that if monks were seen to be offering help and support to such people, the result would be that others would lose the fear of catching the virus. He believed that the only way to fight AIDS was for the government to crack down on brothels and prostitution.<sup>169</sup>

Venerable Samdech Sanghareach Bour Kry, the leader of the smaller *Thammayuttanikāya* Sect, had markedly different views. He believed that the authorities should hide nothing of the severity of the AIDS problem from the Cambodian people, or from the world at large,

---

<sup>168</sup> Kambodya thaems, 15 March 1996; The Phnom Penh Post, 15 August 1997.

<sup>169</sup> Nadezda Bektinirova. “The Religious Situation in Cambodia in the 1990s,” **Religion, State & Society**, Vol. 30, No. 1, (2002), p. 69.

and that it would be virtually impossible to close down the brothels. Furthermore, he thought that monks had a duty to help control the spread of the disease and to give support to those afflicted so that even though they may have had fallen victim to immorality, they could die in peace. He suggested that monks should include the subject in their sermons, and bring a Buddhist perspective to bear on it. The AIDS issue thus highlights a major challenge to the *Saṅgha*: that of finding the golden mean between adhering to unchangeable tradition and responding to modern problems. Both Tep Vong and Bour Kry were keen to maintain the influence of the in Cambodian society, but while the former believed that this could best be done by asserting the traditional moral and ethical principles of Buddhist teaching, the latter argued that the most fruitful way was through greater involvement of the *Saṅgha* with secular problems.<sup>170</sup> The Khmer *Saṅgha* was thus actively seeking a place of its own in the new society and ways of adapting to new conditions.

However, monks were not the only Buddhist actors with proven potentiality to contribute to local development. Buddhist priests (*Achar*) and *wat* committee members who were elected from the lay community, managed *wat* funds and projects and had the potential to be ideal local development partners, as they tended to have higher levels of education and experience and could offer a bridge to the monastic community. Cambodian nuns or *Donchee* also represented important female actors in Cambodian *wats*. Increasingly both national and international development partners recognized that working within Buddhist structures and with Buddhist actors offered the promise of enhancing the effectiveness, reach, and sustainability of development efforts in many fields. Social engagement for monks and other Buddhist actors was not without challenges, which could range from capacity constraints to contradictions with the *Vinaya* code which sets guidelines for the daily lives and behavior of monastics.<sup>171</sup>

There were tensions within the *Saṅgha* as some sought to return to older esoteric traditions, or “spiritual” Buddhism, while others wished to build a new and “socially engaged” path. Despite these tensions, many Cambodian monks became “socially engaged,” and active in many areas relevant to broader development priorities. However, their efforts were

---

<sup>170</sup> Ibid., pp. 68-69.

<sup>171</sup> World Faiths Development Dialogue, “Buddhism and Development Community in Cambodia: Working as Partners”, pp. 10-11.



poorly funded and little publicized.<sup>172</sup> Engaged Buddhism was less established than it was in neighboring Thailand, but it was, and remains an influential philosophy in Cambodia.

### ***3.2.3.6 The State of Buddhism in the Present Time***

The limitations of the recent, internationally-inspired peace intervention in Cambodia highlight the need for a greater emphasis on peace-building initiative which are grounded in the local Khmer culture. Buddhism is the sole institution which cuts across the deep political divisions separating Cambodians today. The tendency to see it as a passive religion has often led its great potential to be overlooked by outsiders. Khmer Buddhism's timeless message of non-violence and compassion offers an important platform for promoting constructive social and political change in Cambodia today. However, Khmer Buddhism's inherent conservativeness and its recovery from near annihilation under the Khmer Rouge leave it poorly placed to challenge prevailing social injustices.<sup>173</sup>

Many great and intellectual monks were killed during the Khmer Rouge Regime. This was a great loss to *Theravāda* Buddhism in Cambodia. Cambodian Buddhism is reviving, but still remains in a weak state of physical, spiritual, and intellectual health since such development takes a long time, and resources are scarce. Buddhism was reborn and started progressing but on the physical form only.<sup>174</sup> Some responsibilities that used to be done by monks are looked after by the government. Examples include health care and education. The fact that social services once earnestly performed by Buddhist monks are now seen to be done by government, leaves the Khmer Buddhist community inactive in Khmer society. Additionally, owing to the force of globalization, Cambodia needs to be open to other cultures. This is a chance for other religions to have missions operating in Cambodia and do what Buddhist monks used to do. Those religions undertake to perform social services that used to be performed by Buddhist monks. Furthermore, materialism has blinded some Khmer people to forget the

---

<sup>172</sup> Ibid., p. 6.

<sup>173</sup> Yos Hut Khemacaro, "Steering the Middle Path: Buddhism, Non-Violence and Political Change in Cambodia", p. 71.

<sup>174</sup> Interview with Most Venerable Most Ven. Mahā Vimaladhamma, the Second level of the Royal Order and Saṅgha Governing of Cambodian Buddhism, November 11, 2012.

spirituality and the all-important scene behind the hard infrastructure.<sup>175</sup> Moreover, the knowledge about Buddhism by both laity and monks is still low and not up to the standard and quality required. The state of Buddhism and problems it faces in Cambodia today can be summarized as follows:

1. A lack of older educated monks. Those ordained before the war or in 1980 CE are elderly and dying. Abbots today are often young and have limited experience. Many men who are ordained as monks today do so as a means of social mobility; as a way to gain an education.

2. There is still a lack of texts. While some basic books have been reprinted, especially for monks' education, the vast majority of books in Khmer were lost in the destruction of the Khmer Rouge years.

3. Many lay people allege that the monks are not as strict in their practice as the pre-war monks. At the same time, they also discuss a moral crisis among the Khmer lay population. They cite the new outside influences from abroad which including television, drugs, and gangs are bad influences on young people.

4. A crisis looming as this generation of elders dies. The main group of people practicing Buddhism today are the elders (as was true in the past), but those who are now middle-aged will take their roles as Buddhist leaders as they are. They were children under the Khmer Rouge and had limited contact with Buddhism until about 1980 CE. They did not listen to sermons at their parents' knees, nor were they ordained in their teens as their parents were.

In recent years, however, Cambodian Buddhism has changed in significant ways and monks have become increasingly involved in politics. This recent political activism of the Khmer *Saṅgha* recalls the role that it played in social and political affairs in the 1940s and 1950s, when monks protested against the French colonial regime, demanding freedom, independence and the preservation of Khmer culture and language. Monks were officially granted the right to vote in elections in

---

<sup>175</sup> Unknown Author, Theravada Buddhism in Cambodia: Restoration Development and Challenges, < <http://buddhismtoday.blogspot.com/2010/10/theravada-buddhism-in-cambodia.html> >, Accessed January 22, 2013.

the constitution of 1993. However, many of them participated in the 1998 protests against election irregularities, claiming also that the ruling party practiced ‘poor governance, corruption, and associated social ills.’ At that point, monks joined with the people to demand new leaders for the country.<sup>176</sup>

The participation of Buddhist monks in the general elections and their involvement in political activities have become extremely sensitive issues for the *Saṅgha* and the country at large. Participation resulted in subsequent imposition of restriction upon monks, and limitation of their rights in the political arena, and this in turn has tended to fuel opposition to the government within the *Saṅgha*. Monks who do not agree with the government’s actions are labeled ‘illegal’ or ‘false’ monks and this has led to the polarization of two viewpoints ‘traditionalist’ and ‘modernist’ regarding the role of Buddhist monks in present-day Cambodia.

The supporters of the ‘traditionalist’ view of monks claim that Buddhism is about teaching a way to end suffering and attain spiritual liberation and happiness by cultivating one’s peace of mind. Any involvements in worldly matters, it is held, will cause attachment and craving, which could damage the monks’ spiritual achievements, and they would also be disturbed by politicians seeking support and popularity. Buddhist temples depend solely on popular support. Although donations to temples from politicians as well as lay people provide valuable materials for temple construction and for the monks’ subsistence and education, many politicians today come to *wats* in the name of their political parties. According to Buddhist monastic principles, monks are supposed to accept anything that people offer.

Nevertheless, many monks, like ordinary community members, nowadays support different political parties. Yet when monks align with a party, they are seen as biased, they are less trusted by people, and they are considered ‘political monks’. The political affiliations of monks thus create divisions and disharmony among people and among the monks themselves. Many argue that to avoid problems such as these monks should remain neutral and independent of politicians. In this way, it is

---

<sup>176</sup> Alexandra Kent, **People of Virtue: Reconfiguring Religion, Power and Moral Order in Cambodia today**, p. 242.

thought, they will earn greater trust from the general public and will remain free to express their own opinions on different issues.<sup>177</sup>

However, nowadays Buddhism in Cambodia, based on the widespread building of *wats* in contemporary Cambodia, along with popular participation of Khmer people in a wide range of religious ceremonies, remains very strong in people's consciousness. This suggests that Buddhism could potentially play a more active peace-building role than it has to date in Cambodia, although this would require a radical adaptation by Khmer Buddhist to the changes occurring in Cambodian society and the wider world.<sup>178</sup>

### 3.3 Concluding Remarks

Through my research, I have attempted to show how Cambodian Buddhism was revived and developed after the traumatic events of the rule of the Khmer Rouge who tried to destroy it and other religions. Over the next paragraphs, I would like to summarize the most important points that come out of the study. The survival and the development of Buddhism in Cambodia after Khmer Rouge Regime has been divided into two main periods:

The first period was from 1979 to 1993 CE. We generally call the nation at that time the People's Republic of Kampuchea. Buddhism was revived immediately by new government of Heng Samrin when the Khmer Rouge rule ended. The situation of Buddhism changed from destruction under the Khmer Rouge to restoration under the new government of the PRK. However, Buddhism in this period was under the control of the government. The government at the time faced many problems and challenges. However, I think that even though Buddhism was controlled and directed by the governments of this period, progress was made, and Buddhism survived and appeared in Cambodia again.

The second period was from 1993 to 2000 CE. the country at that time was known by its current name, which is the Kingdom of Cambodia. This was a period of quite some recovery and development of Buddhism. Buddhism was given more rights and freedom to develop and progress, and these changes allowed Buddhism to develop in a strong and

---

<sup>177</sup> Ibid., p. 243.

<sup>178</sup> Yos Hut Khemacaro, "Steering the Middle Path: Buddhism, Non-Violence and Political Change in Cambodia", p. 73.

sustainable way. The country changed from communism to democracy, and the government policies toward religions were further relaxed.

When considering the restoration and development of Buddhism in Cambodia we should not forget the important role played by Khmer Buddhists of all kinds. They were the most important variable in the process of the revival and development of Buddhism. They steadfastly maintained their support for the Triple Gem. Although Buddhism was virtually wiped out by the Khmer Rouge, it seems that it was only the material forms that were extinguished. On the contrary, the spiritual form of Buddhism was always in the hearts and souls of all Khmer Buddhists. Indeed, as they say 'to be Khmer is to be Buddhist,' and it was in the end the love that Cambodians had for the Buddha, his teachings, and the *Saṅgha* that was the basis for the rebirth and restoration of Buddhism in Cambodia.

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **THE RESULTS CAN BE USED TO PROMOTE CAMBODIAN BUDDHISM IN THE FUTURE**

#### **4.1 The Factors that impact on the Changing of Buddhism in Cambodia**

Everything in the world cannot change without causes. Buddhism in Cambodia faced many challenges in its traumatic history. The factors that produced change in Buddhism since the Khmer Rouge regime can be divided into two main groups: external factors and internal factors.

##### **4.1.1 External Factors**

The variability of conditions that Buddhism in Cambodia faced was often caused by forces from outside the country. Political ideology and intervention from other countries were two common factors. It was in particular the political ideology of communism that was very hostile to Buddhism. The Khmer Rouge tried to destroy Buddhism in Cambodia. Foreign powers also came to dominate and influence politics in Cambodia. This factor led to attempts to usurp political power between groups of the people and often terrible fighting also resulted. Such factors finally led to the revolution that affected the whole of Cambodian society including the institutions of Buddhism too. It is therefore appropriate to study these factors in some more detail.

##### **4.1.1.2 Political Idealism**

From the 1960s onward, the ideology of “communism” was popular in certain circles in Indochina, and of course it involved the promotion of radical change and revolution. The Khmer Rouge, under leadership of Pol Pot, Khieu Samphan, and Ieng Sary brought this ideology to Cambodia with the aim of creating unity and reducing social inequality in the country in accordance with the policies as follows:

1. The government was to be the owner of the production.

2. The state had to give the welfare for the people by the establishment of state welfare.

3. The government had to produce release from the materialism (the essence of socialism).<sup>179</sup>

The Khmer Rouge brought socialism for the purposes of destroying materialism, a move which they regarded as getting back to a feudal society. The revolution occurred in order to change the social structure in every way. The aim was to produce a cultural revolution; a change that the Khmer Rouge believed was for the betterment of the country.

The Khmer Rouge government adhered to the idea that revolution is the means of changing the social and the economical systems in order to destroy materialism and to create socialism instead. The revolution began with the idea of destroying the influence of materialism and ended with the creation of a state of hard labor. This ideology was called by Mark Chist the revolution of proletariat by destroying of the economic base of classical oppression”<sup>180</sup>

During the period 1975-1979., the whole of Cambodian society practiced the way of “socialism.” The monks were killed and disrobed during three years under Khmer Rouge regime. The political thinking at the first time by the leaders of Khmer Rouge like Pol Pot and Khieu Samphan had been developed when they were studying in France. Communism and religion were necessarily antagonist ways of living and seeing the world. Their ideology also included ideas about revolution received from Mao Tse-Tung. The Cambodian communists adapted his ideas and fine tuned them for use in Cambodia.<sup>181</sup>

Heng Samrin, the ex-Khmer Rouge member, had ideological conflicts with Pol Pot, and fled to ask for aid from the Vietnamese who were engaging in a border dispute with the Khmer Rouge. The Heng Samrin government went on under the direction of Vietnamese communists. The policies of the communists under the government of

---

<sup>179</sup> Phra Raphin Dualoi, “A Study on the Status of the Cambodian Saṅgha, 1975-1989”, p. 70.

<sup>180</sup> Thira Nutpam, “The Indochinese under Political Changing of Communism from 1975-1991”, p. 256.

<sup>181</sup> Phra Raphin Dualoi, Op. Cit., p. 70.

Heng Samrin backed by Vietnam were more flexible and tolerant. The monks had to follow some conditions and try to promote the stability of politics and economics in the country.

However, the formation of the coalition government in the aftermath of the 1993 general elections led to the promulgation of a new constitution in line with most previous Cambodian constitutions and Buddhism was enshrined as the religion of the State.<sup>182</sup> In order to get more popular with the public, the government released the previous restrictions and allowed the *Saṅgha* to grow up and develop. The *Saṅgha* had come under control of the ruling party, with political legitimacy gained by country's strongman, Hun Sen.<sup>183</sup>

#### ***4.1.1.3 The Foreign Interventions***

After WWII, political allegiances in the world were divided between two main sides. There was the free world and there was the communist world. Each tried to influence global arena, searching for partnerships and alliances. This competition was the “the Cold War,” and the principal combatants were the Soviet Union, China, and the USA. These countries looked to expand their influence in Southeast Asia and they encouraged many countries in the region to fight to one another, in which were called representative wars. There was also encouragement in the form of economic help. Therefore, foreign countries of either of the two political kinds came to get involved in and even rule the region.

China was influential in Indochina because its border adjoined Vietnam and the Soviet Union. China had a long history of conflict with Vietnam which was backed by Soviets,<sup>184</sup> and this had led China to search for the alliances with other countries, especially Cambodia, and China came to influential in Cambodia and provided a variety of forms of support.<sup>185</sup> Cambodia and China had had a tight relationship since the

---

<sup>182</sup> Ian Harris, **Buddhism and Politics in Twentieth Century Asia**, p. 69.

<sup>183</sup> Ishtiaq Ahmed (ed), **The Politics of Religion in South and Southeast Asia**, (USA: Routledge Press, 2011), p. 132.

<sup>184</sup> Phonprapha Phathirakun, “A History of Diplomatic Relation between China and Soviet from 1949-1989”, (*Prawattisat Khwam Samphan Thangkan Thu Tra Wang Chin Kap Sowiak 1949-1989*), **Master's Degree Thesis**, (Bangkok: Graduated School of Srinakharinwirot University Press, 2000), pp. 37-60.

<sup>185</sup> Somphong Chumak, **The Effort International on Crisis Resolution in Cambodia**, (*Khwam Phaya Ya Ma Wang Prathet Nai Kan Kae Panha Wikrit Nai*



pre-Khmer Rouge regime. This point is illustrated in a speech of Pol Pot's made when he visited China in September, 1977 CE. he said that "we have adopted the idealism of Mao Tse-Tung since we are empty-handed. The Khmer people and revolutionaries around the world believe that the ideology of Mao Tse-Tung was behind the great victory of Khmer Rouge". The expansion of Chinese influence over the Khmer Rouge regime was seen in that the Khmer Rouge had their own home-grown cultural revolution.<sup>186</sup> Cambodia had absorbed the methods that the communists had used in China. Although the Cultural Revolution in China was a costly failure, it was an indicator of the strength of Chinese influence in Cambodia that the experiment should be repeated in Cambodia.

When Vietnam, in 1979, sent troops to attack and topple the Khmer Rouge government, which had been supported by China, China had to consider the state of the Vietnamese alliance with the of Soviet Union. The conduct of Vietnam was in conflict with the interests of China, and China could hardly accept that.<sup>187</sup> Actually the Soviet Union encouraged Vietnam to attack the forces of the Khmer Rouge, and eventually move into Cambodia. China in response at first tried to block Vietnamese and Soviet relations. In February 17, 1979 CE, China sent troops to attack the Vietnamese, and the conflict escalated into a full-blown border region war. China could not stand the bellicosity of Vietnamese to the Khmer Rouge who they supported.

After Khmer Rouge was defeated and had withdrawn to jungles along the Cambodia-Thai border, China continued to support the Khmer Rouge with weapons and other necessities, and this led to a civil between the forces of Heng Samrin backed by Vietnam and the Soviet Union, and the Khmer Rouge backed by China. This conflict extended over decades.

---

*Prathet Kamphucha*), (Bangkok: Chulalongkorn University Press, 1984), pp. 185-189.

<sup>186</sup> The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, commonly known as the Cultural Revolution, was a social-political movement that took place in the People's Republic of China from 1966 through 1976. Set into motion by Mao Zedong, then Chairman of the Communist Party of China.

<sup>187</sup> On Anong Noi Wong, **Cambodia: Thai Foreign Policy under the Prem Tinsulanond's Government**, (*Kamphucha : Nayobai Tangprathet Thai Samai Phon-ek Prem Tinna Su La Non*), (Bangkok: Office of Research Fund, Text Books Foundation of Social Sciences and Humanities Press, 1999), p. 53.

Vietnam, during the Khmer Rouge regime, undertook to “uproot” enemies against its revolution in the country, and it engaged in territorial clashes along the border with the Khmer Rouge. This caused the DK to break off diplomatic relations with Vietnam in 1977 CE, and the DK proclaimed that Vietnam as the enemy number one instead of America.<sup>188</sup> This serious conflict between Vietnam and Cambodia arose when the relationship of Vietnam and China became problematic. The suspicion of Vietnam that China was backing the Khmer Rouge led to Vietnam signing a peace and cooperation treaty with the Soviets in May 1978 CE. The Vietnamese decided to send troops into Cambodian territory on October 25th, 1978 CE, and they seized Phnom Penh a month later. The Khmer Rouge era was finished.

The Vietnamese had been worried that about the influence of China in Cambodia, and suspected that China would use Cambodia to blockade and press Vietnam.<sup>189</sup> The relationship between China and Cambodia had gotten stronger, and China was providing more and more support to the Khmer Rouge, and as the level of suspicion between China and Vietnam grew, Vietnam and Cambodia started to make threats to each other and started to test each other’s military strength and will.

The conflict between Vietnam and Cambodia at that time led to the Vietnamese attack on Cambodia and the defeat of the Khmer Rouge. Heng Samrin then established the new government of Cambodia and the changes he put into place led to the creation of a new Cambodia and a new Cambodian society. As we have seen Buddhism was to emerge again from the ashes that was Khmer Rouge Cambodia.

Leonid Brezhnev was the secretary general of Soviet Communism Party. The Soviet Union came to be influential in Indochina. It looked for alliances and propagated communist ideology. It offered political, tactical and economic assistance, established military bases in Vietnam. Another reason for its interest in Indochina was to thwart the USA’s interests there. It was with help from the Soviet Union that Vietnam has enough power, military forces and weapons to seize Cambodia from the Khmer Rouge and establish the government of Heng

---

<sup>188</sup> Chang Pao Min, **Kampuchea Between China and Vietnam**, (Singapore: Singapore University Press, 1987) pp. 72-90.

<sup>189</sup> Pinthong Chaisutthi, “Thai Foreign Policy toward Cambodian Issues from 1975-1991”, p. 109.

Samrin there. Therefore, it was the latent power of the world's leading communist countries influenced to the decisions of the nations of Indochina.

The Americans came to Indochina with the idea of slowing or halting the growth of communism there. although U.S. President Richard Nixon<sup>190</sup> offered support to the Khmer Rouge regime in the form of weapons and forces. The aid must have been inadequate as the Khmer Rouge was attacked and defeated by Vietnam. America came to have a similar role again during the presidency of Gerald Ford,<sup>191</sup> who encouraged various opposition groups including the King Sihanouk's faction and that of Son Sann. The Khmer Rouge were of course always supported by China.<sup>192</sup>

The Thai Prime Minister, Thanom Kittiachorn followed similar policies to America in the attempt to block the expansion of Communism. When Phnom Penh was taken by the Vietnamese-backed forces, the Khmer Rouge escaped to the border area with Thailand and dug in for a long fight with the Heng Samrin's government. Thailand and other countries still accepted the Khmer Rouge as the legitimate government. Moreover the Thai Prime Minister Kriangsak Chomanan who served as the prime minister from 1977 to 1980, encouraged the Khmer Rouge by offering them financial and munitions support. In fact he offered the Khmer Rouge support under the condition that China desist from supporting the communist movement in Thailand. It seems that China, Thailand and the USA all encouraged the Khmer Rouge in some way. All three countries had a common interest in suppressing the ambitions of Vietnam and Heng Samrin's government in Cambodia.<sup>193</sup>

---

<sup>190</sup> Richard Milhous Nixon (January 9, 1913 – April 22, 1994) was the 37th President of the United States, serving from 1969 to 1974. The only president to resign from office, Nixon had previously served as a Republican U.S. representative and senator from California and as the 36th Vice President of the United States from 1953 to 1961.

<sup>191</sup> Gerald Rudolph "Jerry" Ford, Jr, was the 38th President of the United States, serving from 1974 to 1977, and prior to this the 40th Vice President of the United States serving from 1973 to 1974.

<sup>192</sup> Kieman, **“Inclusion of the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia Peace: Causes and Consequences,”** In *his Genocide and Democracy in Cambodia*, p. 210.

<sup>193</sup> Phra Raphin Dualoi, “A Study on the Status of the Cambodian Saṅgha 1975-1989”, p. 77.

The internal interventions were important factors that caused violence to erupt in Cambodia. Each side in the Cambodian conflict had their supporters from other countries. This caused the civil war or representative war to drag on for more than ten years. These external forces worked together with internal ones inside Cambodia. The conflict between the Khmer Rouge and Heng Samrin forces continued on for so long because both sides had encouragement from other countries.

## **4.2 The Internal Factors**

There were various important internal factors that affected the development of the new Buddhism in Cambodia. These factors included politics, society, economics, and education in the country. The Khmer Rouge regime used the ideology “cultural revolution” to change Cambodia’s social infrastructure and eliminate Buddhism. As we have seen, when the politics in the country changed, many other factors changed, too. The society, the economy and the education system were destroyed by the Khmer Rouge regime. These were later restored by the People’s Republic of Kampuchea regime and finally redeveloped by later government when the country changed to be a democracy. These fundamental factors were significant affecters of the survival and development of Cambodian Buddhism in the later period. I discuss them in more detail in the following sections.

### **4.2.1 The Political Issues**

The Democracy of Kampuchea regime, run by the Khmer Rouge established communist rule, and imposed an iron grip on Cambodia in order to control the people and begin the implementation of a radical program of change. Buddhism, the former national religion of the Khmer, did not prohibit the people from undergo radical reorientation. This involved a change of the roles and the functions of the teachings, the *Saṅgha* and the monastery. The *Dhamma* (the Buddha’s teachings) was now to be reinterpreted to support revolutionary causes and actions. The professional carriers of Buddhism, i.e. the monks, were not encouraged to maintain their status. Those who remained in the monkhood had to undergo reeducation and were treated badly. The monks were forced to do hard labor in the fields and construction work on the roads and in irrigation systems. Their former religious prestige status and privileges were removed and eliminated. They were looked down on as burdens on

society.<sup>194</sup> No monks remained, and even the temples in every village were destroyed by the Khmer Rouge. Buddha images were destroyed and church halls were used as granaries and animal cages. Every building that had once been a signal of Buddhism disappeared from the country during the Khmer Rouge regime.<sup>195</sup>

The People's Republic of Kampuchea regime marked the end of Khmer Rouge rule. A government backed by Vietnam with Heng Samrin as the President was installed. The Heng Samrin government's policy concerning Buddhism was, on the surface, more positive than that of the Khmer Rouge. It favored a controlled restoration of Buddhism. The development of Buddhism was closely monitored and Buddhism kept subservient to the State. Some have observed that the State carefully planned and structured the size and the growth of the religion. Ordination was not directly discouraged, but there were constraints by age. That is to say a male adult under 50 years old was forbidden to enter the monkhood. The government made extensive use of Khmer Buddhism and the *Saṅgha* for politically defined ends. Monks were urged to join in revolutionary training courses,<sup>196</sup> work for the rebuilding of the country according to the orders of the government. The government put the policies for monks to work for the country.<sup>197</sup>

The Kingdom of Cambodia regime followed. When the government announced a withdrawal of Vietnamese forces after the general election in 1993 CE, Hun Sen, the PRK prime minister (and former Khmer Rouge officer), agreed in principle to the creation of a new government that would include the PRK and Prince Ranariddh. In order to bolster its popular appeal, the PRK stepped up its support of Buddhism, and Hun Sen publicly apologized for the government's previous "mistakes".<sup>198</sup> According to the September 1993 CE. Constitution, the motto of the Kingdom of Cambodia was "Nation,

---

<sup>194</sup> Son Soubert, et al, **Buddhism and The Future of Cambodia**, p.121.

<sup>195</sup> . Interview with the Most Venerable Mahā Vimaladhamma, the Second level of the Royal Order and Saṅgha Governing of Cambodian Buddhism, Wat Rajabo , November 11, 2012.

<sup>196</sup> Son Soubert, et al, Op. Cit., p.124.

<sup>197</sup> Interview with the Most Venerable Mahā Vimaladhamma, the Second level of the Royal Order and Saṅgha Governing of Cambodian Buddhism, Wat Rajabo , November 11, 2012.

<sup>198</sup> Thomas Banchoff, **Religious Pluralism, Globalization, and World Politics**, p. 132.

Religion, King” (Article 4). Buddhism was also established as the state religion (Article 43). The constitution also ensured that “Khmer citizens of either sex shall have the right to freedom of belief.” However, “freedom of religious belief and worship shall be guaranteed by the state on the condition that such freedom does not affect other religious beliefs or violate the public order and the security.” Therefore, from then on Buddhism had the right to develop and flourish in Cambodia again, and that could be seen with the rebirth of *Saṅgha* administration, *Saṅgha* education, and *Saṅgha* social engagements.

It can be concluded that politics was one of the most important internal factors that led to either the death or the survival of Buddhism in the country, too. The research suggest that whenever the leader of the country adhered, believed and supported Buddhism, then Buddhism survived and progressed, but on the contrary, whenever the leader of the country did not adhere to the faith, Buddhism did not really do well. Buddhism in Cambodia has changed in accordance with the political changes in the country. The Khmer Rouge regime destroyed Buddhism, the People’s Republic of Kampuchea regime restored Buddhism, and after Cambodia became a democracy, the government leaders encouraged the development of Buddhism, until it took on more or less the form that it has today.

#### **4.2.2 Social Issues**

The leaders of the communist DK regime attempted to restructure Cambodian society and culture radically. It evacuated the people from urban centers into rural areas; reorganized the population into communes and work teams population with collectivized ownership, production, and distribution; suppressed Buddhism; and imposed harsh living conditions and discipline that led to many deaths from lack of food, exhausting workloads, illness, and executions.<sup>199</sup>

Almost immediately after capturing Phnom Penh, the Vietnamese set up what was purported to be an independent government in Cambodia, styling itself as the People’s Republic of Kampuchea. Its leading officials were DK military officers who had defected to Vietnam in 1978 CE, Cambodians who had lived in Vietnam since the 1950s , and

---

<sup>199</sup> Narendra S. Bisht, “Khmer” **Encyclopedia of the South East Asian Ethnography: Communities and Tribes**, p. 332.

members of ethnic minorities untainted by service to the previous regime. Several figures in this original group including Heng Samrin, Chea Sim, and Hun Sen remained powerful through to the year 1980 CE.<sup>200</sup>

The new government promised to respect human rights, including the freedom of opinion and association, but it was severe with regard to political opponents, as all the earlier regimes had been. No election was held until 1981 CE, and it was not contested by opposing parties. As early as month after declaring its existence, the PRK signed a treaty of friendship and cooperation with Vietnam. This gesture was done in spite of the terrible hardship that affected all the Cambodians, and convinced many Cambodians that they would be better off outside the country. Many Cambodians believed that the Vietnamese planned to annex Cambodia, or at least dominate its politics for an indefinite period of time. During the first few months, the Vietnamese kept foreign observers away from Cambodia and denied their own military presence there.<sup>201</sup>

Nearly all Cambodians welcomed the Vietnamese at first, not because they preferred being invaded to being autonomous, but because the invasion signaled the end of DK. Almost at once, nearly everyone began moving. Throughout 1979 CE, and during the first few months of 1980 CE, hundreds of thousands of Cambodians crisscrossed the country looking for relatives, returning to their homes, trading or seeking refuge overseas. Although Vietnamese forces pursued DK armed units into the northwest, the civil authorities did nothing to prevent this less organized movement of people or the informal revival of trade. As the PRK struggled to its feet, many prerevolutionary institutions came back to life, including markets, Buddhism, and family farming. The PRK's *laissez-faire* policy did not extend to political activity, however; that was monopolized by the government and the People's Revolutionary Party of Kampuchea (PRPK), a Communist grouping that shared its pre-1975 C.E., history with the discredited CPK.

---

<sup>200</sup> David P. Chandler, **A History of Cambodia**, 4th Edition, (USA: Westview Press, 1993), p. 228.

<sup>201</sup> Vivid accounts of these early months, written by people sympathetic to the PRK, are Jhon Pilger and Anthony Barnett, *Aftermath* (London, 1982), and Wifred Burchet, *The China-Vietnam-Cambodia Triangle* (London, 1984).

The Conditions were stabilized in 1980 CE, when the rice harvest was double in size. In rural areas, most Vietnamese forces withdrew from villages into garrisons, and local people were once again put in control of their own affairs. Rural society, however, was a shambles. Villages had been abandoned or torn down; tools, seed, and fertilizer were nonexistent; hundreds of thousands of people had migrated to the UN refugee camps along the border of Thailand and Cambodia,<sup>202</sup> or some had been killed; and in most areas the survivors suffered from malaria, shock, or malnutrition. So many men had died or disappeared under the DK that in some districts, more than 60 percent of the families were headed by widows; thousands of widows, whose children had died, lived alone.

Outside Phnom Penh, the information about conditions in the SOC was difficult to obtain, but none of it was encouraging, except insofar that Cambodia's population has managed to survive. The picture that emerged in 1991 CE was of a rural population that was poorer and more poorly served than at any time since the 1920 CE. The rate of infant mortality was one of the highest one in the world, as was the birthrate.<sup>203</sup>

When the Khmer Rouge was forced to retreat to the Thai border in 1979 CE, the Cambodian people who remained in the country worked very hard to put their family's lives together. The newly formed government propped up by Vietnam tried to govern in a way that was not very effective given the circumstances. The work by the people and the government from 1979 CE, to early 1990 CE meant it was a period of rehabilitation. They went through many stages of reform but with little success in the economic, agricultural, state controlled, semi-state controlled, joint ventures of state and private agencies areas. Faced with international isolation, trade embargoes and meager resources, the Cambodians tried to survive. However painstakingly slow and ineffective that was, for the Cambodian people and the government, it was a period that they came together to revive the country from "Year Zero."<sup>204</sup>

---

<sup>202</sup> Interviewed with Mr. Son Sut, the president committee of Wat Phnom Chon Chiang, November 16, 2012.

<sup>203</sup> David P. Chandler, *A History of Cambodia*, p. 236.

<sup>204</sup> Nassrine Azimi, *UITRA Hiroshima Series in Post-conflict Reconstruction in Japan, Republic of Korea, Vietnam, Cambodia, East Timor and Afghanistan*, p. 121.



The tradition of patron-client relationship had a long history in Cambodian society. It was observed that in post-1993 CE, Cambodia had accentuated this informal patron-client relationship. This was because the newly founded state with its elected government has not been able to provide security and protection for its citizens. Under such circumstances, the people had to devise other mechanisms, which result in dividing society into two classes: those who sought protection and those who provided protection.

The situation of land tenure, employment possibility, access to education, and access to health services were still so fragile that people could not place their faith in the formal institution of governance, but rather on the non-formal institution of governance building around patron-client relationship. In this situation, the poor were very susceptible to abuse by the powerful. The elections brought about a parliament that did not perform to the expectations of a liberal democratic institution in fulfilling its duty of governance. This service was a barrier to equitable development, to the development of civil society, and in turn, to the development of government institution. The people simply did not trust formal institutions.<sup>205</sup>

It is, therefore, worth remembering that when a new structure or new system is introduced, whether it is a democratically elected government or otherwise elected, the decentralized body, the judicial system, the fiscal system, or the market system, the new structure or the system will not work without concurrent change in social relationships or work regimes. A new structure is not a sure thing for bringing a desirable change. Like any technology, it requires time for the fabric of society to adjust to it and serious preparation to make it work. It was this poor preparation that hindered the movement toward a liberal democratic society that we witness today. It was obvious that not enough seeds or enough instruments and time had been planted to ensure a satisfactory outcome of the social evolution.

However, the politics lead to changing society and the state of changing of society can affect the living people unavoidably. Just as the people depend on the society to survive, Buddhism also depends on the people too as the cycle. According to the previously mentioned point it was found that the disorder of society since the DK to the present time

---

<sup>205</sup> Ibid., p. 122.

has been due to instability, disorder and that after the restoration of the country that starting from the beginning again caused the people to work very hard to survive in order to put their family's lives. Therefore, this caused Buddhism to be slow in restoration after Khmer Rouge regime because the country had to be restored first. If the country was not yet restored or developed how could Buddhism be restored and developed? Therefore, Buddhism and country had to go together.<sup>206</sup> After the restoration and development of the country, Buddhism could progress to be the spiritual refuge of the Cambodians again.

#### 4.2.3 Economic Issues

The Khmer Rouge unfurled a radical Communist, anti-modernist plan that destroyed the Cambodian economy, infrastructure, and social fabric while wiping out all signs of “corrupting” western capitalism.<sup>207</sup> The extreme left-wing Khmer Rouge regime that ruled Cambodia from 1975 to 1979 CE, sought to create a rural peasant economy in the country. The economic system revolution that Khmer Rouge leader took to use, which was based on agriculture called “self-reliance agriculture” involved moving the people from urban to rural areas, and the monks were forced to disrobe and work as the laborers in the rice field just like the ordinary people.<sup>208</sup> In their efforts to reshape the nation, the Khmer Rouge virtually destroyed the Cambodian economy which has been slowly but not fully rebuilt. As a result of the Khmer Rouge dictatorship and decades of civil war in the second half of the twentieth century, much of Cambodia lacked a basic modern infrastructure, particularly in the countryside. Transportation and communications networks that were inadequate and the educational system had to be completely rebuilt. Industries were destroyed under the Khmer Rouge, and reconstruction was slow. The nation suffered a considerable skills shortage in part, because so many qualified people were murdered by the Khmer Rouge.<sup>209</sup>

---

<sup>206</sup> Interviewed with Venerable Son Sa Ruet, the abbot of Wat Phra Narin, November 12, 2012.

<sup>207</sup> Katherine Marshall, **Heart And Soul: In The Fight Against Poverty**, (Washington: The World Bank Press, 2004), p. 245.

<sup>208</sup> Interviewed with Venerable Chuek Tun, Wat Sama Thi Phon, November 14, 2012.

<sup>209</sup> Marshall Cavendish, **World and Its Peoples: Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam, Eastern and Southern Asia**, p. 782.

Heng Samrin was installed as chief of state by the Vietnamese army of occupation and over the next decade a slow restoration of economic and social life took place.<sup>210</sup> Amid so much disorder, most of the 1979 CE rice crop went untended, and by the middle of the year a famine had broken out. Very few Cambodians stayed long enough to plant the 1979-1980 CE, rice crop, and when grain stored under the previous regime had been consumed, or appropriated by Vietnamese forces, hundreds of thousands of Khmer had little or nothing to eat. Famine conditions were exacerbated by a drought, and it was at this point that Cambodia gained attention in the West, where television audiences, already vaguely aware of the horrors perpetrated in DK, were shocked to see skeletal Khmers stumbling into Thailand or dying of starvation beside Cambodia's roads. The suffering provoked a massive charitable response, but the delivery of food and medicine from foreign countries was often delayed by bureaucratic rivalries, by constraints imposed by Thailand and its allies, and to a lesser extent by the Vietnamese themselves, who understandably used some of the food and medicine to support their own hard-pressed military and administrative personnel.<sup>211</sup> At this time the government also restricted the restoration of Buddhism, and the males who wanted to be ordained had to be over 50 years old. Those who were younger were disrobed, as young males were needed in order to fight, reconstruct and develop the economy and agriculture.<sup>212</sup>

The decade witnessed a dramatic change in Cambodia's political and economic systems. A new coalition government was formed in 1993 CE, after national elections were held under the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia, following the Paris Peace Accords in 1991CE. This marked a turning point in the emergence of a multi-party political system and the transition to a market-oriented economy. As far as Buddhism was concerned, when the economics in the county improved, the government started to ease the restrictions on ordination and allowed Buddhism to develop according to the needs of society.<sup>213</sup> The new government viewed economic integration into the regional and word economies as a key national strategy for reconstruction and development. Accordingly, the new government submitted its formal

---

<sup>210</sup> Ibid., p, 765.

<sup>211</sup> Vickery Michael, **Cambodia 1975-1982**, p. 225.

<sup>212</sup> Interviewed with Venerable Rai Vimal, the abbot of Wat Phra Pun Lia, Pun Lia Village,, November 13, 2012.

<sup>213</sup> Interviewed with Venerable Son Sa Ruet, the abbot of Wat Phra Narin, November 12, 2012.

application for full membership in ASEAN in April 1996 CE., and it started to prepare for access to the ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA).<sup>214</sup>

Economic growth after all the previous destruction started at a very low level but constantly improved. With continuing severe shortcomings in infrastructure, education, the industrial base and business experience, the country still relied very much on agriculture and tourism as domestic sources of growth. However, the county's great potential in the areas of hydropower and hydrocarbons, as well as the growing integration into the regional markets and increasing foreign investment may speed up the economic recovery in the coming years. Cambodia is still very reliant on foreign Official Development Assistance (ODA) and the help of the foreign NGOs.

#### 4.2.4 Educational Issues

Modern education began to expand at the turn of the 20th century with the establishment of the Franco-Cambodian educational system. In an effort to draw more Cambodians into modern education, particularly in areas outside the urban centers, in the early 20th century the French "modernized" the *wat* schools (both secular and Buddhist schools). Despite some difficulties at the beginning, this reform spread rapidly around the country. The modernized *wat* schools provided education to Cambodian children in cities, towns, villages, and rural areas throughout Cambodia. In principle, modernized *wat* schools served as a bridge to the Franco-Cambodian education system,<sup>215</sup> and the expansion of the educational sector that had been made by King Sihanouk was halted in the early 1970s. Cambodia became the victim of violent conflict both from civil war with the Khmer Rouge in the west and the spillover of the Vietnam War across Cambodia's eastern border. Many of Cambodia's education elite fled to France and Thailand during this period. However, the greatest threat to the education system came from the Khmer Rouge as they took political control of the county. The Khmer Rouge, under the control of Pol Pot, oversaw the systematic execution of the educated population that had remained in the country between 1975 and 1979 C.E. The four-year period saw the death of nearly two million people; Buddhist monk was specifically targeted for elimination.

---

<sup>214</sup> Mya Than, **ASEAN Enlargement: Impacts and Implications**, (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies Press, 2001), p. 164.

<sup>215</sup> Gerard A. Postiglione, **Going to School in East Asia**, (USA: Postiglione, Gerard Press, 2007), pp. 44-45.

Education everywhere in Cambodia was effectively halted and the facts tell us that between 75% and 80% of Cambodia's teachers and higher education students including the Buddhist scholar were killed or fled the country. In addition, roughly 67% of the primary and secondary students were also killed or forced to flee during the same period.<sup>216</sup>

The Khmer Rouge forced an exodus of the urban centers and moved the entire population to the rural countryside where they were engaged in agricultural production. In the deserted urban areas, schools were converted into prisons. In rural areas, schools were turned into animal shelters. In attempting to create an easily controllable and uneducated society, the Khmer Rouge destroyed much of the human capital and educational infrastructure in the country. The regime moved the country toward an agrarian society, as the human capital of the country was either killed or was forced to leave, and the educational infrastructure was abandoned or destroyed. Further the regime attempted to instill a new social order by separating families and communities in an attempt to ensure allegiance to the state.

In 1979 CE, the Vietnamese entered Cambodia and drove the Khmer Rouge into exile in the Cambodian jungles. Once, when Vietnam occupied Cambodia in 1979 C.E., a forced communist system was imposed. Although an education system was reinstated in the country, there were very few ordained individuals to fill the roles of teachers and administrators. According to a ICORC/UNICEF report, by 1980 CE, many people had returned to the urban centers, over 5,000 primary schools were reopened, with roughly 60% of the school-aged population and 21,000 teachers in the primary schools. During the period of Vietnamese occupation, the desperate attempts to create the needed skilled manpower for the semi-autonomous government in Phnom Penh gave rise to a system based on the maxim, "those who know little teach those who know nothing".<sup>217</sup> Progress in the educational sphere was slow and hampered by a shortage of teachers, low qualities of standardized curriculum, and high dropout and repetition rates. During this period, the Vietnamese established an in-service training program to try and provide basic skills to many of the untrained teachers that had been recruited to

---

<sup>216</sup> Donald B. Holsinger, **Inequality in Education: Comparative and International Perspectives**, (Hong Kong: Comparative Education Research Center Press, 2008), p. 192.

<sup>217</sup> Gerard A. Postiglione, Op. Cit., p. 50.

teach in the education system. However, at this time, Buddhist education was still not yet restored, because Buddhist scholars both monks and lay people were lost during the Khmer Rouge regime.<sup>218</sup> On the other hand, the numbers of monks started to pick up, even though many were elderly monks who were over 50 years old. Before the Vietnamese left Cambodia in 1989 CE, the enrollment had increased to 1.3 million at the primary level and 2.4 million at the lower secondary level.<sup>219</sup>

Buddhist education in Cambodia during this time began with the official re-opening of a Buddhist primary school on December 1989 CE by Chea Sim, a member of the Central Bureau of Kampuchea People's Revolutionary Party.<sup>220</sup> After this official opening of the first Buddhist primary school, many such schools followed suit, both in the capital and in the provinces. In 1992 CE, Buddhist secondary education began with the re-establishment of the Suramrith Buddhist High School on the premises of the former Preah Sihanouk Raja Buddhist University. In 2004 CE, the High School was relocated to its origin before pre-1975 CE, location.<sup>221</sup>

Between 1989 and 1998 CE, the country continued to undergo political, social, and economic uprising and turmoil, as the country moved toward establishing a post-conflict, post-occupied country. The Kingdom of Cambodia held its first peaceful election in 1998 CE, and the new government inherited not only a new found peace in the country, but also a population that had been devastated over thirty years of civil unrest and conflict. The overall population had low levels of education attainment (both secular and Buddhist education) and high levels of poverty and, like most developing countries, had scarce financial resources to address these issues.

Severe major challenges prevented the MoEYS from achieving their goals at increasing access to nine years of quality education throughout the country. At the time of the 1998 census 48.3% of primary school lacked a complete range of grade levels, 28 districts lacked lower-

---

<sup>218</sup> Interviewed with Venerable Sek Sa Wuean, the abbot of Wat Borom San Pruek, November 15, 2012.

<sup>219</sup> Donald B. Holsinger, Op. Cit., p. 193.

<sup>220</sup> From a report of the Official Opening Ceremony of the Buddhist Primary School obtained from Tuol Tum Pong monastery, Phnom Penh.

<sup>221</sup> Harold G. Coward, **Religion and Peacebuilding**, p. 197.

secondary school facilities, and dropout and repetition rates remained high. Teachers' salaries were seen by MoEYS as a reason for the low ion quality as teachers and teachers had to engage in additional economic activities. Teachers' low salaries led to unofficial fees being collected from students at classroom doors, thus preventing the poorer segment of society from attending.

It seemed that everything in Cambodia had to start again from the beginning and this included education at secular and Buddhist educational institutes. If there were no educated people, who would teach? Good teachers were essential pre-requisites for recovery. This was a significant question. Most qualified people were killed by the Khmer Rouge. We can see that the education factor has a deep impact on the growth of the nation and of Buddhism. It seemed sensible to develop the nation first. That is why the secular education was restored first and developed by the government. This did not mean the government ignored Buddhism; Buddhism was simply unable to be restored at that due to various prevailing factors. One reason was that most of the educated monks had disrobed or were killed during the Khmer Rouge regime. Another reason was that materials necessary for education had been destroyed.

It took nearly two decades to develop educational resources for the monks that were anywhere near as good as those developed for secular education. This factor challenged the institutions of Buddhism.

## **4.2 The Future of Buddhism in Cambodia**

The political events of the civil war proved that it was necessary for the Khmer people to restore and develop Buddhism. Buddhism re-appeared again because Khmer society demanded its re-appearance.

Cambodia's development depended on both improving its governance and empowering the Buddhist *Saṅgha* through the recognition of monks' secular roles in state programs for national development.<sup>222</sup> In Cambodia today, the *Saṅgha* certainly plays an important role in society, it would be greatly beneficial to Cambodia if monks are allowed to enjoy civil rights and have a say on matters of

---

<sup>222</sup> Alexandra Kent, **People of Virtue: Reconfiguring Religion, Power and Moral Order in Cambodia today**, p. 250.

general concern. Their rights and roles should not be limited to religious affairs inside the temple. They should not be isolated from the secular affairs of the state.

By virtue of their religious status and leadership potential, they can be powerful instruments for overseeing the correct implementation of government policy. To do this, they need to develop their participation in secular affairs rather than confining their activities to only studying and preaching. This means extending their activities to include greater involvement in the community and the country as a whole, keeping people informed about the social, political and economic situation, and making effort to repair the deteriorating moral order by teaching people and leaders how to apply the Buddhist Dhamma to their daily lives.<sup>223</sup>

For the monks to have a greater role in secular society, the monks must be better trained and educated. The Buddhist educational institute is the developmental base of the *Saṅgha* organization. Institutes are few in number and cannot cope with the demands of the 55,000 monks nationwide. Clearly more government help, financial and otherwise is need if Buddhist education is to be better run. Teachers' budgets and support must be increased if Buddhist schools are to thrive and produce well-trained and morally upright graduates – graduates who can stimulate the further development of the religion, and preserve it and its role in Khmer society. Slowness in developing the *Saṅgha* education will cause the Khmer people to understand less about the Buddhist teachings. Those who were born after Khmer Rouge regime, and the newer generations will need to be well educated in the Buddhist ways.

Cambodia has seen periods of great instability in the spheres of politics and society, and the monks have experienced many bad things. Certain other religions, especially Christianity have taken the chance to lay down their foundations in Cambodia by providing various forms of assistance to the Khmer people, and they have targeted poor families and youth. Some of these poor people and young people have problems and do not understand much about Buddhism. These factors have contributing to them changing to a new religion.<sup>224</sup>

---

<sup>223</sup> Ibid., p. 252.

<sup>224</sup> Huk Savonn, **The Strengthening of Buddhism in Cambodia**, p. 64.



Politics in Cambodia caused Cambodian monks to lose their identities as members of the Buddhist *Saṅgha*. This can be seen from the participation of monks in the general elections of 1993, 1997, and in recent years. The new constitution gave monks the right to vote for the first time in Cambodian history, and this caused the monks to be divided according to the political parties that they associated with, or liked, or were supported by. The Buddhist *Saṅgha* is a symbol of chastity, neutrality and unity in Khmer society. The *Saṅgha* is now slightly different to its old pre-Khmer Rouge form due to fact that it was forced to assume a role in politics.

One wonders if religion, which is so important to the Khmers, could disappear. However, they believe that the elimination of Buddhism is the elimination of Sheerness. Living without Buddhism is living without tradition and culture. Therefore, Khmer identity would be lost. Because of this strong conviction, the majority of Khmers never believed Khmer Rouge could abolish their religion, although in fact they did.<sup>225</sup> The present day political situation has returned to a more normal condition, and the majority of Khmers people do not believe that Buddhism will again be abolished by political groups as the Khmer Rouge did before, but they wonder if Buddhism might well face new obstacles from modern society. The younger generation are interested and involved more with materialism than Buddhism, and they live and learn in a new educational system which pays little heed to religious training. The monks and practicing Khmer Buddhists are the keys for Buddhism in the future.<sup>226</sup>

It is worth remembering that even though Cambodia as a whole is swamped by myriad problems, Buddhism still alive, and remains a symbol of hope for most Cambodians. Cambodian people hope that Buddhism will become strengthened in the not too distant future and once again become the backbone of Cambodian society that it used to be, and guide the country towards real peace, happiness and prosperity.<sup>227</sup>

---

<sup>225</sup> Yang Sam, **Khmer Buddhism and Politics From 1954 to 1984**, p.90.

<sup>226</sup> Interviewed with Ven. Rai Vimal, the abbot of Wat Phra Pun Lia, November 13, 2012.

<sup>227</sup> Alexandra Kent, **People of Virtue: Reconfiguring Religion, Power and Moral Order in Cambodia today**, p. 269.

### **4.3 Concluding Remarks**

In this chapter, I have tried to find out what are the causes of change of Buddhism in Cambodia, by illustrating the factors that seem to affect Buddhism. It is appropriate to study the roots of the problems in order to explain the reality that happened to Buddhism in Cambodia, therefore I have summarized the main factors that were external and internal in nature.

The indirect variability was caused by external factors which caused Buddhism in Cambodia to change. Included here were political ideology and the intervention from other countries. We have seen that Communism came to dominate and influence Cambodia. It was the basis of serious revolution in Cambodia perpetrated by the Khmer Rouge. Their disastrous social experiment, which was perversely supported by China and by the USA, affected the whole of Cambodian society and very nearly destroyed Buddhism for good.

Various internal factors were also shown to have been direct affecters of Buddhism and its survival and development. These factors includes politics, society, economics, and education. When the politics changed so did almost everything else. The Khmer Rouge oversaw massive political change, and such change destroyed most of the institutions that had constituted life in Cambodia. Buddhism was especially hard hit.

It is worth noting that significant factors that I mentioned above became, after regime change, positive factors that supported the restoration and the development of Buddhism. Buddhism was restored in People's Republic of Kampuchea regime and finally was developed in Kingdom of Cambodia period when the country changed to a democracy. These fundamental factors were significant variable that accounted for the survival and the development of Cambodian Buddhism in the later period.

## CHAPTER V CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

A study of “The survival and the development of Cambodian Buddhism after Khmer Rouge Regime up to 2000 C.E.”, the purpose of this research is comprised with three objectives, namely: - (1), to study the structure and the function of Buddhism in Cambodia; (2), to study the survival and the development of Buddhism in Cambodia after Khmer Rouge regime up to 2000 CE., and (3), to study the findings from research that can be used to promote Cambodian Buddhism in the future.

This research is the qualitative research, according to methodology was carried out by the inductive description and the analysis of the information collected from documents and in-depth interview with 10 key informants. The findings from research will present in detail with explanations and giving the conclusions and suggestions for further research works.

### **5.1 Conclusion**

According to the research objective number I, it is found that Buddhism was introduced in Cambodia sine the third century BC. after the Third Buddhist Council, nine missions of elders were sent to various states and foreign countries. One of these headed by Elder *Sona* and *Uttara* was sent to *Suvarṇabhumi* or Southeast Asia one of the countries is Cambodia also. The structure of Buddhism in Cambodia: There are two Buddhist Orders, *Mohanikay* and *Thommayut* and according to *Saṅgha* administration, the Supreme Patriarch is the most highest position of Cambodian Buddhist community, and the group of high ranging monks (*Rajagana*) form an inner cabinet act as a bridge between the Supreme Patriarch and the provincial chief monks and fallowing by district, and temple chief monks. Moreover, there are two main institution steer Buddhist affair at the national level called *Saṅgha* (Association) and the Ministry of Cults and Religions is primarily responsible for the administration dimensions associated with the managing of monastery’s system and other Buddhist institution in Cambodia.

The function of Buddhism in Cambodia: Buddhism is the national religion of Cambodia under the constitution in which 95 percent

of all population is Buddhist. Buddhism has influent a deep root in the Khmer society, not only in artistic and cultural life but it also shapes the personality and the mentality of people as characteristic of Khmer that is based on Buddhist principles of conduct as the important guides for way of life. Moreover, the temple as the supreme and sacred place is considered as the pillar of Khmer society that it plays as social, medical, spiritual and artistic centers. The Buddhist monk generally high respect by the Khmer people as spiritual leader in the community who are in a close-day-today relationship with all sorts of people. All of these influent to the whole of Cambodian societies, as the saying that “to be Khmer is to be the Buddhist and to be Buddhist is to be Khmer.”

According to research objective number II, it is found that when the Khmer Rouge unfurled a radical Communist, the antimodernist plan to destroy the Cambodian economy, the infrastructure, and social fabric while wiping out all signs of “corruption” western capitalism. An estimated 2 million Cambodians died through execution, starvation, overworking, and disease. As some 65,000 monks were killed and forced to disrobe and 3,500 *Wats* were destroyed or converted to prisons in just four years. Under the pretext of saving the Khmer people from the regime of Pol Pot, Vietnam invaded Cambodia and took over Phnom Penh on January 17, 1979. A government backed by Vietnam with Heng Samrin as the President of People’s Republic of Kampuchea was installed.

The gradual reemergence and recovery of organized Buddhism after the darkness of the Pol Pot years were slow, in part because of its ideological manipulation by the new Vietnamese-backed government. After the Khmer Rouge regime, the Buddhist practice that reappeared in Cambodia in the 1980 was not the same as that of pre-war time. The PRK government set age restrictions for ordination, prohibiting men under 50 years of age from becoming monks. Monks were not to be differentiated according to sect. The great majority of damage temple buildings were not yet reconstructed because of the economic difficulties in the country at the time. Buddhist activities in Cambodia did not undergo significant revitalization until 1989. In this year, the post-PRK government declared Theravada Buddhism once again the state religion. The number of monks and novices increased dramatically after the abolition of the ordination age restriction in the same year. The re-establishment of the two sects of the national *Saṅgha*, *Mohanikay* and *Thommayut*, took place upon the return of King Norodom Sihanouk to the country in 1991.

The restoration and the development of public order after the election in 1993 when the country changed to be democracy and also once again changed country's name as Kingdom of Cambodia. The co-prime ministers Hun Sen and Prince Ranaridh in order to bolster its popular appeal, the government stepped up its support Buddhism to develop and released the previous religious restriction. It is clearly contributed to the revitalization of various Buddhist activities in the country. As, the improvements in security and the expansion of economic activities in the country. The *Saṅgha* education has been gradually reopened again when the number of monks increased and now all the religious activities are allowed in the country.

According to research objective number III, it is found that the communism and the intervention by foreign powers that resulted in political turmoil had an adverse effect to Buddhism in Cambodia to be changed. As the political idealism of the Communist world that hostile and negative to the religions in which Khmer Rouge used to destroy Buddhism in Cambodia. The politics is another important factor that affected to change the whole of Cambodia, and it also linked to other factors, such as society, economy, and education as the important social fabric to be affected according to the political situations in the country. As when the political conflict which ended in a civil war that lasted for 10 years, and economic hardship also contributed significantly to the difficulty of Buddhist restoration in Cambodia after the post-Khmer Rouge era. As later communist and democratic regimes treated monks differently, they both sought to deduce the influence of Buddhism in Cambodia. These fundamental factors were significantly variable for the survival and the development of Buddhism in Cambodia.

However, the Cambodian Buddhism is revived and developed, but still remains in a weak state of physical, spiritual, and intellectual health since everything begins to develop bare handedly by. Today Buddhism is struggling to re-establish itself, but the lack of Buddhist scholars and leaders and the continuing political instability is making the task difficult. Khmer Buddhism is in the long process of rebuilding her own Buddhist institutions and developing the monks as national resources. This is the only means and goal for the future of the Cambodian Buddhism.

## 5.2 Suggestions

From the result of this research, it is suggested for the policies and the practices in order to fulfill the needs and development of Cambodian Buddhism in the future with the suggestions for the further research works as the followings:

### 5.2.1 Suggestions for the Policy and the Practice

1. Develop the *Saṅgha* education to be available all the provinces and upgrade the *Saṅgha* educational system to be more in standard.
2. The Government should provide more opportunity and freedom for the Buddhist monks in the secular affairs as in term of Buddhism and social engagement in Cambodia.
3. The Government should establish some parts of the Buddhist subject in the government educational system, in order to preserve Buddhism in the long term.
4. The monks and government authorities should cooperate together in both of secular affair and Buddhist affair as the mutual assistance.

### 5.2.2 Suggestions for the Further Researches

My research is not covered the whole points of Buddhism in Cambodia, it is just only find out and demonstrate in some interesting points. It still needs for the further researches and find out the other interesting points about Buddhism in Cambodia. Therefore I would like to suggest for the next research works according to the followings:

1. A study of the development of *Saṅgha* administration in Cambodia.
2. A study of the *Saṅgha*'s roles and the expectations of Khmer people from the monks in modern society.
3. A study of Cambodian Buddhism and political legitimacy: benefit or affect for the monks voting in general election.
4. A study of the Cambodia people with the Buddhist knowledge.
5. A study of the opportunity and the challenge of Cambodian Buddhism after the opening of ASEAN.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### I: Primary Sources

- Alexandra Kent and David Porter Chandler (ed). **People of Virtue: Reconfiguring Religion, Power and Moral Order in Cambodia Today**. Malaysia: Nordic Institute of Asian Studies Press, 2008.
- Joakim Ojendal and Mona Lilja (ed). **Beyond Democracy in Cambodia: Political Reconstruction in a Post-Conflict Society**. Malaysia: Nordic Institute of Asian Studies Press, 2009.
- Ian, Harris. **Cambodian Buddhism: History and Practice**. USA: University of Hawaii Press, 2005.
- \_\_\_\_\_. **Buddhism and Politics in Twentieth Century Asia** London: Great Britain Press, 1999.
- Raoul M. Jennar. **The Cambodian Constitutions, 1953-1993**. Bangkok: White Lotus Press, 1995.
- Son Soubert, et al. **Buddhism and the Future of Cambodia**. Rithisen, Thailand: Khmer Buddhist Research Center Press, 1986.
- Trevor Ling, (ed). **Buddhist Trends in Southeast Asia**. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asia Studies Press, 1993.
- Yang Sam. **Khmer Buddhism and Politics from 1954 to 1984**. USA: Khmer Buddhist Institute, 1987.

### II: Secondary Sources

#### 1. English Sources

- Alexander Laban Hinton (ed). **Annihilating Difference: The Anthropology of Genocide**. USA: University of California Press, 2002.
- Barbara A. West. **Encyclopedia of the Peoples of Asia and Oceania**. USA: An Imprint of Infobase Publishing Press, 2009.
- Ching Hsin. **Buddhist Education: Continuity and Progress**. Vietnam: Culture and Information Press, 2008.
- Chang Pao Min, **Kampuchea Between China and Vietnam**. Singapore: Singapore University Press, 1987.
- Charles F. Keyes, Laurel Kendall and Helen Hardacre (ed). **Asian Visions of Authority: Religion and the Modern States of**

- East and Southeast Asia.** USA: University of Hawaii Press, 1994.
- David P. Chandler. **A History of Cambodia.** 4th Edition. USA: Westview Press, 1993.
- Donald B. Holsinger and W. James Jacob (ed). **Inequality in Education: Comparative and International Perspectives.** Hong Kong: Comparative Education Research Center Press, 2008.
- Donald K. Swearer, **The Buddhist World of Southeast Asia.** 2th Edition. USA: State University of New York Press, 1995.
- Eric C. Bjornlund. **Beyond Free and Fair: Monitoring Elections and Building Democracy.** Washington: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2004.
- Gerard A. Postiglione and Jason Tan. **Going to School in East Asia.** USA: Postiglione and Gerard Press, 2007.
- Harold G. Coward and Gordon Scott Smith (ed). **Religion and Peacebuilding.** USA: University of New York Press, 2004.
- Heinrich, Dumoulin. **The Cultural, Political, and Religious Significance of Buddhism in the Modern World.** New York: Collier Books Press, 1976.
- I. B. Horner, M.A. (tr.). **The Book of the Discipline** (Vinaya Piṭaka). I Vols. London: The Oxford University Press, 1938.
- Ishtiaq Ahmed (ed). **The Politics of Religion in South and Southeast Asia.** USA: Routledge Press, 2011.
- Isaac A. Blankson and Patrick D. Murphy (ed). **Negotiating Democracy: Media Transformations in Emerging Democracies.** USA: University of New York Press, 2007.
- John Witte and M. Christian Green (ed). **Religion and Human Rights: An Introduction.** New York: Oxford University Press, 2012.
- Jonatthan, Fox. **A world Survey of Religion and the State.** USA: Cambridge University Press, 2008.
- Katherine Marshall and Lucy Keough. **Mind, Heart And Soul: In The Fight Against Poverty.** Washington: The World Bank Press, 2004.
- Marie A. Martin (tr.). **Cambodia: A Shattered Society.** Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1994.
- Marshall, Cavendish. **World and Its Peoples: Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam, Eastern and Southern Asia.** 6 Vols. China: Marshall Cavendish Corporation Press, 2008.
- Matthew, Clarke. **Development and Religion: Theology and Practice.** USA: Edward Elger Press, 2011.



- May Mayko Ebihara, Carol Carol Anne Mortland, and Judy Ledgerwood. **Cambodian Culture Since 1975: Homeland and Exile**. USA: Cornell University Press, 1994.
- Mya Than and Carolyn L. Gates (ed). **ASEAN Enlargement: Impacts and Implications**. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies Press, 2001.
- Nick Ray, Greg Bloom and Daniel Robinson (ed). **Cambodia**. New York: Lonely Planet Press, 2004.
- Nancy Joan and Smith Hefner. **Khmer American: Identity and Moral Education in Diasporic Community**. U.S: University of California Press, 1990.
- Narendra S. Bisht and T. S. Bankoti (ed). **Encyclopedia of the South East Asian Ethnography: Communities and Tribes**. India: Global Vision Publishing House Press, 2004.
- Nassrine De Rham-Azimi and Matt Fuller, and Hiroko Nakayama. **UITRA Hiroshima Series in Post-conflict Reconstruction in Japan, Republic of Korea, Vietnam, Cambodia, East Timor and Afghanistan**. United Nations Press, 2003.
- Peter A. Poole. **Politics and Society in Southeast Asia**. USA: McFarland Company, Inc., Press 2009.
- Peter, Church. **Focus On Southeast Asia**. Singapore: KHL Printing Co Pte Ltd Press, 1995.
- Pou Sothirak, Geoff Wade and Mark Hong (ed). **Cambodia: Progress and Challenges Since 1991**. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies Press, 2012.
- Phra Brahmaganabhorn. **Dictionary of Buddhism**, 19th edition. Nonthaburi: SR Printing Mass Production Press, 2012.
- Phra, Rajavaramuni. **Vision of the Dhamma , A Collection of Buddhist Writing in English**. Bangkok: Wat Nyanavesakavan, 2007.
- Phra, Rajavaramuni. **Thai Buddhism in the Buddhist World**. Thailand: Amarin Printing Group Press, 1987.
- R. Scott, Appleby. **The Ambivalence of the Sacred: Religion, Violence, and Reconciliation**. USA: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc Press, 2000.
- Smith-Hefner. **Khmer American: Identity and Moral Education in Diasporic Community**. U.S: University of California Press, 1990.
- Stephen C. Berkwitz. **Buddhism in World Cultures: Comparative Perspectives**. USA: ABC-CLIO Press, 2006.
- Somboon, Suksamran. **Buddhism and Political Legitimacy**. Bangkok: Chulalongkorn University Press, 1993.

- Stanley L. Kutler (ed). **Encyclopedia of the Vietnam War**. New York: Scribners Publications Press, 1996.
- Susan Anne Needham and Karen I. Quintiliani. **Cambodians in Long Beach**. U.S: Arcadia Publishing Press, 2008.
- Thomas Banchoff (ed). **Religious Pluralism, Globalization, and World Politics**. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008.
- Usha, Welaratna. **Beyond the Killing Fields: voices of nine Cambodian Survivors in America**. California: Stanford University Press, 1993.
- Vickery Michael. **Politics, Economics, and Society: Marxist Regimes Series**. London: Pinter; Boulder, and CO: Rienner Press, 1986.
- Vickery Michael. **Cambodia 1975-1982**. Boston: South End Press, 1984.

## 2. Thai Sources

- On Anong, Noiwong. **Cambodia: Thai Foreign Policy under the Prem Tinsulanond's Government**. (*Kamphucha : Nayobai Tangprathet Thai Samai Phon-ek Prem Tinna Su La Non*). Bangkok: Office of Research Fund, Text Books Foundation of Social Sciences and Humanities Press, 1999.
- Pinthong, Chaisutthi. "Thai Foreign Policy toward Cambodian Issues from 1975-1991", (*Nayobai Tangprathet Khong Thai To Panha Phrateth Kampuchar Rawang 2518-2534*). **Master's Degree Thesis**. Bangkok: Graduated School of Srinakharinwirot University Press, 1997.
- Phonprapha, Phathirakun, "A History of Diplomatic Relation between China and Soviet from 1949-1989". (*Prawattisat Khwam Samphan Thangkan Thu Tra Wang Chin Kap Sowiat 1949-1989*). **Master's Degree Thesis**. Bangkok: Graduated School of Srinakharinwirot University Press, 2000.
- Phra Raphin, Dualoi. "A Study on the Status of the Cambodian Saṅgha, 1975-1989". (*Kansueksa Sueksa Sathanaphap Khong Phrasong Kamphucha Rawang Khoso 1975 - 1989*), **Master's Degree Thesis of Asian History**. Graduate School: Srinakharinwirot University, 2002.
- Somphong, Chumak. **The Effort International on Crisis Resolution in Cambodia**. (*Khwam Phaya Ya Ma Wang Prathet Nai Kan Kae Panha Wikrit Nai Prathet Kamphucha*). Bangkok: Chulalongkorn University Press, 1984.

Thira, Nutpam. **Indochina under Communist Political Changing Since 1975-1991**. (*Indocheen Phaitai Rabop Khommionit Kwam Plianplaeng Thangkanmueang Tangtae 1975-1991*). Bangkok: Chulalongkorn University Press, 1991.

### 3. Khmer Sources

Chheat, Sreang. **The Buddhist Institute: A short History**. (*Puttasana bhorndhit: provat doisangkhep*). Phnom Penh: The Buddhist Institute, 2005.

Huk, Savann. **The strengthening of Buddhism in Cambodia**. (*Kar bongrereng phraputtasana nao protest kampuchea*). Cambodia: Phnom Penh, 2008.

\_\_\_\_\_. **The roles of Sangha in Khmer society**. (*Tunaiti robose phrasangh nao khnong protest kampuchea*). Cambodia: Phnom Penh Press, 2008.

San, Phonla. **The History and Practice: Buddhism in Cambodia**, 1 vols. (*Prawattisat nurng kar patibat: Phraputtasana nao khnong protest kampuchea*). Cambodia: Nakorwat Press, 2011.

Somdetphramahāsūmethāthibodisanghanāyaga (Hut Tat). **Buddhism in Cambodia**. (*Phraputtasana nao khnong protest kampuchea*). Cambodia: Buddhist Institute, 1970.

### 4. Theses

Gerard, Ravasco. “Towards a Christian Pastoral Approach to Cambodian Culture”, **Master’s Degree Thesis of Theology in Missiology**. Africa: Sa Theological Seminary Press, 2004.

Samsopheap, Preap. “A Comparative Study of Thai and Khmer Buddhism”, **Master Degree Thesis in Buddhist Studies**. Graduate School: Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya Press, 2004.

Sok Udom Deth. “The People’s Republic of Kampuchea 1979 – 1989: A Draconian Savior”. **Master’s Degree Thesis in the Center for International Studies**. USA: Ohio University Press, 2009.

Un Sovanny. “The Buddhist Monks’ Role in Development of Buddhist Education in Cambodia”. **Master Degree Thesis in Buddhist Studies**. Graduate School: Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya Press, 2010.

Urakorn Khajornwit Fuderich. “Beyond Survival: A Study of Factors Influencing Psychological Resilience among Cambodian Child

Survivors”, **Doctor Degree Dissertation**. USA: Department of Education, University of Massachusetts Amherst Press, 2007.

### 5. Articles, Journals and IT Devices

- Annual report on international religious freedom. “Department of State in Accordance with section 120 of the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998”. USA: Joint Committee Print, 2000, pp. 161-162.
- Alexandra Kent. “Recovery of the collective spirit: The role of the revival of Buddhism in Cambodia”. Sweden: Goteborg University Press, 2003.
- Ebihara. “Interrelations between Buddhism and Social Systems in Cambodian Peasant Culture”, in Manning Nash et al. Yale University: Graduate School: Southeast Asian Studies Press, 1966, pp. 68, 175-176, 187.
- Ian, Harris. “Groupings in Cambodia”. *Buddhist Studies Review*. UK: Association for Buddhist Studies, 2001, p. 81.
- Kobayashi Satoru. Vol. 42. “An Ethnographic Study on the Reconstruction of Buddhist Practice in Two Cambodian Temples: With the Special Reference to Buddhist Samay and Boran”. Southeast Asian Studies Press, 2006, p. 492.
- Ministry of Cults and Religions (Cambodia), “National Religious Statistics 2010”, <<http://www.mocar.gov.kh>>, accessed August 13, 2012.
- Nadezda Bektimirova. “The Saṅgha in Politics: Challenges and Consequences”. *Phnom Penh Post*, November 21 December, 4, p. 6.
- \_\_\_\_\_. “The Religious Situation in Cambodia in the 1990s”, *Religion, State & Society*, Vol. 30, No. 1, 2002, pp. 64, 68-69.
- William Shawcross. “Tragedy in Cambodia,” New York: Review of Books, October 18, 1996, p. 47.
- Steve Heder and Judy Ledgerwood, eds. “Propaganda, Politics and Violence in Cambodia: Democratic Transition under United Nations Peacekeeping”. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1996.
- World Faith Development Dialogue. “Buddhism and Development: Communities in Cambodia Working as Partners”, <<http://berkeleycenter.georgetown.edu/wfdd/publications/buddhis>

m-and-development-communities-in-cambodia-working-as-partners>, accessed August 13, 2012.

APPENDIX I  
INTERVIEWED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

**The Survival and The Development Of Cambodian Buddhism after  
the Khmer Rouge Regime Up To 2000 C.E.**

In order to understand more about my topic, I established a program in order to interview Cambodian people of different historical, experiences and educational backgrounds. These interviews were needed in order that specific questions that were crucial to the completion of this work could be answered. The various answers given were collated and studied. The interviews were also used as a source of information needed to deal with questions that arose during the research work. Details of the questions and their answers are recorded in the following pages.

**Interviewees:**

1. The Most Venerable Mahā Vimaladhamma (Tin Same, Sirisuvanna), 71 years old, the Second level of the Royal Order and Saṅgha Governing Body of Cambodian Buddhism, Wat Rajabo, Wat Bo Village, Salakumvek Sub-district, Siam Reap District, Siam Reap Province, Cambodia, on November 11, 2012.
2. Ven. Son Sa Ruet (Pali name: Khunavatto), 42 years old, the abbot of Wat Phra Narin, Kro Sang Village, Charao Sub-district, Siam Reap District, Siam Reap Province, Cambodia, on November 12, 2012.
3. Ven. Rai Vimal (Pali name: Vimalapaññā), 84 years old, the abbot of Wat Phra Pun Lia, Pun Lia Village, Pun Lia Sub-district, Sri Sophon District, Ban Banteay Meanchey Province, Cambodia, on November 13, 2012.
4. Ven. Chuek Tun (Pali name: Dhammaramo), 83 years old, of Wat Sama Thi Phon, Phra Bun Lia Sub-district, Boon District, Sri Sophon District, Banteay Meanchey Province, Cambodia, on November 14, 2012.
5. Ven. Sek Sa Wuean (Pali name: Titabalu), 57 years old, the abbot of Wat Borom San Pruek, Kho Ra Than Village, O Om Boen Sub-

district, Sri Sophon District, Banteay Meanchey Province, Cambodia, on November 15, 2012.

6. Ven. San Yan (Pali name: Dhammasako), 83 years old, the abbot of Wat Suphamongkhon, O Om Boen Sub-district, Sri Sophon District, Banteay Meanchey Province, Cambodia, on November 15, 2012.

7. Ven. Muk Chum (Pali name: Dhammaphalo), 42 years old, the abbot of Wat Rajabo, Wat Bo Village, Salakumvek Sub-district, Siam Reap District, Siam Reap Province, Cambodia, on November 11, 2012.

8. Ven. Pan Sung (Pali name: Visuttho), 62 years old, Wat Domnak, Wat Domnak Village, Salaberg Sub-district, Siam Reap District, Siam Reap Province, Cambodia, on November 11, 2012.

9. Mr. Ly Lao, 67 years old, the president of the committee of Wat Suphamongkhon O Om Boen Village, O Om Boen Sub-district, Sri Sophon District, Banteay Meanchey Province, Cambodia, on November 15, 2012.

10. Mr. Son Sut, 73 years old, the president of the committee of Wat Phanom Chon Chiang, Kiap Village, Tuek Thala Sub-district, Sri Sophon District, Ban Tai Mian Chai Province, Cambodia, on November 16, 2012.

### **Interviewed Questions**

- Q1. How was Buddhism in Khmer Rouge regime?
- Q2. When did you see Cambodian Buddhism being restored?
- Q3. What were the roles of Buddhist monks in the People's Republic of Kampuchea regime?
- Q4. How was Cambodian society in the People's Republic of Kampuchea regime?
- Q5. When did you see Cambodian Buddhism being developed?
- Q6. What were the roles of Buddhist monks after Cambodia became democratic?
- Q7. When was Buddhist education restored and developed?
- Q8. How are Buddhism and the Social Engagement in Cambodia?
- Q9. How do you think, about the factors which caused Buddhism in Cambodia to be changed?
- Q10. How do you think, about the need in developing Buddhism in Cambodia in the future?

**Q1. How was Buddhism in the Khmer Rouge regime?**

**Interviewed 1. The Most Venerable Mahā Vimaladhamma (Tin Same, Sirisuvanna), 71 years old, the Second level of the Royal Order and Sangha Governing Cambodian Buddhism, Wat Rajabo, Wat Bo Village, Salakumvek Sub-district, Siem Reap District, Siem Reap Province, Cambodia, on November 11, 2012.**

The Khmer Rouge ruled from 1975-1979 by toppling Lon Non's government, and it began to destroy and eliminate Buddhism from the country. For the monks, many of them were killed and the rest were forced to disrobe, and not any monks remained. Even the temples in every village were destroyed by the Khmer Rouge. The Buddha images and the Buddhist churches were destroyed and used as rice granaries and animal cages. Every Buddhist building used as the signal of Buddhism disappeared from the country during the Khmer Rouge regime. The people sang one songs that went "the people have suffered over two thousand years ago, exploited by the Buddhists, they are over the people and the enemy of the people, and now e have released the people from enemy".

If we witnessed it with our own eyes, we felt so miserable! For the Khmer Buddhists, this event was a very said story. During the three years of the Khmer Rouge, the lay Buddhists were not allowed to practice any Buddhist ceremony or ritual. Even chanting or worshiping the Buddha image was to be punished. However, the people still secretly practiced the Buddhist teaching behind the Khmer Rouge soldiers. Although it seemed that Buddhism had disappeared during the Khmer Rouge regime, it was only the external forms of Buddhism that did so. The internal forms, the essence of Buddhism still survived and existed in the hearts and the souls of all Khmer people. The monks who were disrobed were also forced to work as laborers, and the kind of duty they did depended on their age. Some of the elders looked after the animals and some planted vegetables for making food for the people. Others who were young had to work harder than the older ones. Those who had been monks before tried to follow the orders of Khmer Rouge in order to survive. They wanted to return to the monkhood again when the Khmer Rouge ended. Most of the educated population was killed; especially the students and the government officials. The Khmer Rouge installed uneducated men to control other people in the villages.



**Interviewed 2. Ven. Son Sa Ruet (Pali name: Gunavatto), 42 years old, the abbot of Wat Phra Narin, Kro Sang Village, Charao Sub-district, Siem Reap District, Siem Reap Province, Cambodia, on November 12, 2012.**

Buddhism during the Khmer Rouge regime was completely destroyed. The monks were killed and disrobed and moreover, forced to work as the laborers as ordinary people, because the Khmer Rouge believed that the religion exploited the people, and monks lived by depending on other people. At this time I lived in Toklok, Sdak, Siem Reap province. After three years of the Khmer Rouge no monks remained in the country.

**Interviewed 3. Ven. Rai Vimal (Pali name: Vimalapañña), 84 years old, the abbot of Wat Phra Pun Lia, Pun Lia Village, Pun Lia Sub-district, Sri Sophon District, Ban Tai Mian Chai Province, Cambodia, on November 13, 2012.**

The Khmer Rouge, in 1975, got control over Cambodia. It called the people to hold a New Years celebration again in the a city (after the general new year) in order to check who was good or bad, ignorant or intelligent. When they had decided, they started to separate the people and bring the good people and the intelligent persons to be killed, first. The Buddhist monks were all forced to disrobe.. They had to disrobe immediately when they were ordered, but not as part of any system. The Khmer Rouge gave them new clothes and they simply changed out of the robe. It ws finished quickly. After that, they forced everybody to move from the city to the rural areas to prepare the rice fields, This included the monks who had disrobed as well. After three years, no monks remained in Cambodia because they had all been disrobed or killed. Some of them survived by escaping to neighboring countries, especially the border of Thailand.

**Interviewed 4. Ven. Chuek Tun (Pali name: Dhammaramo), 83 years old, of Wat Sama Thi Phon, Phra Bun Lia Sub-district, Boon District, Sri Sophon District, Banteay Meanchey Province, Cambodia, on November 14, 2012.**

When the Khmer Rouge took Phnom Penh, they ordered the people to get out of the city by saying that the American army would bomb the city and that in only three days they would called back. All the people believed them, and got out of the city and went to the forest and to the rural areas. Ven. Sarng the vice provincial chief monk of Battambang province was arrested by the Khmer Rouge. No one knew where he went.

After seven days the Khmer Rouge ordered the monks to disrobe and destroyed the temples and the Buddha images and started to force the people to work on the rice field, especially digging the irrigation ditches. The Khmer Rouge did not allow the people to join in any Buddhist activity. Every ceremony and tradition was abolished. The Khmer Rouge called it Tmil (no religion). Most of the Buddhist monks after disrobing had to work hard with the lay people and some were killed. During these three years, many of people were killed or and starved until they died.

**Interviewed 5. Ven. Sek Sa Wuean (Pali name: Titabalu), 57 years old, the abbot of Wat Borom San Pruek, Kho Ra Than Village, O Om Boen Sub-district, Sri Sophon District, Banteay Meanchey Province, Cambodia, on November 15, 2012.**

Buddhism in the Khmer Rouges regime was destroyed. The monks were killed or disrobed and forced to work as the laborers with the ordinary people, because at this time they adhered to the ideology that everyone was equality. No one was higher than another by virtue of caste or position. The soldiers of Khmer Rouge called it Dhmil “no religion.” The Khmer Rouge organization called Angkor held that one who could benefit the nation were the ones who worked for Angkor as laborers. This was one of the reasons they disrobed the monks and made them into laborers. During this time no monks could stay as monks. If the monks refused to be disrobed they were be killed by the Khmer Rouge. No monks remained in the country, and all the Buddhist traditions were abolished. The people could not practice any religious ceremonies. The temples and the Buddha images were destroyed or used as animal cages and other things that were not concerned with Buddhism.

**Interviewed 6. Ven. San Yan (Pali name: Dhammasako), 83 years old, the abbot of Wat Suphamongkhon, O Om Boen Sub-district, Sri Sophon District, Banteay Meanchey Province, Cambodia, on November 15, 2012.**

The Khmer Rouge Regime did not allow people to practice any religious activities. All of the monks in the country were forced to disrobe and some who did not agree to do so were led to be killed. No monks remained in the country. Those who survived or preserved their monkhood escaped from the country, especially to Thailand or other countries. In fact, it was not only the monks; the Khmer people as well found it very hard to survive. After the Khmer Rouge took the power, the people were forced to move from the urban to rural areas and work hard as labourers of the state. They established radical regulations for the

people, and those who committed crimes would be led to immediate execution. This caused uncountable deaths during the Khmer Rouge regime.

**Interviewed 7. Ven. Muk Chum (Pali name: Dhammaphalo), 42 years old, the abbot of Wat Rajabo, Wat Bo Village, Salakumvek Sub-district, Siam Reap District, Siam Reap Province, Cambodia, on November 11, 2012.**

When the Khmer Rouge came to power in 1975, Buddhists, especially the monks were killed and the rest were forced to disrobe. We can say that no monks remained in the country after the four years of the Khmer Rouge rule. Moreover, the temples in every village were destroyed by the Khmer Rouge. The Buddha images and the Buddhist temples were also destroyed and some were used as granaries and cages.

**Interviewed 8. Ven. Pan Sung (Pali name: Visuttho), 62 years old, Wat Domnak, Wat Domnak Village, Salaberg Sub-district, Siam Reap District, Siam Reap Province, Cambodia, on November 11, 2012.**

Buddhism in the Khmer Rouge period was under the radical policy of the Khmer Rouge. Monks were forced to disrobe and some were killed, and moreover, the temples and the Buddhist buildings were destroyed and the rest converted for use as cells and animal cages. All religious activities were abolished; the Khmer Rouge did not allow the people to conduct any religious ceremonies. Moreover, it was not only the monks who faced such difficulties. The Khmer people were forced by the Khmer Rouge to move from the cities and treated as agricultural labourers in the rural areas. Many people were killed during this period, Some say the number is over two million. No monks could preserve their statuses, and only those who escaped to other countries were able to stay as monks.

**Interviewed 9. Mr. Ly Lao, 67 years old, the president committee of Wat Suphamongkhon O Om Boen Village, O Om Boen Sub-district, Sri Sophon District, Banteay Meanchey Province, Cambodia, on November 15, 2012.**

When the Khmer Rouge took the Phnom Penh and got victory over the Lon Non government in 1975, country experienced radical change under the policies of the Khmer Rouge. They did not want to keep any religion under their ruling anymore, particularly Buddhism. After they controlled the whole of the country, they immediate ordered and forced the monks to disrobe and treated them as labourers on the rice

fields. Some who did not agree to disrobe faced difficulty surviving, owing to the fact that the Khmer Rouge did not allow the people to offer food to the monks. The people themselves lived in a very difficult situation, and never had enough food to eat. This made them unable to feed the monks as well. Finally the monks decided to disrobe. Some of the monks who refused to disrobe were killed.

**Interviewed 10. Mr. Son Sut, 73 years old, the president committee of Wat Phnom Chon Chiang, Kiap Village, Tuek Thala Sub-district, Sri Sophon District, Banteay Meanchey Province, Cambodia, on November 16, 2012.**

The Khmer Rouge regime instigated the Cultural Revolution. The idea was to rebuild the people again according to its ideology. When the Khmer Rouge came to power in 1975, they ordered the people to move from the urban to rural areas to work as laborers, digging the irrigation ditches and planting the rice on the rice fields. The monks were killed and forced to disrobe and later moved to the countryside. For example, on January 7, 1975, the Khmer Rouge attacked Phnom Penh and took over Lon Non's government the same day. The Ven. Han Tat the supreme patriarch of Cambodia was killed by the Khmer Rouge who ordered the monks to move immediately from Phnom Penh. Later all of them were killed and forced to disrobe. No monks remained in the country. They did not allow the people to practice and follow the religion any more.

### **Interviewer's Conclusion - Question 1**

Most of the interviewees gave a very similar answer to Question 1) about life in the Khmer Rouge Regime. We can conclude what happened to Buddhism in Cambodia during three years and 8 months of Khmer Rouge regime. The Khmer Rouge adhered to the ideology of cultural revolution in order to rebuild the people and Khmer society. They held that all of the Khmer population had equal rights regardless of caste, position or status. This thinking led to elimination of the rich, the educated, government officials and Buddhist monks. The Khmer Rouge did not allow the people to follow and practice their religion. This led to the destruction and elimination of Buddhism. The Khmer Rouge sang songs that depicted Buddhism as the enemy of the people. The Buddhist monks were killed and forced to disrobe and finally were places as laborers who had to dig irrigation ditches, practice agriculture, and do very hard work. Buddhist images and Buddhist buildings were destroyed and used as granaries and cages. According to my interviews, there was

not a single monk to be found in Cambodia, nor where there any Buddhist monks in the country who could stay as monks . It seemed that Buddhism had disappeared from Cambodia, but in fact it was observed that some people secretly performed Buddhist rituals or Buddhist chanting. If they had been discovered, they would have been killed. Some monks escaped into to Thailand and other countries during the Khmer Rouge regime. Therefore, we can conclude that that Buddhism did disappear in Cambodia during the Khmer Rouge regime, but it was only the external form of Buddhism that vanished. It remained internally, that is in the hearts and souls of Khmer people, forever.

**Q2. When did you see Cambodian Buddhism being restored?**

**Interviewed 1. The Most Venerable Mahā Vimaladhamma (Tin Same, Sirisuvanna), 71 years old, the Second level of the Royal Order and Sangha Governing of Cambodian Buddhism, Wat Rajabo, Wat Bo Village, Salakumvek Sub-district, Siem Reap District, Siem Reap Province, Cambodia, on November 11, 2012.**

Although Buddhism was destroyed during the Khmer Rouge regime, it was restored later after the end of Khmer Rouge era, by the re-ordination of former monks in 1979. Only for the men who were over 50 years old, and some of monks who migrated during the Khmer Rouge regime to the other countries, had returned to Cambodia, but those of them still were not accepted from the government of PRK. However, the regulation is not so strict in some areas, owing to the fact that they had ordained the novices too. Some of them were known by the authorities were forced to disrobe. Because those who had the right to be ordained according to the regulation have to inform to the local authorities for permission. At the first time, the ordination was conducted in Phnom Penh, and they ordained seven pre-monks, for the preceptors from Khmer Krom of Vietnam. At this time we can say that, the reasonable of restoration of Buddhism, came from the subconscious mind of Khmer people. They needed Buddhism because Buddhism was destroyed only in the external form, but Khmer people believed and kept the essential Buddhism in their heart and soul of. When the men were ordained, the country was of Buddhism again, according the society and the people was still very poor, but something to be surprised for us is that, even the people lived in short situation, but some of them had tried to visit the temple and offered the food to monks. Some temples which was not restored after the Khmer Rouge, in the jungle and in the ruin of buildings

without any monks. The people cooperated together, rebuilt the temples and cleared the temple's areas, and some of the pre-monks that survived, during waiting for re-ordination, took the white robes and preserved the eight precepts in the temples, and moreover, accordingly to the lay people respected to the eight preceptors instead of monks because at this time no more monks in some areas. The other affective from the ordination for men who were over 50 years old who were not the former monks, some of them had the family before. This caused to the problem in Buddhism. As we knew that they were in lack of knowledge about Buddhism, and could not practise according to the Buddhist Vinaya rules, the fact of which led to problem of Buddhism in the future for the next generations.

**Interviewed 2. Ven. Son Sa Ruet (Pali name: Khunavatto), 42 years old, the abbot of Wat Phra Narin, Kro Sang Village, Charao Sub-district, Siem Reap District, Siem Reap Province, Cambodia, on November 12, 2012.**

After the Khmer Rouge regime finished, and they established the new government under Vietnamese for Hen Samrin. The civil war in the country still continued both outside and inside the country nearly ten years. Buddhism had been restored and the temples were rebuilt again and Khmer People re-practiced the Buddhist ceremonies normally. For the first time of Buddhist restoration there was re-ordination of seven former monks in Phnom Penh by the monks from Khmer Krom, but only the old men were allowed to be ordained as monks. The ordination was spread out from the capital city to other provinces and to the other areas. They young people was not allowed to be ordained, because at this time the country was still lack of security, owing the civil war even inside and outside that Khmer Rouge still remained in the border and the country needed to use the young man forces to be the soldiers and to work in development of the county. The lay people practised and followed to the Buddhist culture as normal. Some monks who migrated during the Khmer Rouge regime had returned to Cambodia, and some of the pre-monks that still did not have the preceptors while waiting for the ordination, had preserved the eight precepts as the ascetics, and conducted the Buddhist ceremonies as the monks, when they were invited by the lay people.

**Interviewed 3. Ven. Rai Vimal (Pali name: Vimalapañña), 84 years old, the abbot of Wat Phra Pun Lia, Pun Lia Village, Pun Lia Sub-district, Sri Sophon District, Banteay Meanchey Province, Cambodia, on November 13, 2012.**

After the Khmer Rouge was over in 1979, the beginning of the seven former monks had been re-ordained in Phnom Penh. One of them was the Ven. Tep Vong as the present *Saṅgharāja* of Cambodia. After that spread to other provinces but strict with the condition that the men must be over 50 years old and had to be the former monks or without marriage before because the government needed the young men to serve in the army and work forces in order to develop the country. At this time not many monks were ordained because of lack of the preceptors, especially in the rural areas. However, they are still the former monks and the old men during waiting for the ordination to spend their time in the asceticism by wearing the white robes and the Khmer people donated the food to them and respected them as the monks. When the ordination spread to other provinces, each province will be able to establish one ordination center in the provincial cities, because there is not enough preceptors (*Upachāya*), so, if one wants to be ordained one has to be ordained at those ordination centers. On the other hand, the monks from neighboring countries can be migrated at the Khmer Rouge regime. For example, *Theravada* Buddhism from the North of Vietnam (Khmer Krom) and Thailand came back to Cambodia in order to restore Khmer Buddhism again.

**Interviewed 4. Ven. Chuek Tun (Pali name: Dhammaramo), 83 years old, of Wat Sama Thi Phon, Phra Bun Lia Sub-district, Boon District, Sri Sophon District, Banteay Meanchey Province, Cambodia, on November 14, 2012.**

After Khmer Rouge regime about 1979 C.E. the re-ordination had taken place in Phnom Penh by the Khmer Krom monks from Vietnam but at the first time only seven men were ordained and the monks who migrated to Thailand since the Khmer Rouge regime have come back in order to restore Buddhism in the country. After that, the ordination spread out, but only the old persons who were over 60 years old could be ordained. Some of Khmer monks who lived in Thailand before Khmer Rouge, had brought Khmer books that remained when they studied there and returned to Cambodia. The monks who were ordained at that time had to pay the tax of 70% of all income to the Ranase (the preventatives of government). Even so, at this time many monks ordained as widely spread, but they must be more than 60 years old. If the government officials checked and found that they less than 60 years old, they would be disrobed. The government controlled the temple and the

tax that monks and temples must pay to the Ranase Organization. This was left in the 1990 C.E., in which they never asked for the money from the monks and the temples anymore.

**Interviewed 5. Ven. Sek Sa Wuean (Pali name: Titabalu) 57 years old, the abbot of Wat Borom San Pruek, Kho Ra Than Village, O Om Boen Sub-district, Sri Sophon District, Banteay Meanchey Province, Cambodia, on November 15, 2012.**

Buddhism was restored again after 1979 C.E., by the re-ordination, but the ordination, the men must be over 50 years old to be able to be ordained, some monks who migrated during the Khmer Rouge regime lived along the border of Thailand and Cambodia or lived in other countries came back to Cambodia and were ordained.

**Interviewed 6. Ven. San Yan (Pali name: Dhammasako), 83 years old, the abbot of Wat Suphamongkhon, O Om Boen Sub-district, Sri Sophon District, Banteay Meanchey Province, Cambodia, on November 15, 2012.**

I am not sure, in Banteay Meanchey Province, I saw the monks again after the Khmer Rouge surrendered to the Vietnamese forces in 1979. It may be around the years of 1985, when I saw the monks, at that time there were very few of monks. Because at the beginning of PRK period only the old men were allowed to be ordained by the government approval. For me, I used to be the monks in pre-Khmer Rouge and later was ordered to disrobe by the Khmer Rouge, however, I got ordination again in 1994. After that I have seen the numbers of increase respectively.

**Interviewed 7. Ven. Muk Chum (Pali name: Dhammaphalo), 42 years old, the abbot of Wat Rajabo, Wat Bo Village, Salakumvek Sub-district, Siam Reap District, Siam Reap Province, Cambodia, on November 11, 2012.**

After the Khmer Rouge was defeat by the Vietnamese forces in 1979, Buddhism had been restored again and the temples were rebuilt. The Khmer people re-practiced the Buddhist ceremonies as before. For the first time of Buddhist restoration there was the re-ordination of seven former monks in Phnom Penh under the preceptors from Khmer Krom, Vietnam, but at that time only the old men were allowed to be ordained as



monks. The ordination firstly, was spread out from the capital city to other provinces and to the other areas respectively.

**Interviewed 8. Ven. Pan Sung (Pali name: Visuttho), 62 years old, Wat Domnak, Wat Domnak Village, Salaberg Sub-distict, Siam Reap District, Siam Reap Province, Cambodia, on November 11, 2012.**

Buddhism had been restored after the Khmer Rouge was defeat by the Vietnamese forces and fled to the border jungle of Thailand and Cambodia. As I knew the first time, there was the re-ordination of seven former monks in Phnom Penh, one of them was the present Supreme Patriarch Ven. Tep Vong. According to the ordination in the aftermath had spread out to other provinces. However, the process of restoration of Buddhism was very slow, the re-ordination under the policy of new government backed by Vietnam was put on condition that they did not allow the male he was under 50 years old to enter the monkhood.

**Interviewed 9. Mr. Ly Lao, 67 years old, the president committee of Wat Suphamongkhon O Om Boen Village, O Om Boen Sub-district, Sri Sophon District, Banteay Meanchey Province, Cambodia, on November 15, 2012.**

When the Khmer Rouge surrendered to the Vietnamese forces in 1979, the program of re-ordination of the Buddhist monks were started at the late of that year, but only the old men were allowed to be ordained, the young people was not allowed to be ordained, because at this time the country was still lack of security owing to the civil war in the country. The Khmer Rouge forces still remained along the border of Cambodia and Thailand and the fighting between the government and Khmer Rouge continued nearly a decade. Moreover, the country needed to use the young forces to be the soldiers and to work in developing of the county.

**Interviewed 10. Mr. Son Sut, 73 years old, the president committee of Wat Phanom Chon Chiang, Kiap Village, Tuek Thala Sub-district, Sri Sophon District, Banteay Meanchey Province, Cambodia, on November 16, 2012.**

When the Vietnamese did release Cambodia from the Khmer Rouge in 1979, in the same years, Buddhism had been restored by re-ordination of the seven pre-monks that *Upatchāya* by the Khmer Krom monks from Vietnam. In the aftermath, some monks who migrated to

other countries during the Khmer Rouge regime had returned to Cambodia. At the beginning of this period, the ordination was not available for everyone. Only the people who were over 50 years old were allowed to be ordained. The government wanted the young men to serve in the army for fighting with enemies. In each temple there were not more than five monks. In some villages when there were not enough monks when the people took the ceremonies, they had to invite the monks from many villages or areas in order to participate in the ceremonies.

### **Conclusion of the Interviewer's Ideas in Question 2**

Owing to the interviewed question 2, the answers given by the interviewees are mostly the same about the restoration of Buddhism in Cambodia after the Khmer Rouge regime, that can be summarized according to the restoration of Buddhism as follows: Buddhism had been restored again in 1979 C.E., when the Vietnamese took the victory over the Khmer Rouge, by re-ordination of seven former monks at the first time, and later gave the ordination to other people, but restricted with the conditions that men must be over 50 years old and must not be of the family before, and some monks who migrated during the Khmer Rouge regime to neighboring countries had come back to Cambodia in order to restore Buddhism. Moreover, some people while waiting for the ordinations there was not enough preceptors to perform the ordination ceremony, they had to preserve the eight precepts and to live as the ascetics. According to the lay Buddhist who cooperated together repaired and rebuilt their old temples, and re-practiced the Buddhist ceremonies as before even some areas were without Buddhist monks. Although, most of the interviewees answers are the same, the different point of answers is the age of ordination that five of six interviewees told as 50 years old, but Ven. Chuek Tun, told that in some areas must be over 60 years old.

### **Q3. What were the roles of Buddhist monks in the People's Republic of Kampuchea regime?**

**Interviewed 1. The Most Venerable Most Ven. Mahā Vimaladhamma (Tin Same, Sirisuvanna), 71 years old, the Second level of the Royal Order and Sangha Governing of Cambodian Buddhism, Wat Rajabo, Wat Bo Village, Salakumvek Sub-district, Siem Reap District, Siem Reap Province, Cambodia, on November 11, 2012.**

At this time, the monks have worked for the rebuilding of the country according to the orders of the government. what the government would put the policy for monks to work for the society; for example, some money of the temple donated by the people would be used in order to build the roads, the schools, the hospitals and others that are necessary for the country and the public. The monks are pleased to do according to what is necessary for the country. For the merit making or Buddhist ceremonies, the people are able to do as normal, but they would be controlled and limited by local authorities called “Ranase”, not freedom, but better than Khmer Rouge.

**Interviewed 2. Ven. Son Sa Ruet (Pali name: Khunavatto), 42 years old, the abbot of Wat Phra Narin, Kro Sang Village, Charao Sub-district, Siem Reap District, Siem Reap Province, Cambodia, on November 12, 2012.**

The roles played by monks during this time was not so clear. Most of them were the elders and they still were with low Buddhist knowledge and abilities to develop or strengthen Buddhism, just struggled to survive Buddhism and practiced the Buddhist monastic roles as normal and participated when they were invited to join the ceremonies. The development of Buddhism in 1979-1990 C.E. very slow even though the number of monks increased, the affectedness in order to propagate Buddhism was still low.

**Interviewed 3. Ven. Rai Vimal (Pali name: Vimalapaññā), 84 years old, the abbot of Wat Phra Pun Lia, Pun Lia Village, Pun Lia Sub-district, Sri Sophon District, Banteay Meanchey Province, Cambodia, on November 13, 2012.**

During nearly ten years of this regime, the monks who were ordained at this time were of no more duties, they participated in the general ceremonies and preaching the Buddha’s teachings to the people as normal, and in some areas there were no monks, there were only the ascetic men who were disrobed since the Khmer Rouge regime and the former monks waiting for ordination, gathered and performed the Buddhist ceremonies instead of the people in the communities, and at this time the monks were called Ranase (the revolutionist monks). As the education was not yet developed because most monks were old men and they had to study by themselves, without the system. They would teach what they knew to the new monks.

**Interviewed 4. Ven. Chuek Tun (Pali name: Dhammaramo), 83 years old, of Wat Sama Thi Phon, Phra Bun Lia Sub-district, Boon District, Sri Sophon District, Banteay Meanchey Province, Cambodia, on November 14, 2012.**

The monks at this time, tried to preserve Buddhism and practiced according to the Buddhist monastic rules, and preached *Dhamma* to the people as normal, because most of them who were ordained again, were the former monks, who had learned before. Therefore, they have enough ability to teach the people and undertake the Buddhist ceremonies. For the other development it was not yet in existence, because at this time, the monks were still limited in numbers.

**Interviewed 5. Ven. Sek Sa Wuean (Pali name: Titabalu), 57 years old, the abbot of Wat Borom San Pruek, Kho Ra Than Village, O Om Boen Sub-district, Sri Sophon District, Banteay Meanchey Province, Cambodia, on November 15, 2012.**

The Buddhist monks did not have any significant roles in the society, because the country just finished from the Khmer Rouge regime. Moreover, everything had to be restored again including the country and Buddhism as well. As the general roles of monks had to be rebuilt and practiced again as normal, for instance, the monks practiced according to the Buddha's regulations generally and the people visited the temple for merit making and invited monks to participate in the ceremonies as before.

**Interviewed 6. Ven. San Yan (Pali name: Dhammasako), 83 years old, the abbot of Wat Suphamongkhon, O Om Boen Sub-district, Sri Sophon District, Banteay Meanchey Province, Cambodia, on November 15, 2012.**

In the Buddhist tradition the Khmer Monks have played their roles as normal, but in the society it was not very significantly, because the number monks in the country still very few in numbers after the Buddhist restoration. Both monks and Khmer Buddhists were struggling to survive after the country released from the Khmer Rouge regime. Therefore, their roles during this time no any improvement.

**Interviewed 7. Ven. Muk Chum (Pali name: Dhammaphalo), 42 years old, the abbot of Wat Rajabo, Wat Bo Village, Salakumvek Sub-district, Siam Reap District, Siam Reap Province, Cambodia, on November 11, 2012.**

The Buddhist monks did not have any significant roles in the society, the monks who were ordained at this time were of no more duties, they participated in the general ceremonies and preaching the Buddha's teachings to the people as normal, but in some areas there were no monks, there were only the ascetic men who were disrobed since the Khmer Rouge regime and they were waiting for ordination. However, the monks have worked for the rebuilding of the country according the government policy for example, some money of the temple donated by the people would be used to build the roads, the schools, the hospitals and others that are necessary for the country and the public.

**Interviewed 8. Ven. Pan Sung (Pali name: Visuttho), 62 years old, Wat Domnak, Wat Domnak Village, Salaberg Sub-distict, Siam Reap District, Siam Reap Province, Cambodia, on November 11, 2012.**

The beginning of Buddhist restoration, the monks still limited in numbers owing to it was difficult to find out the preceptor to undertake of ordination ceremony, even it was available but only in the capital city or in the main provinces especially provincial cities. Therefore the roles of monks at that time are to restore and preserve Buddhism. Although, the shortage of economy in the country, the Khmer people still visited the temple and conducted their Buddhist ceremonies as normal, especially the dedicated ceremony for the family members who died during the Khmer Rouge regime.

**Interviewed 9. Mr. Ly Lao, 67 years old, the president committee of Wat Suphamongkhon O Om Boen Village, O Om Boen Sub-district, Sri Sophon District, Banteay Meanchey Province, Cambodia, on November 15, 2012.**

After the Khmer Rouge regime, the monks who were ordained at this time were of no more duties, they participated in the general ceremonies and preached the Buddha's teachings to the people as normal. Moreover, they have tried to preserve Buddhism and practiced according to the Buddhist monastic rules as generally.

**Interviewed 10. Mr. Son Sut, 73 years old, the president committee of Wat Phanom Chon Chiang, Kiap Village, Tuek Thala Sub-district, Sri Sophon District, Banteay Meanchey Province, Cambodia, on November 16, 2012.**

According to the duty and roles played by the monks, in each temple, the monks had to pay tax of 30 Riels per month to the government official that installed in every village. The money would be brought to use for building the roads, the schools, and the public buildings or other necessary things in order to reconstruct the country again. According to the Buddhist ceremonies have been restored and practiced again. The monks were invited to participate in the ceremonies as well and according to the lay people, they visited the temple for merit making as before.

### **Conclusion of the Interviewer's Ideas in Question 3**

According to the question no. 3, my observation, I have found that the information from the interviewees about the roles played by the Buddhist monks under PRK regime, most of the answers are similar to one another, but with only few differences according to the social situation, location, experiences, as found that this time was the period of restoration of both nation and Buddhism. Therefore Buddhism is just reborn again. However, the Buddhist monks have the important roles to cooperate with the government in order to rebuild the country again as the significant role, and for the other roles played by monks. As I found from the answers of the interviewees, some locations where the monks who were ordained were, the former monks and the social situation were more in normal condition and far away from the civil war that especially happened along the border of Thailand and Cambodia, the monks would have more ability to put their roles in the societies, but in contrasting, In some areas, the monks who were ordained were not the former monks who would have low knowledge about Buddhism and moreover, the social situation is lack of security because of the civil war. The Buddhist monks would be unable to put any importance in the societies. Accordingly some interviewees have told me that the monks just lived to survive Buddhism, because some of them were still low in knowledge about Buddhism and society which is not suitable for them. These different information are very useful to me to consider and compare according to the differentiation.

**Q4. How was Cambodian Society in the People's Republic of Kampuchea regime?**

**Interviewed 1. The Most Venerable Mahā Vimaladhamma (Tin Same, Sirisuvanna), 71 years old, the Second level of the Royal Order and Sangha Governing of Cambodian Buddhism, Wat Rajabo, Wat Bo Village, Salakumvek Sub-district, Siem Reap District, Siem Reap Province, Cambodia, on November 11, 2012.**

In the society after the Khmer Rouge regime, the people returned to their homeland and the government rearranged the land and houses for the people equally. When we came to our home, we could not take our pre-homes, but we had to take according to the local government officials provision. At the early period, most of the people were very poor. We did not use the money to buy the goods, but the people exchanged the goods by gold and rice instead of money, because the Khmer Rouge regime abolished the using the money. Nearly ten years of this period, the people and society were still in lack of security owing to the civil war in the country between government and the Khmer Rouge.

**Interviewed 2. Ven. Son Sa Ruet (Pali name: Khunavatto), 42 years old, the abbot of Wat Phra Narin, Kro Sang Village, Charao Sub-district, Siem Reap District, Siem Reap Province, Cambodia, on November 12, 2012.**

After the 1979 C.E., the societies were still in lack of the security in the country owing to the fact that in the country civil war had continued nearly ten years, the Khmer Rouge soldiers and the government soldiers were fighting to one another along the border of Thailand and Cambodia. Most of young men had to serve in the army, because at this time the country needed to rebuild the army again, because now the Vietnamese army was still used in the country. During this time the most of the population in the country very poor, even though some people had much money. Nobody created the permanent homes, because they were worried about instability of the society in the county that could change their lives all the time.

**Interviewed 3. Ven. Rai Vimal (Pali name: Vimalapaññā), 84 years old, the abbot of Wat Phra Pun Lia, Pun Lia Village, Pun Lia Sub-district, Sri Sophon District, Banteay Meanchey Province, Cambodia, on November 13, 2012.**

The Politics changed to the new government. After the Khmer Rouge Regime, Khmer people were allowed to come back to their houses, some looked for their family. At this time, the people did not use money in order to buy the goods, but they used the gold and rice instead of money and for the houses the government would arranged them for us. Some time, we could not choose to live in the old house, but have to live according to the home given by government, some time, if we could find a house in which no people lived, we could ask for it in which to live. The other problem after Khmer Rouge was that the rice was not enough for people to eat, owing to most of the rice the Khmer Rouge sent to other countries. I don't know where. It was good luck for us that we could receive the rice from donation from the UN which established the centers for assistance in the border side of Thailand, after the people started for their new careers by trading and others. Many of Khmer people who migrated to Thailand not came back to Cambodia but they decided to continued their lives in other countries especially, USA and others, because they were still worried about the situation in the country.

**Interviewed 4. Ven. Chuek Tun (Pali name: Dhammaramo), 83 years old, of Wat Sama Thi Phon, Phra Bun Lia Sub-district, Boon District, Sri Sophon District, Banteay Meanchey Province, Cambodia, on November 14, 2012.**

After the Khmer Rouge regime, the Khmer societies were better than before. The people were able to come back to their houses, and I also came back, but my house was destroyed. The UN agreement to stop killing and created peace building for Cambodia in Paris, the situation in the country is calm down. At the beginning there was no selling or buying. The UN established the helping centers along Khmer-Thai border, where the people went to receive the rice. Later on, people are started to live and created their careers. At this time no rich or poor people were there, but it would be good luck for them, who remainedl secretness preserved the gold from the Khmer Rouge regime. All the Khmer culture and tradition have been gradually restored and practised as before, especially, Buddhism. The people came to temple to offer the food to the monks and the novices.

**Interviewed 5. Ven. Sek Sa Wuean (Pali name: Titabalu), 57 years old, the abbot of Wat Borom San Pruek, Kho Ra Than Village, O**



**Om Boen Sub-district, Sri Sophon District, Banteay Meanchey Province, Cambodia, on November 15, 2012.**

When the Khmer Rouge was to retreat to the Thai border in 1979 C.E., the Cambodian people who remained in the country worked very hard and put their family's lives together. Some people migrated to the border of Thailand. The people in country were very poor, even the rice to eat was not enough. We had to receive the rice from the donation by the UN at the border of Thailand. The civil war in the country was not yet finished. Still there had been the fighting between the government army and Khmer Rouge that lived in the jungle and along the border of Thailand.

**Interviewed 6. Ven. San Yan (Pali name: Dhammasako), 83 years old, the abbot of Wat Suphamongkhon, O Om Boen Sub-district, Sri Sophon District, Banteay Meanchey Province, Cambodia, on November 15, 2012.**

It is better than under the Khmer Rouge regime, when the Vietnamese forces came to invade Cambodia from the Khmer Rouge. The Khmer people had a chance to come back to their homelands again, at the beginning of PRK's period, the UN organization established the assistant centers along the border of Thailand and we had journeyed to receive the rice there. Because at that time Khmer people had rice not enough to eat and feed their family, as the country situation was in shortage economy that has to be rebuilt again. However, after the situation became to be in normal condition, people started their new career to feed their family lives. But some decided to migrate to other country, because felt insecurity of situation in the country, owing to who lived near to the border faced with Khmer Rouge guerrilla, that they still resided in jungle and fighting back to the government of PRK.

**Interviewed 7. Ven. Muk Chum (Pali name: Dhammaphalo), 42 years old, the abbot of Wat Rajabo, Wat Bo Village, Salakumvek Sub-district, Siam Reap District, Siam Reap Province, Cambodia, on November 11, 2012.**

In Khmer society was better than in the Khmer Rouge regime. The people were able to come back to their houses, and I also came back, but my house was destroyed. The UN agreement to stop killing and created peace building for Cambodia in Paris, the situation in the country

is calm down. However, the situation came to be better than before, but still was in the state of difficulty. Owing to the fighting between the Khmer Rouge with Vietnamese and PRK's government forces. Because Khmer Rouge they fled to the jungle and took guerrilla war as the fighting back to the government. By the night time, they came to kill the people in the villages and attacked to government army. This situation had continued for a decade and caused to be the trouble to the Cambodian society that never finished.

**Interviewed 8. Ven. Pan Sung (Pali name: Visuttho), 62 years old, Wat Domnak, Wat Domnak Village, Salaberg Sub-distict, Siam Reap District, Siam Reap Province, Cambodia, on November 11, 2012.**

After the Khmer Rouge regime finished, the people started to come back their hometowns, some were finding for their family members that who lost during the Khmer Rouge regime. However, the people very happy to be free from the Khmer Rouge again, even everything that they used to have could not return. Everything in Cambodia has to be rebuilt again, the society existed in the shortage and economic crisis. The people had to struggle to survive and created their new careers. However, in the country, the civil war continued nearly a decade between the new government and Khmer Rouge forces that still remained along border of Thailand and Cambodia.

**Interviewed 9. Mr. Ly Lao, 67 years old, the president committee of Wat Suphamongkhon O Om Boen Village, O Om Boen Sub-district, Sri Sophon District, Banteay Meanchey Province, Cambodia, on November 15, 2012.**

After the Khmer Rouge Regime, people in the country very poor because the economic crisis and the shortage of infrastructure. The other problem was the rice not enough for the people to eat, owing to most of the rice the Khmer Rouge sent to other countries. It was still good luck for the people that they could receive the rice donation from the UN organization which established the assistance centers along the border of Thailand.

**Interviewed 10. Mr. Son Sut, 73 years old, the president committee of Wat Phanom Chon Chiang, Kiap Village, Tuek Thala Sub-district, Sri Sophon District, Banteay Meanchey Province, Cambodia, on November 16, 2012.**

The Vietnamese came Cambodia in 1979 C.E. in order to defeat and released the people from Khmer Rouge regime. After they won the Khmer Rouge, they got the freedom again, and started to travel back to their homeland and search for their family that were lost during the Khmer Rouge regime. However, the situation came to be better than before, but still was in the state of difficulty. Owing to the fighting between the Khmer Rouge and the loss of power to Vietnamese and PRK government, they had fled to the jungle and took guerrilla war. By the night time, they came to kill the people in the villages and attacked to government army. This situation had continued for a decade and caused trouble to the Cambodian society. Although they were free from Khmer Rouge regime, they still were in lack of the security of lives. The people worked very hard to survive their lived and some of them decided to migrate to the UN refugee camps in the border of Thailand, because they were worried about the instability of societies and politics in the country.

#### **Conclusion of the Interviewer's Ideas in Question 4**

On interviewing in question 4, the answers from all of the interviewees are mostly the same, I have found that there were no more of differentiation of information, because they talked about the whole situation of Cambodia society. This point just rebuilds again the Khmer Rouge regime. It seems that everything in Cambodia had to be restored again from the beginning, especially the society, the politic, and the economic all of which can be demonstrated as follows:

1. The society: It was still in difficulty and was in lack of the security in the country, because the civil war continued over ten years.
2. Politic: The country still used the ruling system of communism backed by the Vietnamese.
3. Economic: All of the economic systems were abolished during the Khmer Rouge regime and now at the beginning period, without any economic system in the country, no selling or buying, even the money currency system, the people used the gold and rice for exchanging the goods. Moreover, most of the people very poor.

**Q5. When have you seen Cambodian Buddhism being developed?**

**Interviewed 1. The Most Venerable Mahā Vimaladhamma (Tin Same, Sirisuvanna), 71 years old, the Second level of the Royal Order**

**and Sangha Governing of Cambodian Buddhism, Wat Rajabo, Wat Bo Village, Salakumvek Sub-district, Siem Reap District, Siem Reap Province, Cambodia, on November 11, 2012.**

Later on, there have been the release of the restriction of ordination of monks and given the freedom in ordination, but according to the year I am not sure, it may be in 1991 C.E., and after that many of the people were ordained as the monks, and the number of monks increased rapidly. For me, I was ordained at the first time in 1962 C.E. and was forced to disrobe by Khmer Rouge in 1975 C.E. and re-ordained again in 1982 C.E., at Chon Buri, Thailand.

**Interviewed 2. Ven. Son Sa Ruet (Pali name: Khunavatto), 42 years old, the abbot of Wat Phra Narin, Kro Sang Village, Charao Sub-district, Siem Reap District, Siem Reap Province, Cambodia, on November 12, 2012.**

After 1990 C.E., the restriction of ordination was released. All the people in Cambodia had the freedom to be ordained. It seems to depend on the society, during 1979-1990 C.E. Cambodian society was facing with civil war nearly ten years, so the people lived without the security, but when the war ended the situation in the country was more normal in condition. The government had provided the freedom for ordination, and the number of monks increased rapidly in the country.

**Interviewed 3. Ven. Rai Vimal (Pali name: Vimalapaññā), 84 years old, the abbot of Wat Phra Pun Lia, Pun Lia Village, Pun Lia Sub-district, Sri Sophon District, Banteay Meanchey Province, Cambodia, on November 13, 2012.**

As I remember, Buddhism in Cambodia was developed from 1993 C.E., because the government gave the freedom in ordination, and was not strict with the age as before, so, this caused many young men to enter the monkhood and the ordination spread out over the country. At that time we can see the development of Buddhism until the present time.

**Interviewed 4. Ven. Chuek Tun (Pali name: Dhammaramo), 83 years old, of Wat Sama Thi Phon, Phra Bun Lia Sub-district, Boon District, Sri Sophon District, Banteay Meanchey Province, Cambodia, on November 14, 2012.**

In fact, the government has lifted the restriction about ordination since the 1989 C.E., but I was ordained in the 1993 C.E., as we saw the gradual development of Buddhism. Even the monks and the temple were wide spread as quickly. In 1991C.E., the Buddhist *Saṅgha* had cooperated together and took the peace march in the country in order to show the movement of Buddhism as a signal of its progressing again in the country, but it was not so satisfied by the authorities to see the growth of Buddhism. However, when the people needed Buddhism as the spiritual refuge, nobody could stop the development of Buddhism that can be seen Buddhism in the present time. Now in each temple there are 66-90 monks living especially in the provincial cities and on the Buddhist holidays, more than 100-200 people visit the temple for merit making and listening to the *Dhamma* talk.

**Interviewed 5. Ven. Sek Sa Wuean (Pali name: Titabalu), 57 years old, the abbot of Wat Borom San Pruek, Kho Ra Than Village, O Om Boen Sub-district, Sri Sophon District, Banteay Meanchey Province, Cambodia, on November 15, 2012.**

Buddhism has been developed from 1989 C.E., because restriction of ordination was left out. When the people had the freedom to be ordained, many men were ordained. The number of spreading out was rapid over the country. Because many people waited for ordination for a long time from the early period. The men lower than 50 years old were not allowed to be ordained.

**Interviewed 6. Ven. San Yan (Pali name: Dhammasako), 83 years old, the abbot of Wat Suphamongkhon, O Om Boen Sub-district, Sri Sophon District, Banteay Meanchey Province, Cambodia, on November 15, 2012.**

May be from the 1991, because I got the ordination in 1994, at that time I had seen many monks in the areas. Because the government abolished the previous restriction about monk ordination. Therefore the number of monks increased day-by-day. In the present in Cambodia there are over fifty thousand monks and novices.

**Interviewed 7. Ven. Muk Chum (Pali name: Dhammaphalo), 42 years old, the abbot of Wat Rajabo, Wat Bo Village, Salakumvek Sub-district, Siam Reap District, Siam Reap Province, Cambodia, on November 11, 2012.**

After 1990 C.E., the restriction of ordination was left by the government. All the people in Cambodia now have the right and the freedom to be entered the monkhood, owing to it was not limited by the age condition of the government as before. Therefore, this caused many young men entered the monkhood and the monks' ordination spread out over the country again. From that time, Buddhism has developed as gradually until the present time.

**Interviewed 8. Ven. Pan Sung (Pali name: Visuttho), 62 years old, Wat Domnak, Wat Domnak Village, Salaberg Sub-distict, Siam Reap District, Siam Reap Province, Cambodia, on November 11, 2012.**

The number of monks increased after the government dissolved the previous religious restrictions, and after the general election in 1993, many young men came to be ordained insistently. Including with the country situation to be more in normal condition, this led the people to visit the temples and conduct more about the Buddhist ceremonies. It is found that the monks in Cambodia today are more than fifty-thousand.

**Interviewed 9. Mr. Ly Lao, 67 years old, the president committee of Wat Suphamongkhon O Om Boen Village, O Om Boen Sub-district, Sri Sophon District, Banteay Meanchey Province, Cambodia, on November 15, 2012.**

The development of Buddhism is after the government has given the freedom for the monks 'ordination in 1989 and as the same year that the Vietnamese forces withdrew from Cambodia. From the aftermath many young men have been ordained increasingly.

**Interviewed 10. Mr. Son Sut, 73 years old, the president committee of Wat Phanom Chon Chiang, Kiap Village, Tuek Thala Sub-district, Sri Sophon District, Banteay Meanchey Province, Cambodia, on November 16, 2012.**

I have seen the development of Buddhism since King Sihanouk came back from China to Cambodia in 1991 C.E., and after the general election in 1993 C.E. This because of the freedom is given to the men to be ordained without the restriction as before. From that time on, many young men have been ordained. Buddhism has developed as gradually

until the present time. In the city temples in each temple at least 50-80 monks lived in the temple.

### **Conclusion of the Interviewer's Ideas in Question 5**

According to question 5, those interviewees have answered about the development of Cambodian Buddhism that was very beneficial for my thesis about the restoration and the development of Cambodian Buddhism. I have found that, when I asked about the development of Buddhism, all of the interviewees tried to focus on the freedom of the monks ordination given by the government which was related to the monks' re-ordination in my previous statement. Most of them believed that the rights of freedom in ordination have caused the development of Buddhism in Cambodia; owing to the fact that many people have been waiting for ordination for nearly ten years. According to the differentiation of the answers given by the interviewees, I have seen only the years of freedom in ordination by those interviewees as follows: Ven. Chuek Tun and Ven. Sek Sa Wuean pointed out the development of Buddhism after the changing of the new government in 1989. The Most Ven. Mahā Vimaladhamma and Mr. Son Sut pointed out that the development of Buddhism, because of the coming back of King Sihanouk in 1991, and also Ven. Rai Vimal is pointed out the development of Buddhism after the new constitution was established in 1993.

### **Q6. What were the roles of Buddhist monks after Cambodia became the Democratic?**

**Interviewed 1. The Most Venerable Mahā Vimaladhamma (Tin Same, Sirisuvanna), 71 years old, the Second level of the Royal Order and Sangha Governing of Cambodian Buddhism, Wat Rajabo, Wat Bo Village, Salakumvek Sub-district, Siem Reap District, Siem Reap Province, Cambodia, on November 11, 2012.**

When the country was changed to democracy, the government provided more freedom to the monks to conduct Buddhist activities. The government supported many things to develop Buddhism, for example, the Buddhist education, the building up of the temples, and the encouragement of the Buddhist social services. The roles played by monks are developed at the present time and the monks have freedom in propagating Buddhism to the society. In my temple it has established the Buddhist radio broadcasting in order to propagate the Buddha's teaching

and this program is also available in other provinces. The present government never prohibited it but all the Buddhist activities for the social services the monks can do. However, it must not be against the state and government policies. For example, now the government has established the project called “Buddhist social engagement that supports the monks to work for social service” and many monks are very active to work for this. Another example is that the government allowed the monks to give the *Dhamma* talk through the television channel in some periods of time.

**Interviewed 2. Ven. Son Sa Ruet (Pali name: Khunavatto), 42 years old, the abbot of Wat Phra Narin, Kro Sang Village, Charao Sub-district, Siem Reap District, Siem Reap Province, Cambodia, on November 12, 2012.**

According to the roles played by the monks after Cambodia became the Democracy, if we talk about the general roles of monks, they still have been as the spiritual leaders of Khmer people and they conducted all of the Buddhist activities as before, but if we talk about the roles played by the monks in the society or in social service it is still limited, with no more of the significant rules, because the monks were of low education, and in lack of opportunity to work in social service.

**Interviewed 3. Ven. Rai Vimal (Pali name: Vimalapaññā), 84 years old, the abbot of Wat Phra Pun Lia, Pun Lia Village, Pun Lia Sub-district, Sri Sophon District, Banteay Meanchey Province, Cambodia, on November 13, 2012.**

When Cambodia became the democratic country, according to Buddhism, the government had given more rights and the freedom to religions to be developed and progressed, especially Buddhism. The monks have played their general roles in the Khmer societies as normal according to the Buddhist tradition, but it has changed to another remarkable role of monks that never happened before, namely the new constitution of Cambodia established in 1993 C.E., which had given the right and allowed the Buddhist monks to vote in election, that was the first time in Cambodia, which caused the problems of Buddhism to arise in Cambodia. Most of the monks are not welcomed in the voting and the laypeople are also not satisfied with seeing the monks voting, they thought that this would lead the monks to be the political monks, and



these would unavoidable of the conflict in the temple. For me, I don't like to vote and have never be allowed the monks in my temple to vote too.

**Interviewed 4. Ven. Chuek Tun (Pali name: Dhammaramo), 83 years old, of Wat Sama Thi Phon, Phra Bun Lia Sub-district, Boon District, Sri Sophon District, Banteay Meanchey Province, Cambodia, on November 14, 2012.**

The monks played their roles as before, because the government was not strict in controlling Buddhism as under the People's Republic of Kampuchea. However, at the beginning of this period, they did not support and did control the Buddhist activities, but they just only allowed Buddhism to be developed, and later they have supported Buddhism. For example they built up the *Pāli* schools for *Saṅgha* education. Now some monks after finishing their education, have been the teachers, educating the new generation, novices and monks, and for the social service, they teach the *Dhamma* to the people, especially on the Buddhist holiday. More than hundred people would visit the temple for merit making and listening to the monks' teaching, the monks practise the Buddhist ceremonies as normal when they invited. Moreover, some time the monks have joined the social service, for example, some project that allowed the monks to participate, the monks came to teach in the secular schools and undertook the Buddhist training in the schools too.

**Interviewed 5. Ven. Sek Sa Wuean (Pali name: Titabalu), 57 years old, the abbot of Wat Borom San Pruek, Kho Ra Than Village, O Om Boen Sub-district, Sri Sophon District, Banteay Meanchey Province, Cambodia, on November 15, 2012.**

After there have been many monks, the roles of Buddhist monks have been developed according to the situation of society. We can see that after the government has given more freedom to Buddhism in practising the Buddhist activities and ceremonies, in the societies or the temples there were not so much that we can see, because the young monks have to develop their education and ability.

**Interviewed 6. Ven. San Yan (Pali name: Dhammasako), 83 years old, the abbot of Wat Suphamongkhon, O Om Boen Sub-district, Sri Sophon District, Banteay Meanchey Province, Cambodia, on November 15, 2012.**

Buddhism in Cambodia after the country became the democracy, and at this time the monk population already increased owing to the previous religious restriction is stopped to use anymore since 1989. However, now the monks have been allowed to do every Buddhist activities, but all activities must be not against to the country stability. In the present Cambodia, whenever the temples take the Buddhist ceremonies and festivals many of Khmer people would participate. Especially the Khmer youth they are very like to participate the festival in the temples, such as the ancestor day, more than three people visit the temple.

**Interviewed 7. Ven. Muk Chum (Pali name: Dhammaphalo), 42 years old, the abbot of Wat Rajabo, Wat Bo Village, Salakumvek Sub-district, Siam Reap District, Siam Reap Province, Cambodia, on November 11, 2012.**

The roles played by monks are more developed at the present time because the monks have been more the freedom in propagating Buddhism to the society when the country was changed to democracy in 1993. However, it has changed to another remarkable role of monks that never happened before, namely the new constitution of Cambodia established in 1993 has given the right and allowed the Buddhist monks to vote in general election that was the first time in Cambodia. According to the traditional roles of Khmer monks they have played as normal, even the teaching of the *Dhamma* and holding the Buddhist ceremonies, and others.

**Interviewed 8. Ven. Pan Sung (Pali name: Visuttho), 62 years old, Wat Domnak, Wat Domnak Village, Salaberg Sub-district, Siam Reap District, Siam Reap Province, Cambodia, on November 11, 2012.**

After the general election in 1993, the new government has been allowed Buddhism to be developed and now all the Buddhist activities are allowed in the country without the restriction as before. However, any activity conduct by monks must not be against to the stat stability. However, the roles according to the Buddhist tradition in Cambodia are practiced monks as normal, such as preaching the *Dhamma* and participating the ceremony. But it is additional one more remarkable role of monks; this is the right given for monks to vote in general election by the new constitution of 1993. Although this event never happened with Buddhism in Cambodia before. However, this new role is caused problem

and conflict in the *Sangha* community among those who accept to vote and who do not accept to vote. According to the lay people they seem that do not so satisfy for the monks to vote in the general election.

**Interviewed 9. Mr. Ly Lao, 67 years old, the president committee of Wat Suphamongkhon O Om Boen Village, O Om Boen Sub-district, Sri Sophon District, Banteay Meanchey Province, Cambodia, on November 15, 2012.**

When Cambodia became the democratic country, the monks have played their general roles in the Khmer societies as normal, and it has changed to another remarkable role of monks that the new constitution of Cambodia established in 1993 which had given the right and allowed the Buddhist monks to vote in election as the ordinary people.

**Interviewed 10. Mr. Son Sut, 73 years old, the president committee of Wat Phanom Chon Chiang, Kiap Village, Tuek Thala Sub-district, Sri Sophon District, Banteay Meanchey Province, Cambodia, on November 16, 2012.**

After Cambodia became the democratic country, the government provided more freedom to Buddhism to develop and progress in the country again. The monks have more freedom in doing the Buddhist activities and the government never collected the money from the temple and the monks anymore. According to the traditional roles which the Khmer monks have played as normal, even the teaching of the *Dhamma* and holding the Buddhist ceremonies, and others, all of the activities conducted by the monks did not affect the state.

### **Conclusion of the Interviewer's Ideas in Question 6**

According to question 6, about the roles played by the Buddhist monks after Cambodia has changed to democracy, I have found that, most of the interviewees have answered with similar answers. They tried to focus on the Buddhist monks' roles which are developed more, by linking to the factors of freedom ordination and freedom in Buddhist activities that were allowed by the government the fact of which caused the development of monks' roles in Cambodia to arise. However, all of these are just only the signals of the starting point of monks' roles in improvement beyond the democracy. Moreover, this democracy had given additional roles to the Buddhist monks as one of the citizens who

has the right to vote in general election. This fact it never happened in Cambodia before. All of the answers from the interviewees, are every useful for me to be compared with the pre-democracy, and it is found that the social and political changing is the main factor that caused to arise the improvement of the monks' roles.

**Q7. When has Buddhist education been restored and developed?**

**Interviewed 1. The Most Venerable Mahā Vimaladhamma (Tin Same, Sirisuvanna), 71 years old, the Second level of the Royal Order and Sangha Governing of Cambodian Buddhism, Wat Rajabo, Wat Bo Village, Salakumvek Sub-district, Siem Reap District, Siem Reap Province, Cambodia, on November 11, 2012.**

The Buddhist education has been allowed and restored since the 1991 C.E., but before this time some temples had been stolen to undertake the Buddhist instruction in the temples by the monks who learned before. This was only in some areas. The system of instruction was just only the informal way, not the formal one because during this time the government did not allow to study Buddhism. If it was known by the government authorities would be punished. However, in the first period of Buddhist education, the monks studied only *Dhamma* and *Vinaya* and with more freedom in the Buddhist activities. Now, the Buddhist education in Cambodia is more developed and the monks have more freedom in education, and many of them have finished primary, secondary and higher education

**Interviewed 2. Ven. Son Sa Ruet (Pali name: Khunavatto), 42 years old, the abbot of Wat Phra Narin, Kro Sang Village, Charao Sub-district, Siem Reap District, Siem Reap Province, Cambodia, on November 12, 2012.**

For the Buddhist education in the earlier period of restoration of Buddhism, it was not yet restored or developed, but it was restored and opened for the Buddhist education, especially the *Dhamma* and *Pāli* schools have gradually been opened after the general election in 1993 C.E. So the Buddhist education was just restored again after 1993 C.E.

**Interviewed 3. Ven. Rai Vimal (Pali name: Vimalapaññā) 84 years old, the abbot of Wat Phra Pun Lia, Pun Lia Village, Pun Lia Sub-**

**district, Sri Sophon District, Banteay Meanchey Province, Cambodia, on November 13, 2012.**

In the Buddhist education during 1979-1990 C.E., there was no any system of education because of the lacking of book and most of monks were the old men. They had to teach and learn by themselves. Until after 1993 C.E., many monks were ordained; so, the education has to develop according to the many necessary. At firstly, the government established the *Pāli* school in some of the provincial cities. However, some provinces were still not yet available.

**Interviewed 4. Ven. Chuek Tun (Pali name: Dhammaramo), 83 years old, of Wat Sama Thi Phon, Phra Bun Lia Sub-district, Boon District, Sri Sophon District, Banteay Meanchey Province, Cambodia, on November 14, 2012.**

In Buddhist education, after restoration of Buddhism, no any book remained even the Buddhist books also. The monks learned by themselves and some of them who were ordained again, and learned before, had taught the *Dhamma Vinaya* and *Pāli* to the new generation. We received the books donated from Buddhist countries, for example Thailand and Japan. When I was ordained in 1993 C.E., I had taught the *Dhamma Vinaya* to the young monks ordained from this time too. In a few years later, the Buddhist schools have been re-opened, and the education system started from the *Dhamma Vinaya* Studies, to *Pāli* studies, in primary and secondary educations. Now many monks have more higher education, and some of them attended both secular and Buddhist schools.

**Interviewed 5. Ven. Sek Sa Wuean (Pali name: Titabalu), 57 years old, the abbot of Wat Borom San Pruek, Kho Ra Than Village, O Om Boen Sub-district, Sri Sophon District, Banteay Meanchey Province, Cambodia, on November 15, 2012.**

After the Khmer Rouge regime, the *Saṅgha* education in the first decade was unable to restore or develop. The monks had to learn by themselves, because of lack of the materials and most of the monks were being elderly persons. However, the Buddhist education of monks at the early period just conducted in the informal way still not had any system. Later the general election in 1993 C.E., the education had been restored and developed, but very slowly and some provinces of just opened the

*Pāli* school for a few years, the delay of this restoration was because of the number of monks and Buddhist teachers. However, if the school is opened, but is in lack of students and teachers, that is unable to undertake the education too.

**Interviewed 6. Ven. San Yan (Pali name: Dhammasako), 83 years old, the abbot of Wat Suphamongkhon, O Om Boen Sub-district, Sri Sophon District, Banteay Meanchey Province, Cambodia, on November 15, 2012.**

The Buddhist education was destroyed during the Khmer Rouge regime, however, most of Buddhist scholars in Cambodia lost too much during the Khmer Rouge regime, and later period even Buddhism has been restored but Buddhist education could not restore in the same time. The Buddhist education just has been re-merged again after the general election in 1993, but it is every slow development and not available in all the provinces.

**Interviewed 7. Ven. Muk Chum (Pali name: Dhammaphalo), 42 years old, the abbot of Wat Rajabo, Wat Bo Village, Salakumvek Sub-district, Siam Reap District, Siam Reap Province, Cambodia, on November 11, 2012.**

The Buddhist education during 1979-1990 C.E., there was no any system of education because of the lacking of book and most of monks were the old men., However, in the first period of restoration of Buddhist education in Cambodia, the monks studied only *Dhamma* and *Vinaya* and the later of general election in 1993, it is found that some of Buddhist primary schools were gradually re-opened, but reestablished in Phnom Penh first, before spread to other provinces.

**Interviewed 8. Ven. Pan Sung (Pali name: Visuttho), 62 years old, Wat Domnak, Wat Domnak Village, Salaberg Sub-district, Siam Reap District, Siam Reap Province, Cambodia, on November 11, 2012.**

According to the Buddhist education in Cambodia is just restored after the withdrawal of Vietnamese forces and the general election in 1993, but for the beginning the Buddhist schools were reopened in Phnom Penh and spread out to other Provinces. However now, the Buddhist schools available only in some provinces and especially the cities.

**Interviewed 9. Mr. Ly Lao, 67 years old, the president committee of Wat Suphamongkhon O Om Boen Village, O Om Boen Sub-district, Sri Sophon District, Banteay Meanchey Province, Cambodia, on November 15, 2012.**

In the Buddhist education during 1979-1990 C.E., there was no any system of education because of the lacking of book and most of monks were the old men. They had to teach and learn by themselves. However, when the number of monks more increased after the general election in 1993, it is necessary to re-open the Buddhist schools for education. The Buddhist school was re-established again as the first time in Phnom Penh and later spread out to other provinces.

**Interviewed 10. Mr. Son Sut, 73 years old, the president committee of Wat Phanom Chon Chiang, Kiap Village, Tuek Thala Sub-district, Sri Sophon District, Banteay Meanchey Province, Cambodia, on November 16, 2012.**

The *Saṅgha* education was just restored after King Sihanouk came back from China, but I cannot remember the year. I knew only that the *Dhamma* study was divided into three levels (*Trī, Do and Eka*) which have been restored first, and followed by restoring of *Pāli* education that divides into three levels too. They are primary school, secondary school, high school and higher education.

### **Conclusion of the Interviewer's Ideas in Question 7**

According to question 7, about the restoration and the development of Buddhist education in Cambodia after the Khmer Rouge regime. All of the answers that I received from the interviewees are similar. There are not much more difference, just only some of them explained more in detail, but according to the conclusion, it is the same. Therefore, it is valuable for me to illustrate in brief according to the finding of results from the interviewees as:- the Buddhist education after the Khmer Rouge regime during 1979-1993 C.E., was not yet restored, and it has been restored and developed after the general election in 1993 C.E. up to the present time. The factors that caused to a delay of Buddhist education can be concluded as follows:

1. Firstly, the country which is the most important has to be restored and developed, especially, the secular education. Then the Buddhist education is to be done later.

2. In the early period, most of the Buddhist monks were the elderly persons, and were limited in numbers.

3. Most of the educated monks or the Buddhist scholars were killed and Buddhist scriptures were destroyed since the Khmer Rouge regime, owing to the lack of the teachers and the material equipments to open the Buddhist education.

**Q8. How are Buddhism and the Social Engagement in Cambodia?**

**Interviewed 1. The Most Venerable Mahā Vimaladhamma (Tin Same, Sirisuvanna), 71 years old, the Second level of the Royal Order and Sangha Governing of Cambodian Buddhism, Wat Rajabo, Wat Bo Village, Salakumvek Sub-district, Siem Reap District, Siem Reap Province, Cambodia, on November 11, 2012.**

Regarding Buddhism, and the social engagement and the post-Khmer Rouge, the monks had the roles in the society by cooperating with the government to reconstruct the country, but at the present time, when the country is more developed and the society is in normal condition, the monks have joined in social engagement as we have seen in some temples, and the monks have been the teachers. They teach Buddhism in the schools and take the Buddhist training project for Khmer youth and gave the radio *Dhamma* talk and other programs.

**Interviewed 2. Ven. Son Sa Ruet (Pali name: Khunavatto), 42 years old, the abbot of Wat Phra Narin, Kro Sang Village, Charao Sub-district, Siem Reap District, Siem Reap Province, Cambodia, on November 12, 2012.**

The monks are pleased to work for the social services, but they still have the obstacles, even they want to undertake any Buddhist project for the children and the youths they have to be ordered first then they can do, but if they would do by themselves, it cannot be done even they have the good idea. If they are without the order, they cannot do anything. Therefore, now the monks have to work for the social service in limited field and condition they can do only according to the government policy and order from the top *Saṅgha* leaders.



**Interviewed 3. Ven. Rai Vimal (Pali name: Vimalapaññā), 84 years old, the abbot of Wat Phra Pun Lia, Pun Lia Village, Pun Lia Sub-district, Sri Sophon District, Banteay Meanchey Province, Cambodia, on November 13, 2012.**

In my temple on one of the Buddhist holidays, hundreds of people visit the temple for merit making and now they are monks to do the activities in the secular school, and the monks who live in the provincial cities must study. If they do not study, I will not accept them after finishing the Pāli school and being as the teachers for new generation.

**Interviewed 4. Ven. Chuek Tun (Pali name: Dhammaramo), 83 years old, of Wat Sama Thi Phon, Phra Bun Lia Sub-district, Boon District, Sri Sophon District, Banteay Meanchey Province, Cambodia, on November 14, 2012.**

According to the roles played by the Buddhist monks, who have joined the social service, for example, some projects that allowed the monks to participate, the monks came to teach in the secular schools and undertook the Buddhist training in the schools too.

**Interviewed 5. Ven. Sek Sa Wuean (Pali name: Titabalu), 57 years old, the abbot of Wat Borom San Pruek, Kho Ra Than Village, O Om Boen Sub-district, Sri Sophon District, Banteay Meanchey Province, Cambodia, on November 15, 2012.**

The roles played by Buddhist monks are many of social services, for example, educating the people, training the youths, and teaching the people, and some monks and government school cooperated together, invited the monks to teach or train the students in the schools and some Buddhist project organized by the monks for propagating Buddhism and social service, for example the monks give the *Dhamma* by radio broadcasting in some periods of time. This program is very popular to the people. It has been established in nearly every province in Cambodia.

**Interviewed 6. Ven. San Yan (Pali name: Dhammasako), 83 years old, the abbot of Wat Suphamongkhon, O Om Boen Sub-district, Sri Sophon District, Banteay Meanchey Province, Cambodia, on November 15, 2012.**

According to the Buddhism and social engagement in Cambodia today, it seem more develop in significantly. As in the recent years the government provides some opportunity for the monks to involve in the secular affair as propagate the Buddhist teachings and serve the society by the Buddhist moral training course that is now undertake in some government schools.

**Interviewed 7. Ven. Muk Chum (Pali name: Dhammaphalo), 42 years old, the abbot of Wat Rajabo, Wat Bo Village, Salakumvek Sub-district, Siam Reap District, Siam Reap Province, Cambodia, on November 11, 2012.**

Cambodia in the present day, it we talk about Buddhist social engagement by the Buddhist monks as we have seen in some temples, and the monks have been the teachers. They teach Buddhism in the schools and take the Buddhist training project for Khmer youths. But all of these in Cambodia still very few owing to the Buddhist education is not yet so develop, and during the Khmer Rouge regime many of the Buddhist scholars were killed.

**Interviewed 8. Ven. Pan Sung (Pali name: Visuttho), 62 years old, Wat Domnak, Wat Domnak Village, Salaberg Sub-distict, Siam Reap District, Siam Reap Province, Cambodia, on November 11, 2012.**

The roles of monks in the social engagement in Cambodia today, still very few especially in the field of secular affair, because the *Saṅgha* education just re-emerged and it is not so develop to the standard, moreover in lack of Buddhist scholars in the country owing to the most of Buddhist scholars were killed during the Khmer Rouge regime.

**Interviewed 9. Mr. Ly Lao, 67 years old, the president committee of Wat Suphamongkhon O Om Boen Village, O Om Boen Sub-district, Sri Sophon District, Banteay Meanchey Province, Cambodia, on November 15, 2012.**

Regarding to Buddhism, and the social engagement in Cambodia today, the monks please to work for the social services, but their opportunity in the secular affair is still quite few. However, according to the general roles that we can see are: educating the people, training the youths in term of Buddhist moral training, and teaching the people. Moreover, some time monks and government officials cooperating

together as they invited the monks to teach Buddhism in the secular schools.

**Interviewed 10. Mr. Son Sut, 73 years old, the president committee of Wat Phnom Chon Chiang, Kiap Village, Tuek Thala Sub-district, Sri Sophon District, Banteay Meanchey Province, Cambodia, on November 16, 2012.**

At the present time, the government, especially the ministry of cults and religions has cooperated with the Buddhist monks in order to put the projects for Buddhism and social engagement. As we have seen now, the monks have the chance to teach Buddhism in the secular schools, to train the Khmer youths, and to give the *Dhamma* talk on the TV or radio broad casting and so on.

### **Conclusion of the Interviewer's Ideas in Question 8**

According to the interviewed question 8, about Buddhism and social engagement from the answers it is found that, most of the interviewees have given the different answers according their understanding in term of Buddhism and social engagement. All of their definitions of Buddhism and social engagement in Cambodia have been found as follows: the monks provide instruction about Buddhism in the secular schools, the Buddhist moral training for the youth, *Dhamma* talk through radio broadcasting and television, all of these are the developing roles played by monks at the present time. However, the *Dhamma* talks through radio broadcasting and television are more available in most provinces, and more popular and interesting among the people, but according to the monks instruction in the secular schools and the Buddhist moral training for the youths are still few in the country depending on the cooperation and encouragement of the government and the top *Saṅgha* leaders to undertake those projects.

**Q9. How do you think, about the factors which caused Buddhism in Cambodia to be changed?**

**Interviewed 1. The Most Venerable Mahā Vimaladhamma (Tin Same, Sirisuvanna), 71 years old, the Second level of the Royal Order and Sangha Governing of Cambodian Buddhism, Wat Rajabo, Wat Bo Village, Salakumvek Sub-district, Siem Reap District, Siem Reap Province, Cambodia, on November 11, 2012.**

Now, the *Saṅgha*'s education is more developed, but the practice is still low. However, now the Khmer people know more about Buddhism than before the pre-Khmer Rouge, because the development of the society made it easy to propagate Buddhism in various ways, even the social network, from which the people can get knowledge directly, and most of them are interested more in Buddhism that is useful to the societies. According the government officials, it seems that most of them are in lack of understanding about Buddhism, and some of them are not so satisfied to see the monks education. This is one of the factors, causing one to be in the difficulty between monks and government official in cooperation to work in some projects, or undertaking in some Buddhist activities. We hope that in the future when Buddhism has more Buddhist scholars it may lead Buddhism to more progress in the future and to release the defilement in Buddhism at the present time. Another thing is that one should not forget that everything in the world is not permanent. The progress may be declined to morrow, as the Cambodian Buddhists have experienced before.

**Interviewed 2. Ven. Son Sa Ruet (Pali name: Khunavatto), 42 years old, the abbot of Wat Phra Narin, Kro Sang Village, Charao Sub-district, Siem Reap District, Siem Reap Province, Cambodia, on November 12, 2012.**

The *Saṅgha* and laypeople will cause Buddhism to be developed, if *Shāṅghas* have been educated and are good in practicing and if the lay people have the knowledge and understand about Buddhism, Buddhism will develop. Whenever, the monks are not good at Buddhist knowledge and are in lack of practice according to the regulation and the lay people too, lead to the decline of Buddhism in the country. On other hand, Cambodia has been experienced with many civil wars for a long time. Thus, the country needed to be restored and developed first. If the country, is not yet developed, how can Buddhism be developed? Therefore, at some time, Buddhism and Khmer nation have to go together.

**Interviewed 3. Ven. Rai Vimal (Pali name: Vimalapañña), 84 years old, the abbot of Wat Phra Pun Lia, Pun Lia Village, Pun Lia Sub-district, Sri Sophon District, Banteay Meanchey Province, Cambodia, on November 13, 2012.**

The factors that can cause the development of Buddhism for one of 95 % of Cambodian populations. They believe in Buddhism by the heart even without Buddhist monks. The Khmer people can practise according to the Buddhist teachings that make the restoration and the development of Buddhism quickly. In my temple on the Buddhist holiday, 100 to 200 people visit the temple to make merit and to listen to the monks preaching. this factor caused it to the weakening of Buddhism. Because when the belief in Buddhism, and the civilization of the country are developed more, and the people are more far from the temple and Buddhism, they are interested in the other things.

**Interviewed 4. Ven. Chuek Tun (Pali name: Dhammaramo), 83 years old, of Wat Sama Thi Phon, Phra Bun Lia Sub-district, Boon District, Sri Sophon District, Banteay Meanchey Province, Cambodia, on November 14, 2012.**

The development of Buddhism in Cambodia is because the Khmer People still strongly believe in their religion. Even Buddhism was destroyed during the Khmer Rouge regime. At the present time, when the Buddhist celebration or ceremony take place, many of the people visit the temple to join the ceremonies. Especially, in the ancestor days, hundreds of people came to the temple. Another thing, now, is the *Dhamma* talk program through the radio broadcasting. Many of Khmer youths give the intention and are interested in asking about Buddhism from the monks. This is the signal that shows that the strengthening of Buddhism still existing, but if it is without the belief in Buddhism, it will become weaken.

**Interviewed 5. Ven. Sek Sa Wuean (Pali name: Titabalu), 57 years old, the abbot of Wat Borom San Pruek, Kho Ra Than Village, O Om Boen Sub-district, Sri Sophon District, Banteay Meanchey Province, Cambodia, on November 15, 2012.**

Accordingly, the Buddha said that Buddhism can be survive forever, because of the existence of the Buddha teaching and the disciplines. Whenever the teaching and the disciplines disappeared or nobody follows or preserves then Buddhism would expire from the world. In case of Cambodia too, if the monks do not study and practice according the Buddha's regulations, and the lay people are low in Buddhist understanding, this will lead to the weakening of Buddhism in Cambodia.

**Interviewed 6. Ven. San Yan (Pali name: Dhammasako), 83 years old, the abbot of Wat Suphamongkhon, O Om Boen Sub-district, Sri Sophon District, Banteay Meanchey Province, Cambodia, on November 15, 2012.**

I think depend up on the Buddhist monks themselves, if they strict in the Buddhist monastic codes and learn more about the Buddhist teaching then Buddhism can be survived in the long time. But whenever the teachings and the disciplines disappeared or nobody follows or preserves then Buddhism would disappear or change.

**Interviewed 7. Ven. Muk Chum (Pali name: Dhammaphalo), 42 years old, the abbot of Wat Rajabo, Wat Bo Village, Salakumvek Sub-district, Siam Reap District, Siam Reap Province, Cambodia, on November 11, 2012.**

Whenever, the monks are not good in Buddhist knowledge and are in lack of practice according to the regulations and the lay people lack the faith and the confidence to Buddhist *Saṅgha*, this would lead to the decline of Buddhism in the country.

**Interviewed 8. Ven. Pan Sung (Pali name: Visuttho), 62 years old, Wat Domnak, Wat Domnak Village, Salaberg Sub-distict, Siam Reap District, Siam Reap Province, Cambodia, on November 11, 2012.**

I think that factors of the changing of Buddhism in Cambodia, the most important thing is the monks themselves that how they conduct as the way to preserve Buddhism in Cambodia and other thing is the political changing in the country, as Buddhism experienced in the Khmer Rouge regime before.

**Interviewed 9. Mr. Ly Lao, 67 years old, the president committee of Wat Suphamongkhon O Om Boen Village, O Om Boen Sub-district, Sri Sophon District, Banteay Meanchey Province, Cambodia, on November 15, 2012.**

Whenever the teachings and the disciplines of the Buddha are disappeared or nobody follows or preserves. Moreover, the monks are not good in Buddhist knowledge and lack of Buddhist practice according to

the monastic codes, these would lead Buddhism to be changed or finally decline from Cambodia.

**Interviewed 10. Mr. Son Sut, 73 years old, the president committee of Wat Phanom Chon Chiang, Kiap Village, Tuek Thala Sub-district, Sri Sophon District, Banteay Meanchey Province, Cambodia, on November 16, 2012.**

Most of the Buddhist scholars were killed during the Khmer Rouge regime. This caused the difficulty in development of Buddhism to arise in the present time, because in the present time there is still the lack of the Buddhist scholars to strengthen Buddhism. Though Cambodian Buddhism was developed, it was developed in some areas and still undeveloped in some areas up to the *Saṅgha* leaders who are capable and will be able to lead Buddhism to be strengthened in those areas too.

### **Conclusion of the Interviewer's Ideas in Question 9**

According to the interviewed question 9, asking about the factors which caused to the changing of Buddhism in Cambodia, most of the interviewees have given the answers similar to one another as found, that is from the results which can be divided to the changing of Buddhism in Cambodia into two factors. They are the external factors and internal ones according to the following points:-

1. The external factors:
  - 1.1 Political changing
  - 1.2 Social changing.
2. The internal factors:
  - 2.1 The survival of Buddhist teachings and disciplines.
  - 2.2 The Buddhist education and practicing.
  - 2.3 The believing in and the adhering to the Khmer Buddhists.

**Q10. How do you think, about the need in developing Buddhism in Cambodia in the future?**

**Interviewed 1. The Most Venerable Mahā Vimaladhamma (Tin Same, Sirisuvanna), 71 years old, the Second level of the Royal Order and Sangha Governing of Cambodian Buddhism, Wat Rajabo, Wat Bo Village, Salakumvek Sub-district, Siem Reap District, Siem Reap Province, Cambodia, on November 11, 2012.**

The Buddhist education and practice should go together. If it is studied without practice or the practice without study, Buddhism cannot develop or progress in the future.

**Interviewed 2. Ven. Son Sa Ruet (Pali name: Khunavatto), 42 years old, the abbot of Wat Phra Narin, Kro Sang Village, Charao Sub-district, Siem Reap District, Siem Reap Province, Cambodia, on November 12, 2012.**

To develop Buddhism in the future, the state leader and the Buddhist leader will be the keys to develop Buddhism in the future. If those of them give more intention to Buddhism, Buddhism may be developed, but if those of them do not give intention to Buddhism it would decline according to the leaders. Another thing is that the qualified individual resources both monk and lay people should have both quality and quantitiveness, therefore both Buddhism and nation will develop and progress in the future.

**Interviewed 3. Ven. Rai Vimal (Pali name: Vimalapaññā), 84 years old, the abbot of Wat Phra Pun Lia, Pun Lia Village, Pun Lia Sub-district, Sri Sophon District, Banteay Meanchey Province, Cambodia, on November 13, 2012.**

I think the monks have to study *Dhamma* and *Vinaya* more than other subjects, because these are the roots and fundamentals of Buddhism. When the monks know more of *Dhamma* and *Vinaya*, they practise themselves in the right way and will teach other people in the right way. Without the *Dhamma* and the *Vinaya* what can preserve Buddhism.

**Interviewed 4. Ven. Chuek Tun (Pali name: Dhammaramo), 83 years old, of Wat Sama Thi Phon, Phra Bun Lia Sub-district, Boon District, Sri Sophon District, Banteay Meanchey Province, Cambodia, on November 14, 2012.**

Buddhism needs encouragement in order to be developed in the future. According to the means Buddhism in Cambodia was established as the state religion under the constitution, only the monks cannot lead Buddhism to developing in the future, but the government and the people should sincerely cooperate with the Buddhist monks, to develop together



so Buddhism may progress in the future, because now new Khmer generation is still of low knowledge about Buddhism.

**Interviewed 5. Ven. Sek Sa Wuean (Pali name: Titabalu), 57 years old, the abbot of Wat Borom San Pruek, Kho Ra Than Village, O Om Boen Sub-district, Sri Sophon District, Banteay Meanchey Province, Cambodia, on November 15, 2012.**

Most of the Buddhist scholars both monks and lay people were lost during the Khmer Rouge regime, therefore, now Buddhism in Cambodia is still in lack of Buddhist scholars and needs the Buddhist scholars or qualified Buddhist individuals in order to propagate Buddhism to the people to cause them to understand the essential benefits in Buddhism. Whenever the people understand the Buddhist teachings, then they will love and try to preserve their religion forever, because now the Khmer Buddhist mostly believed in Buddhism through the tradition not through the understanding of Buddhism.

**Interviewed 6. Ven. San Yan (Pali name: Dhammasako), 83 years old, the abbot of Wat Suphamongkhon, O Om Boen Sub-district, Sri Sophon District, Banteay Meanchey Province, Cambodia, on November 15, 2012.**

Buddhism in Cambodia needs to develop more about the Buddhist education in order to re-build the Buddhist scholars that still shortage in Cambodia, because most them were killed during the Khmer Rouge regime. And the monks should learn more about Dhamma Vinaya than other secular subjects.

**Interviewed 7. Ven. Muk Chum (Pali name: Dhammaphalo), 42 years old, the abbot of Wat Rajabo, Wat Bo Village, Salakumvek Sub-district, Siam Reap District, Siam Reap Province, Cambodia, on November 11, 2012.**

The state leaders and the Buddhist leaders would be the keys to develop Buddhism in the future. All the government officials and the Buddhist monks should cooperate together in order develop the country and Buddhism to exist in Cambodia as the long life.

**Interviewed 8. Ven. Pan Sung (Pali name: Visuttho), 62 years old, Wat Domnak, Wat Domnak Village, Salaberg Sub-distict, Siam Reap District, Siam Reap Province, Cambodia, on November 11, 2012.**

In order to develop Buddhism in Cambodia in the future, monk leaders and government should cooperate together; the government should provide more opportunity for monks to play their roles in the secular affair to help to develop the country and society and promote the Buddha teachings. Owing to some Buddhist projects and activities are concerned with the secular affairs, if without the encouragement from the government officials it is difficult to get success.

**Interviewed 9. Mr. Ly Lao, 67 years old, the president committee of Wat Suphamongkhon O Om Boen Village, O Om Boen Sub-district, Sri Sophon District, Banteay Meanchey Province, Cambodia, on November 15, 2012.**

We hope that in the future when Buddhism has more Buddhist scholars it may lead Buddhism to more progress in the future and to release the defilement in Buddhism at the present time. Another thing is that one should not forget that everything in the world is not permanent. The progress may be decline to morrow, as the Cambodian Buddhism has experienced before.

**Interviewed 10. Mr. Son Sut, 73 years old, the president committee of Wat Phanom Chon Chiang, Kiap Village, Tuek Thala Sub-district, Sri Sophon District, Banteay Meanchey Province, Cambodia, on November 16, 2012.**

To adhere to the disciplinary rules by some monks is also to lose today. Owing to the departure from the disciplinary rules, Buddhism seemed to lose popularity with the laypeople. Moreover, the knowledge of Buddhism possessed by both the laity and the monks is still low and is not up to the standard and quality required. Therefore, the monks should give the intention to learn more about Buddhism more than the secular subjects, and should strictly adhere to the monastic rules in order to preserve Buddhism as long as possible.

### **Conclusion of the Interviewer's Ideas in Question 10**

To sum up my interview on the question 10, that asked about the Cambodian Buddhism needs to develop in the future, I have found that some ideas of interviewees are mostly the same and similar to the question number 9. However, according to the main necessity in order to develop Buddhism in the future, I have found from the answers which can be summarized as follows: regarding the Buddhist education and the practicing, the Buddhist monks must learn more about Buddhism and follow strictly the monastic regulations. On other hand, the part of government and the Buddhist *Saṅgha* should cooperate together in order to direct the nation and Buddhism to be developed and progressive together.

### **Conclusion of the Interviewer's Ideas in Question 10**

According to my conclusion of the interviewing, I have found that their answers are very useful and beneficial for me and the readers for understanding about the survival and the development of Cambodian Buddhism after Khmer Rouge regime up to 2000 C.E. Moreover, some parts of their works point out that the views are based on their selves-experiences and knowledge and personal point of view. Because the events that happened with Buddhism in Cambodia are different in some provinces and locations, if we compare according to the different interviewees in the different places, after finishing of my interviews, I have gained more knowledge and understanding of Buddhism in Cambodia.

On the other hand, it is also a good opportunity for me to have the chance to ask the interviewees in order to fulfill the requirement in writing the thesis. So, without their advices and encouragements, this thesis would never have been possible. Moreover, the interviewees show us various kinds of way of maintaining and developing Buddhism in Cambodia. As the results, I have collected the data and the information for the thesis. Therefore, all the above mentioned answers are fundamentally necessary and for contributory to the readers to understand clearly about the survival and the development of Buddhism in Cambodia after Khmer Rouge regime.

## APPENDEX II THE PHOTOS OF INTERVIEWS



1. The Most Venerable Mahā Vimaladhamma (Tin Same, Sirisuvanna), the Second level of the Royal Order and Saṅgha Governing of Cambodian Buddhism, Wat Rajabo, Wat Bo Village, Salakumvek Sub-district, Siam Reap District, Siam Reap Province, Cambodia.



2. Ven. Son Sa Ruet (Pali name: Khunavatto), the abbot of Wat Phra Narin, Kro Sang Village, Charao Sub-district, Siam Reap District, Siam Reap Province, Cambodia.



3. Ven. Rai Vimal (Pali name: Vimalapaññā), the abbot of Wat Phra Pun Lia, Pun Lia Village, Pun Lia Sub-district, Sri Sophon District, Ban Banteay Meanchey Province, Cambodia.



4. Ven. Chuek Tun (Pali name: Dhammaramo), Wat Sama Thi Phon, Phra Bun Lia Sub-district, Boon District, Sri Sophon District, Banteay Meanchey Province, Cambodia.



5. Ven. Sek Sa Wuean (Pali name: Titabalu), the abbot of Wat Borom San Pruek, Kho Ra Than Village, O Om Boen Sub-district, Sri Sophon District, Banteay Meanchey Province, Cambodia.



6. Ven. San Yan (Pali name: Dhammasako), the abbot of Wat Suphamongkhon, O Om Boen Sub-district, Sri Sophon District, Banteay Meanchey Province, Cambodia.



7. Ven. Muk Chum (Pali name: Dhammaphalo), the abbot of Wat Rajabo, Wat Bo Village, Salakumvek Sub-district, Siam Reap District, Siam Reap Province.



8. Ven. Pan Sung (Pali name: Visuttho), 62 years old, Wat Domnak, Wat Domnak Village, Salaberg Sub-district, Siam Reap District, Siam Reap Province, Cambodia.



9. Mr. Ly Lao, the president committee of Wat Suphamongkhon O Om Boen Village, O Om Boen Sub-district, Sri Sophon District, Banteay Meanchey Province, Cambodia

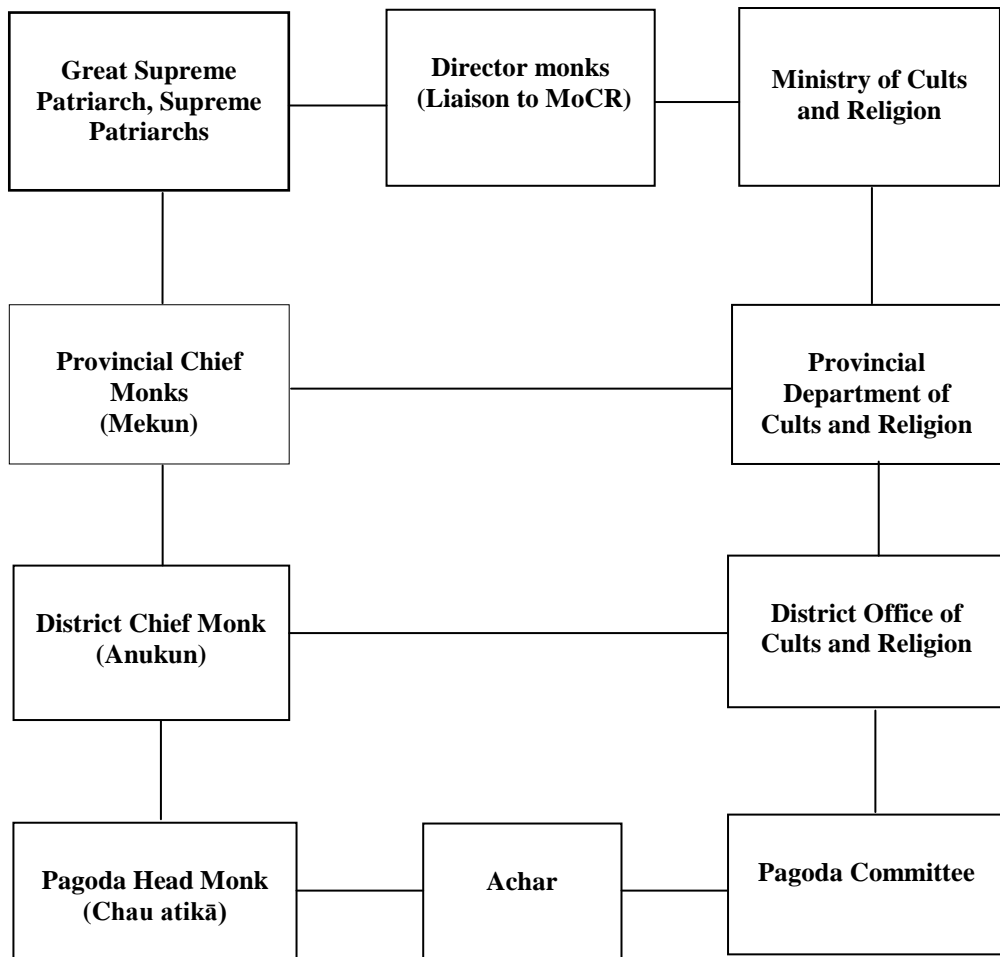




10. Mr. Son Sut, the president of the committee of Wat Phnom Chon Chiang, Kiap Village, Tuek Thala Sub-district, Sri Sophon District, Ban Tai Mian Chai Province, Cambodia.

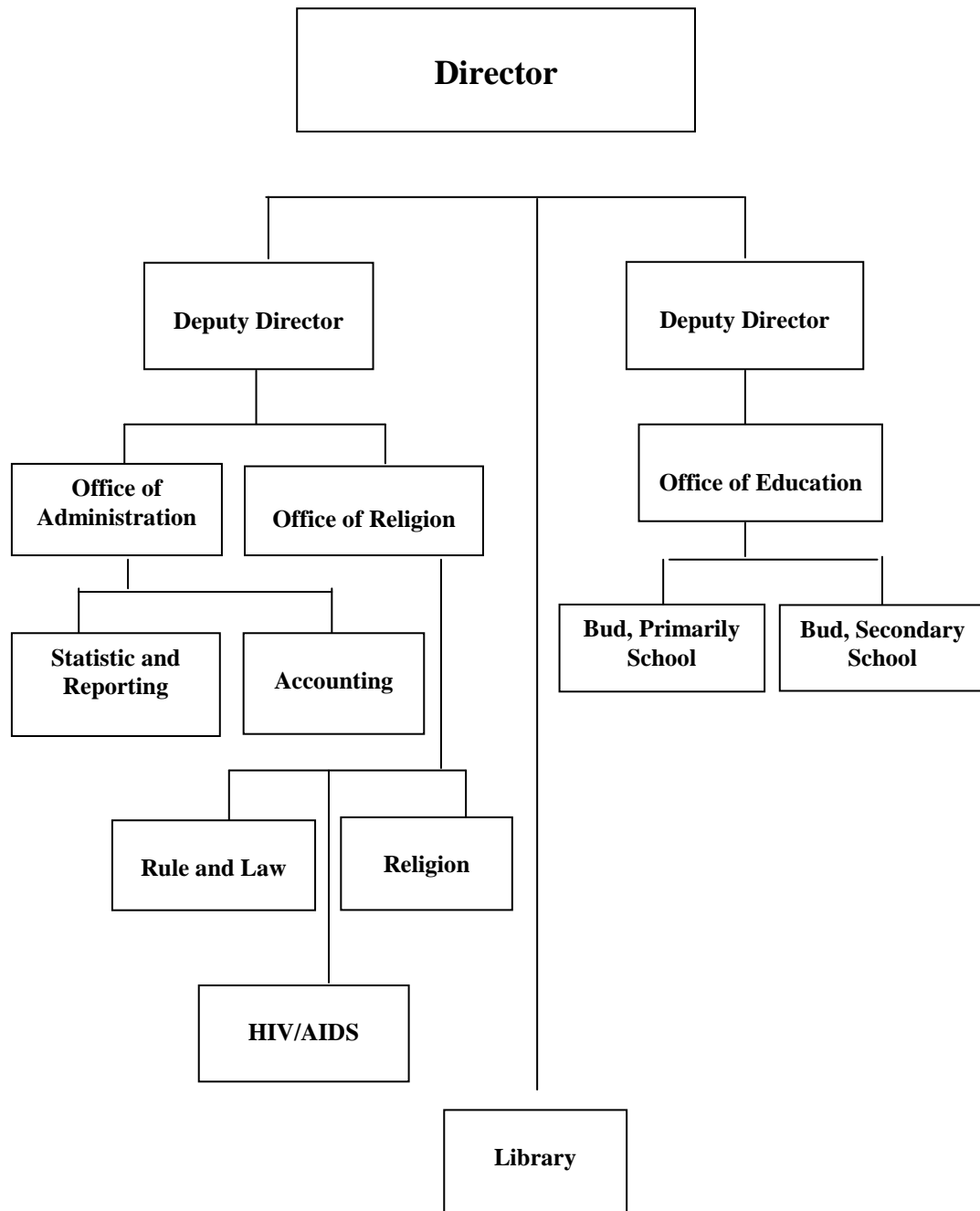
APPENDEIX III  
THE SANGHA ADMINISTRATION IN CAMBODIA

**Saangha Administration in the Present Day**



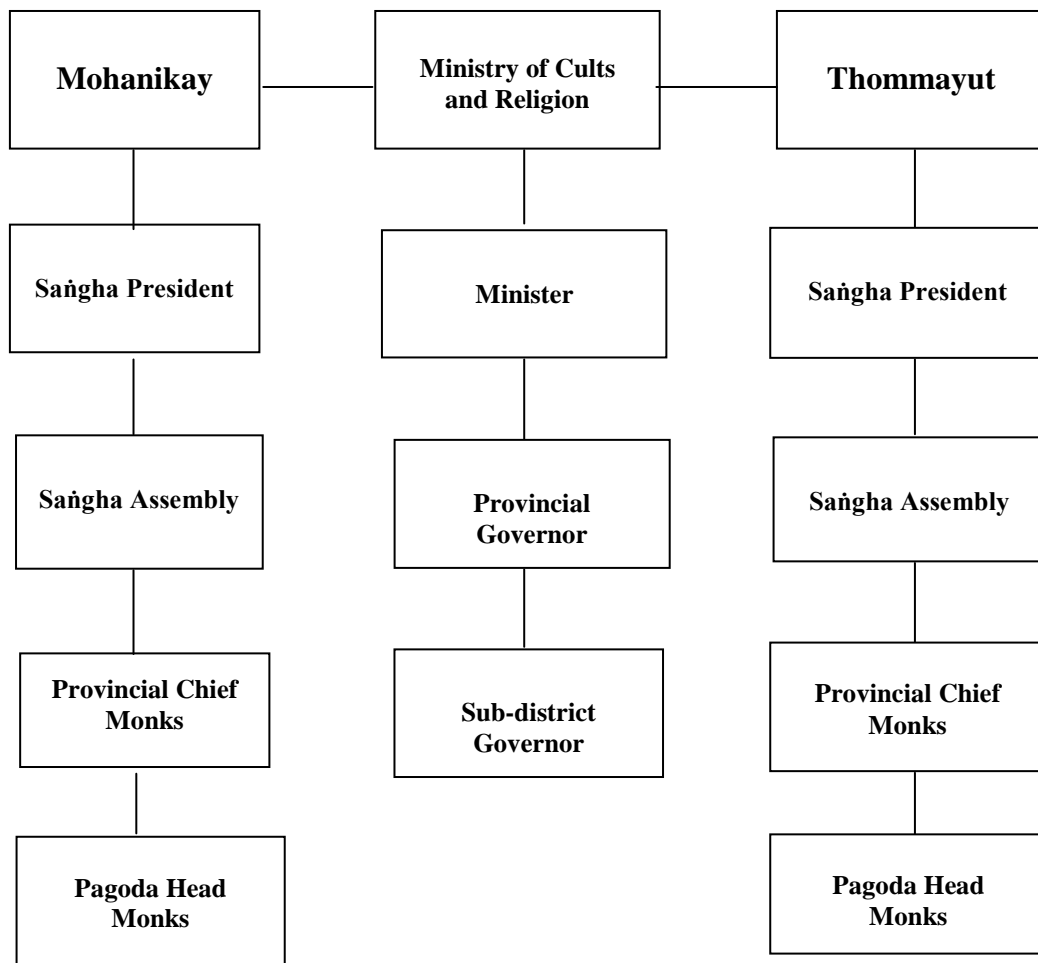
From: World Faith Development Dialogue, “Buddhism and Development: Communities in Cambodia Working as Partners”, p. 17.

### Provincials Department of Cults and Religions in the Present Day



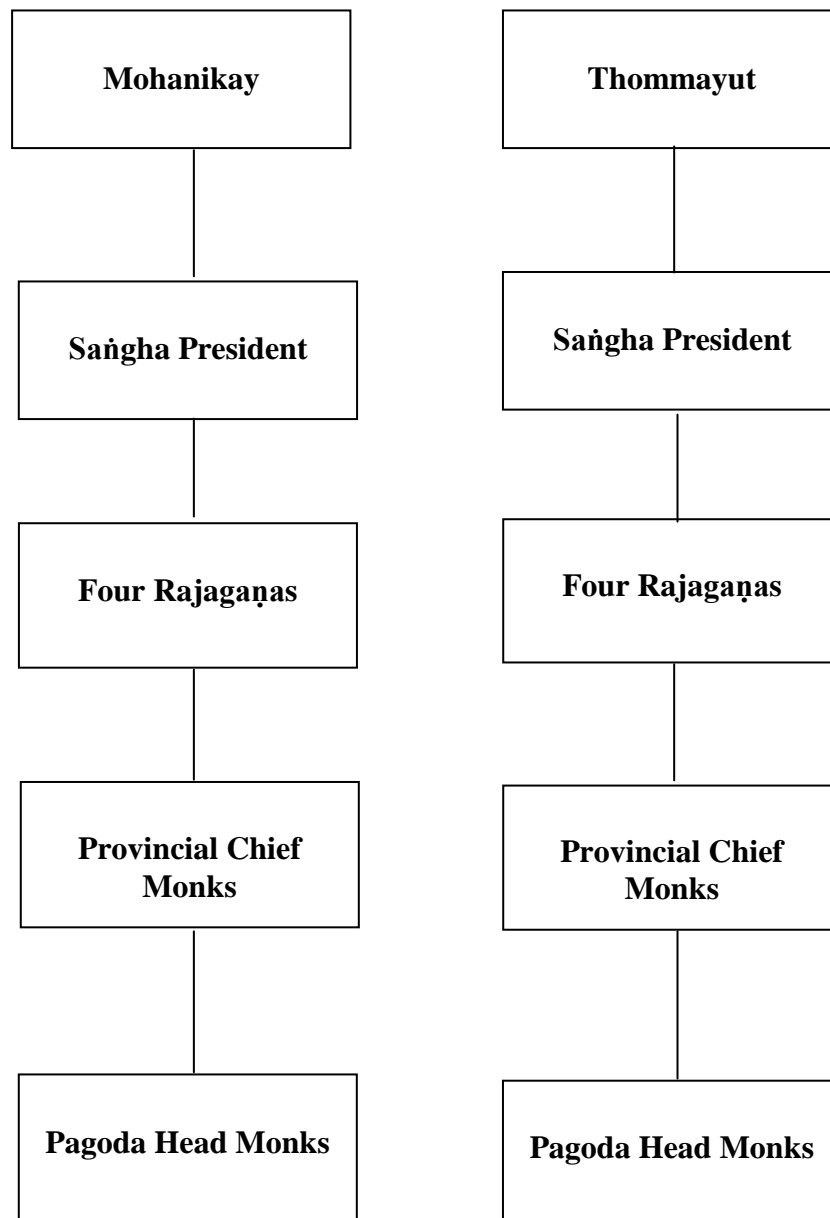
From: World Faith Development Dialogue, “Buddhism and Development: Communities in Cambodia Working as Partners”, p. 19.

### Saṅgha Administration under French (1863-1953)



From: Phra Raphin Duang Loi, "Study on the Status of the Cambodian Saṅgha from 1975-1989", p. 139.

### Early Saṅgha Administration before 1863



From: Phra Raphin Duang Loi, "Study on the Status of the Cambodian Saṅgha from 1975-1989", p. 140

APPENDIX IV  
THE SUPREME PATRIARCH OF CAMBODIA

**The Supreme Patriarch of Mohanikay**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Names</b>	<b>Years</b>	<b>Monasteries</b>	<b>Ages</b>
1	Somdetphrasangkharaj Tiang	1823-1913	Unalom	90
2	Somdetphra Dhammalikhit (Kea Uk)	1850-1936	Unalom	83
3	Somdetphra Mahasumethathibodi (Prak Hin)	1863-1948	Salawan	85
4	Somdetphra Mahasumethathibodi (Chuan Nat)	1893-1959	Unalom	86
5	Somdetphra Mahasumethathibodi (Huat Tat)	1898-1975	Unalom	84
6	Somdetphra Mahasumethathibodi (Tep Vong)	1992-2000	Unalom	74

### The Supreme Patriarch of Thommayut

No.	Names	Years	Monasteries	Ages
1	Somdetphra Mahāsumethathibodi (Pan)	1826-1893	Pathum Wadi	68
2	Somdetphranongkhonthephachan (Iam)	1849-1922	Pathum Wadi	73
3	Somdetphranongkhonthephachan (Suk)	1861-1943	Pathum Wadi	82
4	Somdetphra Mahāsumethathibodi (Ung Sa Rey)	1870-1966	Pathum Wadi	85
5	Somdetphra Mahāsumethathibodi (Phun Det)	1891-197-?	Pathum Wadi	....
6	Somdetphra Mahāsumethathibodi (Thep Lueang)		Pathum Wadi	80
7	Somdetphra Mahāsumethathibodi (Bua Kry)	1940-2000	Pathum Wadi	74

From: Phra Raphin Duang Loi, “Study on the Status of the Cambodian Saṅgha from 1975-1989”, p. 141.

APPENDEX V  
SANGHA HIGHER RANGING IN CAMBODIA

**Rajaghanas**

No.	Mohanikay	Thommayut
1	Somdetphra Mahasumethathibodi (Supremes Patriarch )	Somdetphra Mahasumethathibodi (Supremes Patriarch )
<b>Rajagaṇa of the First Class</b>		
2	Preah Dhammalikhita	Preah Mangaladebācariya
3	Preah Bodhivarsā	Preah Buddhācariya
4	Preah Vanarata	
<b>Rajagaṇa of the Second Class</b>		
5	Preah Mahāvimaladhamma	Preah Mahābrahmamunī
6	Preah Buddhaghosācariya	Preah Dhammottama
7	Preah Dhammaghosācariya	Preah Ariyakassapa
8	Preah Ghosadhamma	
9	Preah Sāsanāmunī	
10	Preah Munīkosala	
<b>Rajagaṇa of the Third Class</b>		
11	Preah Sirisammativarsā	Preah Ariyavarsā
12	Preah Buddhavarsā	Preah Dhammakavivarsā
13	Preah Sākyavarsā	Preah ñāṇaraṇsi
14	Preah Upālivarsā	Preah Mahāvīravarsācariya
15	Preah ñāṇavamsā	
16	Preah Sumedhavarsā	
<b>Rajagaṇa of the Fourth Class</b>		



17	Preah Dhammavipassanā	Preah Padumavarsā
18	Preah Samādhidhamma	Preah Dhammamunī
19	Preah ñāṇakosala	Preah Vajiramedhī
20	Preah Sirisangāmunā	Preah Ariyamunī
21	Preah Sirivisuddhi	Preah Devamolī
22	Preah Dhammavarsā	Preah Dhammathera
23	Preah ñāṇasaṃvara	Preah Amarābhirakkhita
24	Preah Vinayasarvara	Preah Mahārājadhamma
24	Preah Indamunī	Preah Ratanamunī
25	Preah Devamunī	Preah Dhammatrayalokīcariya
26	Preah Vinayamunī	Preah Dhammavarottama
27	Preah Debsatthā	Preah ñāṇaviriya
28	Preah Sīlasarvara	
29	Preah Gambhirathera	
30	Preah Ariyamaggaññāṇa	
31	Preah Vibhaddaññāṇa	
32	Preah Pavarasatthā	
33	Preah Dhammavisuddhivarsā	
34	Preah ñāṇavisuddhivarsā	
35	Preah Piṭakadhamma	

From: Ian Harris, *Cambodian Buddhism: History and Practice*, pp. 236-238

APPENDIX VI  
 STATISTIC OF SANGHA EDUCATION IN CAMBODIA FROM  
 1993-2000

Years	Education Institutions							
	Dhamma Vinay Schools		Buddhist Primary Schools		Buddhist Secondary Schools		Buddhist High Schools	
	Schools	students	schools	students	schools	students	schools	Students
1993	-	-	80	2,837	-	100		
1994	98	2,598	154	5,584	1	200	1	
1995	305	6,724	195	6,503	1	300	1	
1996	291	6,585	239	6,504	1	450	1	
1997	413	7,985	247	7,157	2	600	1	
1998	306	8,823 6	247	7,157	4	754	1	
1999	363	6,818	271	8,236	6	1,104	1	

2000	395	6,812	398	11,597	9	1,389	1	
------	-----	-------	-----	--------	---	-------	---	--

From: Ministry of Cults and Religion of Cambodia.

APPENDIX VII  
MONKS AND MONASTERIES IN CAMBODIA 1975-2000

**The Statistic of Destroying of Monasteries and Monks Under Khmer Rouge  
1975-1978**

No.	Provinces	Monasteries	Monks	Notes
1	Battambang Banteay Meanchey	312	1,525	<p>In Khmer Rouge regime divided into four groups</p> <p>1. Who were killed during the DK.</p> <p>2. Who were forced to disrobed, forced to marriage, and worked as the labourers.</p> <p>3. Who were forced to disrobed but did not marriage, and later ordained as monks with the first generation.</p> <p>4. Who had fled to other countries during DK regime.</p> <p>For the totals of monasteries before 1975 around 3,000 and monks around 60,000.</p>
2	Kampong Cham	404	4,031	
3	Kampong Speu	182	4,031	
4	Kampong Chnang	-	925	
5	Kampong Thom	162	1,619	
6	Kampong Som	16	115	
7	Kampot	107	552	
8	Kandal	-	427	
9	Kep	-	234	
10	Koh Kong	126	650	
11	Mondulkiri	-	-	
12	Phnom Penh	47	1,798	
13	Preah Vihear	44	172	
14	Prey Veng	-	2,572	
15	Pursat	103	374	
16	Ratanakiri			
17	Siem Reap, Oddar Meanchey	53	20 ?	
18	Sihanoukville			
19	Stung Treng	12	31	
20	Svay Rieng	-	234	
21	Takeo	-	5,673	
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>1,968</b>	<b>25,168</b>	

From: Phra Raphin Duang Loi, "Study on the Status of the Cambodian Saṅgha from 1975-1989", p. 142.

**Number of Temples and Monks in Cambodia from 1969 to 2000**

Years (C.E.)	Number of Temples	Number of Monks
--------------	-------------------	-----------------

1969	3,369	65,062
1970–75	n.d.	n.d.
1975–79	n.d.	n.d.
1979–81	n.d.	n.d.
1982	1,821	2,311
1983–87	n.d.	n.d.
1988	2,799	6,497
1989	2,892	9,711
1990	2,900	19,173
1991	n.d.	n.d.
1992	2,902	25,529
1993	3,090	27,467
1994	3,290	39,821
1995	3,371	40,218
1996	3,381	40,911
1997	3,512	45,547
1998	3,588	49,097
1999	3,685	50,081
2000	3,731	50,873

From: Kobayashi Satoru, Vol. 42, “An Ethnographic Study on the Reconstruction of Buddhist Practice in Two Cambodian Temples: With the Special Reference to Buddhist Samay and Boran”, (Sweden: Southeast Asian Studies), p. 492.

Notes: The number of monks includes novices; no data is available for the period of 1970–1979, 1983–1987 and 1991 C.E.

## BIOGRAPHY

\*\*\*\*\*

Name: Venerable Kimpicheth Chhon (Atulo)  
 Date of Birth: 23 January 1990 (B.E. 2533)  
 Place of Birth: Mkakk Village, Tasom Sub-distict,  
 Angkorchum District, Siem Reap Province,  
 Cambodia.  
 Nationality: Cambodian

### Educational Background

2011-2012: MA in Buddhist Studies of International Programme,  
 Studied at Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya  
 University, Bangkok, Thailand.  
 2007-2011: BA in Public Administration, Studied at  
 Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University  
 of Surin Campus, Surin Province, Thailand

### Work Experiences

2009-2010: Worked as a Buddhist Teacher at Samrongnadi  
 Primary School, Kratomphrong Village, Nadi Sub-  
 District, Muang District, Surin Province.

Worked as a Buddhist Teacher of Nak Dham in the  
 First Level (Nak Dham Tri), at Wat Sukhettaram,  
 Kratomphrong Village, Nadi Sub-District, Muang  
 District, Surin Province.

A Buddhist Moral Trainer of the Summer Ordination  
 Project at Wat Sukhettaram, Kratomphrong Village,  
 Nadi Sub-District, Muang District, Surin Province.

2010-2012: In the Present, Work as a Buddhist Teacher of Nak Dham in the Second Level (Nak Dham Dho), at Wat Sri Sudaram, Bangkhun Non Sub-District, Bangkok Noi District, Bangkok.