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The Religious Situation in Cambodia in the 1990s

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The religious situation in Cambodia in the 1990s was shaped by a range of political and religious factors. The first thing to note is that there was a severe crisis of government legitimacy in Cambodia which lasted almost a whole decade (the 1980s) and was resolved only after the general election of 1993. Then following successful elections and the formation of a coalition government the whole spectrum of Cambodia's political forces was at last represented in society, including some which had been in exile for many years. They held widely differing views on the role of religion in contemporary society and on cooperation with the Buddhist Sangha. The beginning of radical reform and the first visible changes in economic and social life in the second half of the 1990s also had an inevitable effect on the standing in society of religion and of the Sangha.

In the 1990s the problem of modernising Buddhism became especially pressing in Cambodia as the Sangha sought actively to find its place in the new political and socio-economic situation. The Khmer Sangha found itself faced with the eternal problem of finding the golden mean in the dialectic between unchangeability and renewal, since both of these were necessary to guarantee its authority in society. The particular nature of Khmer Buddhist society at the time added to the complexity of the problem.

According to Article 43 of the 1993 Constitution Buddhism is the state religion. In 1993 the number of monks and nuns increased more than fourfold and reached 50,000 by the end of the 1990s. In 1993 the Thammayutt 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 (PRK). This reestablishment not only created organisational problems, but also led to a great many conflicts. The Thammayutt tried to regain monasteries it had previously owned and which had been occupied in the 1980s by the Mohanikay sect. Many monasteries were full to overflowing because of the increased influx of new monks and this led to bitter struggles among the monastery-dwellers over property and items such as vessels for offerings, teapots and umbrellas.¹ The lack of clear rules governing the use of property and the spending of the monasteries' income gave rise to more and more clashes between the monasteries and the secular authorities.² The sharp growth in the number of monasteries in the mid-1990s – from 1500 to 3500 – led to a severe shortage of leaders, and many temples were left without a head (*mevat*).

The most severe problem for the Sangha is the extremely low level of education

of those in religious orders. After the fall of the Pol Pot regime in 1979 and the formation of the PRK the Buddhist Sangha was restored, but no religious educational establishment was given any financial help and so for about 20 years (from 1975) there was practically no professional training for monks. Only some 20 per cent of monks, the bulk of whom are under 25 years of age, receive some formal training, mainly from lay teachers whose qualifications tend to be rudimentary. The monks themselves acknowledge that the majority of them do not understand the sacred texts and are not capable of explaining Buddhist teachings to the general public. Many religious leaders note that their activity is ineffective because they have a poor knowledge of the responsibilities laid upon them.³ The low quality of training and education for monks and, consequently, their poor discipline remains one of the great social problems in Cambodia, hindering its recovery as a moral community. The situation is made worse by the Sangha's inadequate printing facilities and the lack of any religious broadcasting on radio or television.

Representatives of the Sangha repeatedly speak of the parlous situation in which the community finds itself and acknowledge many negative phenomena – financial machinations, corruption, a mercenary mentality, the desire to use the title of monk simply to 'gain merit'.⁴ The Khmer press frequently reports on conflicts between believers and those in charge of monasteries which arise from the low moral standards of the latter. Some of them, for example, use monastery land and property for personal commercial benefit, with no regard for the needs of ordinary monks and believers.⁵

While recognising the difficulties experienced by the Sangha, we must not forget that the Khmer Sangha (like any other, for that matter) was never an ideal model. Moreover, experience shows that any 'crisis' or 'decline' in the Sangha is, as a rule, the threshold of a revival. The role which the monastic community is now playing (at least in comparison with the PRK period) seems to confirm this.

In 1993 the Cambodian monarchy was reestablished and the heads of the two Buddhist sects became members of the six-member Royal Council of the Throne. The very fact of the 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 monarchy's system of values: a statement of the basic policies of the royal government in Cambodia includes the sentence 'Khmer Buddhism serves to strengthen the basis of royal power'.⁶ The monarchy and Buddhism in tandem effectively legitimise the traditional system.

The establishment of a union between the monarchy and Buddhism has been the most important feature of the political process in Cambodia in the 1990s. The association of the monarchy with Buddhism makes the throne a symbol of spiritual continuity and national consensus, laying upon the monarchy the significant function of stabilising the political situation in the country. The religious foundation provides the monarchy with incontrovertible legitimacy, which extends to all elements of the contemporary political system in the country – the constitution, the legislative and executive organs, the army and so on. It is precisely this foundation which allows the Cambodian monarchy to call itself a legitimate, morally and religiously empowered entity. Meanwhile, the Buddhist Sangha sanctifies through the institution of the monarchy the secular programmes of socio-political and economic development, and is thus forming a social and political climate in which they will be achieved more easily. This is particularly important because the economic programmes being

carried through at the moment in Cambodia are rather radical.

The situation is aggravated by the fact that the programme for national revival adopted in 1993 was worked out by international experts who were mainly interested in the economic aspects of the problem. For this reason there is practically nothing in the programme on political or ideological issues of the kind which were traditionally dominant in previous periods of Cambodia's history. Although the triad 'nation–throne–religion' is proclaimed to be an important ideological goal, it is not emphasised particularly and the concrete content of each of its constituent concepts is not developed. Yet the entire present generation of Khmer has been brought up with entirely different ideas and these concepts are completely new to them.

In the 1990s much use was made of Buddhist symbolism and ritual giving the new system its outward shape. For example, the process of reestablishing the monarchy was based on the classical mode of succession of a Buddhist king. Sihanouk was 'chosen as king'. The ruling elite asked him to accept the crown, on the basis of a consensual agreement by all the political forces to recognise the superiority of the prince's personal charisma.

The ruling circles in Cambodia began to pay more attention to the exterior ceremonial side of Buddhism, especially to Buddhist festivals, which had always been a useful means of demonstrating devotion to the teaching of Buddha and to the Sangha. The royal ritual of the 'first plough' was thus revived. The festivals of Bon Kathen and Bon Phtyum Ben⁷ are now official public holidays.⁸ In the last few years the organisers of Bon Kathen have as a rule been members of FUNCINPEC (Front Uni Nationale pour un Cambodge Indépendent, Neutre, Pacifique et Coopératif, the political organisation created by Norodom Sihanouk in 1981) and the holders of high ranks in the government. Prince Ranariddh has been especially active. Political leaders have often taken part in and financed less important Buddhist festivities too. The press gave wide coverage for example to Prince Ranariddh when he organised a ceremony at a temple and to Chea Sim (the president of the First National Assembly, 1993–98) when he organised a festival of flowers which raised considerable sums for the Sangha.⁹ Politicians have taken upon themselves specific political responsibilities at the beginning of religious ceremonies. During the period of division in the party in summer 1997, for example, the leadership of FUNCINPEC announced in the press that the deadline for overcoming dissent would be the beginning of the Bon Kathen festival.¹⁰

In general, and for all sorts of different reasons, Khmer politicians do not begrudge funds to support the Sangha. When some highly placed functionaries of the National Party of Cambodia (PRK) received the title *oknya*,¹¹ for example, they immediately made substantial donations to the Sangha,¹² following the traditional stereotype: religious offerings were always a criterion of righteousness and a traditional means of 'earning merit'; and to this day it is the quantity of 'merit' one has, in itself a religious concept, which is the basic criterion for legitimisation of leadership in Khmer society. Buddhist means of legitimisation are so reliable and authoritative that both traditionalists and radicals resort to them. Gifts to the Sangha are not the only way to 'earn merit'. There is also the indirect way of *dana*, or secular charity. Someone who does a lot of this is Hun Sen. The Khmer press gave wide coverage to his personal donations for the building of Phnom Penh University library, which as a sign of recognition was named after him.¹³ Hun Sen is keen to demonstrate his devotion to Buddhism, but at the same time to distance himself from traditionalist forces in society and show himself a reformer in the spiritual sphere. Members of the political elite want to look righteous and to be seen to be concerned with their own

moral improvement. Norodom Sihanouk, for example, retreated to a monastery for three months immediately after his coronation. When Prince Ranariddh became a monk the occasion was celebrated in grandiose style in the royal palace. He studied Buddhist teachings in the Than temple for several weeks, then flew to India to visit Buddhist holy places.¹⁴ The Cambodian press reported in some detail when the prominent politician Sam Rainsy, the opposition leader, temporarily retreated to a monastery.¹⁵ Although Sam Rainsy denied that this was a purely pragmatic step, he was prepared to meet journalists in the monastery, hardly appropriate behaviour for a model monk, on condition, it is true, that their conversations would be confined to Buddhist theology. Upon his return to the world he organised a ceremony of 'sharing the merit' earned in the monastery with the whole Cambodian people.¹⁶ The Cambodian political scientist Oun Pun Monireth comments that 'the leaders of the country are those who have "merit" and the more responsible the post a person occupies, the more "merit" he has'.¹⁷ Although Hun Sen has been in power since the early 1980s it is only since the mid-1990s that people have started calling him *monuh miyen bon* – 'a person with merit'.¹⁸

Politicians not infrequently apply the system of values known as *karma* to assess the material and spiritual condition of Cambodia in the 1990s. The law of karma has always shaped the Cambodian value system. Oun Pun Monireth notes that 'The law of karma has an immense influence on the country's political life. The wealth, the rank, the power a person has in this life are all the result of karma.'¹⁹ The new socio-economic situation in the country has increased reliance on the karma system. With liberal economic reform came sharp social differentiation; the country's leaders declare that 'inequality in Cambodia is not a social phenomenon, but a manifestation caused by karma'.²⁰ In a country where an estimated 36 per cent of the population live below the poverty line, using religious concepts to explain growing social disparity enables the authorities to reduce social tension. There have been similar tendencies in the political sphere too. Let us take as an example the controversial question of the Khmer Rouge. There is disagreement in Cambodia even today on how to evaluate the Pol Pot period, on how far the Khmer Rouge should be integrated into the new political system, on whether they should be given leading posts in the army and government and so on. Some of the Khmer political establishment advocate looking at the whole Pol Pot period of Khmer Rouge activity through the prism of karma. Ieng Sary broke with Pol Pot and went over to the side of the government in 1996; even before the king granted him an amnesty some politicians were proposing to leave it to karma to decide his future.²¹

It is clear, then, that the Cambodian rulers are trying to think through the new political and socio-economic realities in the spirit of Buddhism and put them into a traditional cultural context. This proves that they are well aware of the importance of the revival of religious values for Cambodians as they seek to reaffirm their cultural identity and self-esteem as a basis for facing the outside world with all its opportunities and pitfalls. At the same time it reveals a certain pragmatism on the part of the authorities, who are willing to use religion to solve secular problems, and in particular to smooth over current social tensions. It would not be an exaggeration to say that Buddhist means of legitimisation are at the forefront in Cambodian political practice today. Buddhist symbols and values to a great extent set the tone for Cambodian society in the 1990s.

Monks, too, sometimes participate directly in the political process. The electoral law allows monks to vote. While many did so in the July 1998 elections, others still believe that voting would mean that they would have to adopt a partisan position and

that this would contradict the traditional understanding of their role. The usual political activity for monks is to organise political gatherings of various types. Monks have played an active part in memorial ceremonies for victims of the civil war and in the annual commemoration of the convocation of the National Assembly.²² Meanwhile, representatives of political parties regularly attend all kinds of educational seminars organised for members of the Sangha. Sometimes members of the Sangha have come up with their own political initiatives.²³ Monks of the Botum Vatdey pagoda wrote an open letter to the government calling for the opposition Sam Rainsy Party to be allowed to function legally.²⁴ After a split in the governing coalition letters from monks appeared in the Khmer press, calling for 'the leaders of the country who call themselves true Buddhists to conduct themselves in a Buddhist manner and prevent the worsening of the political situation in the country'.²⁵

In early September 1998 there were mass demonstrations in protest at the election campaign for the National Assembly, which most of the opposition considered unfair. Over 100 monks took part. The demonstrators were attacked and beaten by the police and monks were among the victims. When pictures were shown on national television there was a shocked response: there had been no violence against monks in Cambodia since Khmer Rouge times. However, the general feeling was that religion and politics should not be mixed. Through the press secretary of the Ministry of Internal Affairs the government asserted that only bogus monks could have been involved in the demonstrations. The idea that the new values of democracy and human rights should be instilled in the culture of rural communities in Cambodia is widespread only amongst politically active younger people in urban areas.

On the whole the degree of direct involvement of the Buddhist Sangha in political life has been insignificant. I believe this is chiefly because King Norodom Sihanouk wants to restrain the Sangha from interfering in politics in order to strengthen its spiritual authority in society. Experience shows that excessive politicisation of the Sangha has inevitably led to a sharp decline in its prestige and to 'loss of religious charisma', while the latter has increased when the Sangha has distanced itself from politics. For example, in the PRK period the government made quite frequent use of the Sangha in solving political questions and waging 'psychological warfare'. This of course took its toll on the authority of the spiritual leaders. The Sangha must have the highest moral prestige if it is to fulfil the role of 'moral guide' of the nation. This is particularly true in a country where violence has reigned for many decades and where the traditional role of the Sangha as preserver of the moral and ethical foundations of society has been largely consigned to oblivion. The secular powers, and indeed sometimes the monks themselves, refer to this role only indirectly, as if it were something of little importance. For example, lessons in 'Buddhist ethics', which were compulsory between 1953 and 1975, are no longer included in the school curriculum. Analysing the moral condition of contemporary Cambodian society, Oun Pun Monireth states rather harshly that 'As far as Buddhist moral prescriptions go, the only people who carry them out are the elderly and the disabled, who have nothing left to hope for in this life and can only dream of getting into heaven after they die.'²⁶

Analysis of the ruling circles' policy towards the Buddhist Sangha shows that on the whole the authorities are in favour of preserving the institutions and canons of Buddhism, limiting them in the main to the religious and ideological sphere and agreeing to their modernisation only insofar as this does not contradict the 'orthodoxy' of basic Buddhist ideas and values.

As far as the Sangha itself is concerned, it devotes particular attention to strengthening its position in the sphere of education, actively cooperating in this field with the government. Dhamma-Vinaya and Pali (elementary) schools for monks began to reopen in the early 1990s. The first high school for monks – Suramarit Buddhist High School – reopened in Phnom Penh in 1993 and a preparatory class at the Buddhist university reopened in 1997. A lack of adequate human and material resources has limited the quality of education, however. There are virtually no qualified monk teachers and the supply of lay teachers is inadequate in the country as a whole, partly because they are paid so poorly that many of them are unable to feed their families. In order to improve the quality of monastic education the Sangha seeks to work with local Buddhist nongovernmental organisations, including the Buddhist Study Association in Phnom Penh and Samakithor (Dharmic Solidarity) in Battambang province. Both these NGO have established track records in education and community development. They have submitted proposals and supplied materials to train and equip the teachers at the Dhamma-Vinaya and Pali schools and are helping to open new schools, libraries and community learning centres. The Ministry of Cults and Religious Affairs in cooperation with the Sangha is seeking to reform the primary, secondary and tertiary monastic education curricula, which are based on outdated 1960s content and methodologies. An initial partial reform already implemented has marginally increased time for Buddhist studies by reducing the emphasis on the hard sciences. Commissions at each level seek to work with national and international Buddhist monastic education advisers. Monks have come forward with an initiative for the widespread publication of *cpap*²⁷ and other morally edifying material for use in the teaching process in secular schools and for the inclusion of lessons on Buddhist ethics in the teaching programme. Attempts are being made to revive the role of monastery schools as well, in order gradually to turn the monastery back into a particular kind of cultural centre, uniting within its walls monastery school, library and reading room.²⁸

This kind of educational activity is traditional for the Khmer Sangha, as is its participation in social and economic development programmes in rural areas. The Sangha likes to talk about its work in mobilising the population to build irrigation works. Monks are ecological activists, protesting for example about the destructive felling of forests, and they also take part in programmes to clear the country of landmines. Under the honorary patronage of the Venerable Samdech Moha Ghosananda a dozen Cambodian nongovernmental organisations led by the Venerable Nhem Kim Teng, Cambodia's 'ecology monk', are endeavouring to help save Cambodia's environment through the network of Buddhist temples in the country. The aim of their programme is to train hundreds of monks in provincial temples to mobilise 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 are new for Cambodia. For instance, monks came up with the initiative of founding monastery-run development banks, to alleviate peasant poverty and help the monasteries themselves to refuse the services of moneylenders.²⁹ Buddhist-oriented nongovernmental organisations, in cooperation with the Sangha, are seeking to renew historical forms of self-help development which benefit people, in particular the most needy, at the community level. Samakithor in particular has 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 are 'community health, water and sanitation', 'village economic and social development' and 'nature

preservation and cultural development'. Monks initiated the 'marches for peace' which have been held across the country every year from 1992 under the slogan 'Down with weapons, long live the Dharma'. During the marches monks would explain the policy of 'national reconciliation' to the people. Moreover 'extra' marches were sometimes organised. Immediately after the forcible removal of Prince Ranariddh from power in summer 1997, for example, when tanks entered Phnom Penh, 700 monks held a march for peace in the city under the slogan 'May peace come to the home of every Cambodian!'.³⁰ In July 1998 monks organised a pre-election march calling for nonviolent elections, and over 2000 male and female members of the Sangha took part. These 'marches for peace' aim to embody the universal values of compassion, nonviolence and solidarity and to serve as models for social mobilisation. They are becoming ever more orientated to social issues. Recent marches have raised awareness on such issues as landmines and deforestation. In 1996, 2000 trees were planted along the route of the march.

The Sangha is, however, finding it hard to come to terms with all modern challenges. Its attitude to the HIV/AIDS problem provides an example. Cambodia is facing an AIDS crisis, to the extent that the government has warned that the rapid spread of the sickness may become a threat to national security. At the end of May 2000 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, leader of the majority Mohanikay sect, believes that official figures on the prevalence of HIV have been massively inflated, and he is strongly opposed to any involvement by the Sangha in combating its spread. In his view it is inappropriate for Buddhist monks to talk to women about sexual matters. He holds that AIDS is a punishment for the sins of those with loose morals and that if monks are seen to be offering help and support to such people the result will be that others will lose their fear of catching the virus. He believes that the only way to fight AIDS is for the government to crack down on brothels and prostitution. The Venerable Samdech Sanghareach Bour Kry, leader of the smaller Thammayutt sect, is of markedly different views. He believes that the authorities should hide nothing of the severity of the AIDS problem from the Cambodian people or from the world at large, that it would be virtually impossible to close down the brothels, and that monks have a duty to help control the spread of the disease and to give support to those afflicted so that even though they may have fallen victim to immorality they can die in peace. He suggests that monks should include the subject in their sermons, bringing a Buddhist perspective to bear on it. The AIDS issue thus highlights a major challenge to the Sangha: that of finding the golden mean between adhering to unchangeable tradition and responding to modern problems. Both Tep Vong and Bour Kry are keen to maintain the influence of the Sangha in Cambodian society, but while the former believes that this can best be done by asserting the traditional moral and ethical principles of Buddhist teaching the latter argues that the most fruitful way is through greater involvement of the Sangha with secular problems.

The Khmer Sangha is thus actively seeking a place of its own in the new society and ways of adapting to new conditions. This '*aggiornamento*' has been prompted not only by the consequences of social and economic modernisation, but also by important new phenomena in the religious life of the country. For the first time in the postcolonial period the Khmer Sangha has come up against competition from other

religious confessions. In the 1990s Cambodia became the object of increased attention on the part of various missionary organisations and schools of preaching. This was facilitated by the tolerance of Buddhism towards other religions, by the lack of a legal framework in the country to regulate the activity of religious groups and cults, and also by the policy of the Cambodian authorities who in their growing concern to attract foreign investment to the country tend to welcome any kind of activity, including that of religious organisations, which promises to provide financial aid of one kind or another.

One organisation working in Cambodia which has great financial potential and a large number of members is the 'Suma Ching Hai' association, which has its headquarters in Taiwan. The sect's founder Ching Hai has stated openly that Cambodia is 'an ideal place' in which to spread her teaching.³¹ Setting itself the goal of penetrating into Cambodia, the sect initiated various humanitarian and charitable activities in 1994–95, giving financial aid to build schools and hospitals and organising educational programmes; it gave large sums of money to support the charitable activities of the wives of high-ranking officials.³²

As a result the sect received substantial reductions on the price of large plots of land in Cambodia, especially in Kompong Speu province, where it set up its Centre of Spiritual Renaissance, to the great displeasure of the local population. The conflict caused by the sect's activity became even more serious when it became apparent that a significant number of its members had entered Cambodia illegally and had circumvented the legislation in force when they acquired Cambodian passports. Another noticeable feature is that most of the followers of the teaching are people of Chinese origin. There are several reasons for this, but it is clearly part of the process of the revival of the Chinese community and the restoration of its members to their previous positions in the Cambodian economy. This process began in the 1990s and is stimulated by energetic lobbying on behalf of the interests of the Chinese community in government and political circles. In order to solve the various problems and to prevent such conflicts in the future a special committee has been set up to investigate the activities of the Ching Hai association and to register its members. The results of its investigations have been considered by the government, which has adopted a resolution stipulating drastic measures to control the activity of the sect and to provide security in the region where the religious community is located. The Ministry of Cults and Religious Affairs has been ordered to exercise guidance over the activities of the Centre of Spiritual Renaissance. Given the fact that laws on religion in Cambodia are in an underdeveloped state this is a first and very significant step towards the regulation of the activity of religious groups in Cambodia.

Just as active are the Japanese sects and Christian missions which combine preaching with generous charitable activity. Khmer peasants who come to their places of worship are given bicycles, motorcycles, agricultural equipment and financial help.³³ The standard of living in Khmer villages is extremely low and the peasants need all the material help they can get, so some of them, for purely pragmatic reasons, agree to accept another faith, though they continue to go to Buddhist temples as well.

More than 700 Protestant organisations and hundreds of missionaries are hard at work all over Cambodia building churches, supplying aid to needy communities and seeking converts among the traditionally Buddhist population. According to Article 43 of the law regulating religion any religious organisation is forbidden to 'buy' converts. However, the government is too poor to provide adequately for the needs of

the population, and people tend to give their allegiance to those who help them materially. Missionary organisations explain that offering physical help in the form of clothes and rice to people in need is an expression of God's love. The head of the Department of Foreign Relations at the Ministry of Cults and Religious Affairs, You Davann, says that her department is pitifully understaffed and underfunded and unable to monitor what she calls the 'growing trend' for Buddhist Cambodians to convert to Christianity.³⁴

Without doubt 'modernisation' – the economic and socio-cultural changes which have taken place in Cambodia – has presented the Khmer Sangha with serious problems and the process of its adaptation to the new situation will be complex, even ambiguous. The relationship between the process of transformation of Buddhism and the dynamics of the modernisation of society will depend on many factors and, indeed, not so much on the Buddhist community itself as on the degree of interest in its activity shown by different political forces in the country. At present Cambodian politicians are fully aware of the importance of this question for the future of the country; they understand completely that there are limits to the process of transforming Buddhism, and that the religious consciousness of the Khmer is not able to adapt to all the consequences of modernisation.

Notes and References

- ¹ *Rosmey Kampuchea* (a newspaper), 31 July 1996; 4 February 1997.
- ² *Rosmey Kampuchea*, 3 November 1993; *Kambodya thaems* (a newspaper), 22 July 1996.
- ³ *Kambodya thaems*, 25 February 1996.
- ⁴ *Rosmey Kampuchea*, 4 February 1997; 3 November 1993; *Kambodya thaems*, 22 June 1996. 'Merit' here is a religious term; it is the basis of Khmer Buddhist social practice.
- ⁵ *Koh santepheap* (a newspaper), 15 September 1999.
- ⁶ *Setykdeythlaengka sdey pi koulka nojoubay ney reachrothaphibal ney preahreachea-nachak Kampuchea (Statement of the Political Principles of the Royal Government of the Kingdom of Cambodia)* (Phnom Penh, 1993), p. 1.
- ⁷ Bon Kathen: a festival during which monks are presented with new clothes. It is celebrated in October–November, after the end of the rainy season. Bon Phtyum Ben: a festival for the remembrance of the dead.
- ⁸ *Rosmey Kampuchea*, 27 April 1994.
- ⁹ *Kambodya thaems*, 1 January 1994; 13 June 1996.
- ¹⁰ *Rosmey Kampuchea*, 14 October 1997.
- ¹¹ *Oknya*: a high-ranking official in feudal Cambodia and under the rule of Norodom Sihanouk from 1953 to 1970. After his coronation in 1993 Sihanouk began granting this title again.
- ¹² *The Phnom Penh Post*, 3 October 1996.
- ¹³ *The Cambodia Daily*, 8 January 1996.
- ¹⁴ *ibid.*, 10 December 1996.
- ¹⁵ *ibid.*, 4–6 October 1996.
- ¹⁶ *Samleng yuvechon khmae* (a newspaper), 28 October 1996.
- ¹⁷ Oun Pun Monireth, *Chomtuah ning kalombak satjanumat muey chomnuen khnong kaaphivuat sangkum Kampuchea tam meakea procheathipatay (Some Contradictions and Difficulties on the Path of Cambodian Society towards Democracy)* (Phnom Penh, 1993), p. 6.
- ¹⁸ Marie Alexandrine Martin, *Cambodia: A Shattered Society* (University of California Press, 1994), p. 272.
- ¹⁹ Oun Pun Monireth, *op. cit.*, p. 6.
- ²⁰ *loc. cit.*

- ²¹ *The Phnom Penh Post*, 9 September 1996.
²² *ibid.*, 3 October 1996; *The Cambodia Daily*, 8 January 1997.
²³ *The Cambodia Daily*, 27 December 1996.
²⁴ *ibid.*, 23 September 1996.
²⁵ *Rosmey Kampuchea*, 18 April 1997.
²⁶ Oun Pun Monireth, *op. cit.*, p. 6.
²⁷ *Crap*: collections of advice and moral rules written in poetic form.
²⁸ *Rosmey Kampuchea*, 24 February 1995.
²⁹ *ibid.*, 13 February 1994.
³⁰ *Kambodya thaems*, 15 March 1996; *The Phnom Penh Post*, 15 August 1997.
³¹ *The Phnom Penh Post*, 9 January 1997.
³² *Kambodya thaems*, 13 July 1996.
³³ *Rosmey Kampuchea*, 12 July 1994; 13 August 1994.
³⁴ *The Phnom Penh Post*, 7 July 2000.

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