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# Media Ruins

## Cambodian Postwar Media Reconstruction and the Geopolitics of Technology

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## NOTES

### INTRODUCTION

1. Mekong Strategic Partners and Raintree, “Cambodian Startup Ecosystem Report 2018,” 3.
2. Vong and Hok, “Facebooking: Youth’s Everyday Politics in Cambodia.”
3. Miller, *Tales from Facebook*.
4. For more on Facebook, politics, and disinformation, see Vong and Sinpeng, “Cambodia.”
5. For more sources on twentieth-century Cambodian history, see Becker, *When the War Was Over*; Chandler, *The Tragedy of Cambodian History*; Strangio, *Hun Sen’s Cambodia*.
6. The Extraordinary Chambers of the Court of Cambodia found Khieu Samphan and Nuon Chea guilty of genocide against Vietnamese and Cham peoples and “crimes against humanity” against other Khmer people in 2019.
7. Pirozzi, *Don’t Think I’ve Forgotten*; Chou, *Golden Slumbers*; Daravuth and Muan, *Cultures of Independence*.
8. Thompson and Murphy, “Cambodia Is Turning the Tide on Looted Statues, but Some Things Cannot Be Returned.”
9. For more on “Complexifying Restitution,” see its description from the Berlin Biennale: <https://12.berlinbiennale.de/artists/jihan-el-tahri/>.
10. On memory as contested and historically contingent, see Jelin, *State Repression*.
11. Parks and Starosielski, *Signal Traffic*; Dourish, *The Stuff of Bits*.
12. Hu, *Prehistory of the Cloud*.
13. Parks and Starosielski, *Signal Traffic*; Mattern, “Scaffolding, Hard and Soft.”
14. Parks and Starosielski, *Signal Traffic*; Larkin, “Politics and Poetics of Infrastructure.”

15. Star and Strauss, "Layers of Silence, Arenas of Voice."
16. Star and Ruhleder, "Steps toward an Ecology of Infrastructure."
17. Hackett et al., *Handbook of Science and Technology Studies*.
18. Pipek and Wulf, "Infrastructuring"; Jack, Chen, and Jackson, "Infrastructure as Creative Action."
19. Nguyen, "Infrastructural Action in Vietnam."
20. Star, "The Ethnography of Infrastructure."
21. Star and Bowker, "Enacting Silence."
22. Star and Strauss, "Layers of Silence, Arenas of Voice."
23. Hochschild, "Foreword: Invisible Labor."
24. Poster, "Who's on the Line?"
25. Lindtner, *Prototype Nation*.
26. This insight is articulated clearly in Star and Ruhleder, "Steps toward an Ecology of Infrastructure."
27. Star, "Ethnography of Infrastructure."
28. For example, Anand shows the ways that poor people in Mumbai have to join (physical) water infrastructure with social practices of "pressure" to municipal governments to get water. Anand thus points to Mumbai's water supply as a social *and* physical system. Anand, "Pressure."
29. Richards, *Imperial Archive*; Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain*.
30. Postcolonial memory, as Kusno describes, "is a fraught terrain, contestory and multistranded, and woven around the politics of inclusion and exclusion, of remembering and forgetting." Kusno, *After the New Order*, 12.
31. Gordon, *Ghostly Matters*.
32. Edwards, *Cambodge*.
33. Edwards, *Cambodge*.
34. Ly, *Traces of Trauma*, 2.
35. Edwards, *Cambodge*.
36. Updegraff, Silver, and Holman, "Searching for and Finding Meaning in Collective Trauma."
37. Coombes, *History after Apartheid*; Kwon, *After the Massacre*; Nelson, *Reckoning*; Olsen, *Tailoring Truth*.

38. Schwenkel, "Recombinant History."
39. Schwenkel, *The American War in Contemporary Vietnam*.
40. Jack and Avle, "A Feminist Geopolitics of Technology."
41. Elwood, "Digital Geographies, Feminist Relationality, Black and Queer Code Studies."
42. Tsing, *The Mushroom at the End of the World*; Escobar, *Designs for the Pluriverse*.
43. Taking inspiration, in part, from Mrázek, *Engineers of Happy Land*.
44. Wolford, "The Difference Ethnography Can Make."
45. I have tried in my writing and presentation to move away from the language of "fieldwork," which still relies on a legacy that believes that some places are centers of research and intellectual thought, whereas other places are sites to be researched—with the further assumption that the knowledge flows back "from the field" to the centers of knowledge and research. For more, see Gupta and Ferguson, "Discipline and Practice."
46. Burrell, "The Field Site as a Network."
47. Burrell, "The Field Site as a Network."
48. For instance, the use of Facebook in Myanmar, during both the Rohingya displacement and the 2021 coup, was covered actively by the *New York Times* and other American press outlets.
49. This was a paid position; I paid my RAs \$15 per hour or \$50 per day.
50. I used the Non-Standard Romanization System by Wanna Net, which can be found at <https://ethnomed.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Non-standard-Romanization-system1.pdf>. Thank you to Catriona Miller for her editorial help with this.
51. Willis and Trondman, "Manifesto for Ethnography."
52. Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw, *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*; Wolfinger, "On Writing Fieldnotes."
53. Strauss, *Qualitative Analysis for Social Scientists*; Strauss and Corbin, *Basics of Qualitative Research*; Strauss, *Continual Permutations of Action*.
54. Muan, "Citing Angkor."

## CHAPTER 1

1. The film was finished in 1979 while Sihanouk was living in North Korea.
2. These three dimensions correspond to the three insights from infrastructure studies that I highlighted in the introduction.

3. I am in part inspired here by the field of media archaeology. Media archaeology insists that historical media artifacts can teach us about media's past (in addition to documents and content). For an introduction, see Parikka, *What Is Media Archaeology?*
4. Sihanouk's power to shape information about him was impressive, and a great deal of the archival record is tinged with propaganda created by Sihanouk himself—therefore making it sometimes difficult to assess Sihanouk's popular support. Sihanouk's party was in charge of many of the major magazines of the time, including *Réalités* (in French) and *Kambuja* (in Khmer). Despite the tension and blights on the shininess of the so-called golden era, Sihanouk denied any reports that suggested there was tumult in Cambodia.
5. Roger Nelson told me that Ingrid Muan's papers were at the National Archives, and Srin Sokmean told me about a few PRK-era documents in the National Archives.
6. Erich DeWald shows that the French did construct a shortwave radio network under the name "Radio Colonial" in 1931, an empire-wide limited relay network transmitted from Lyon that inconsistently reached colonies. French people living in the capital also created a small hobbyist private club for radio in the 1930s called Radio Phnom Penh. The most popular brand of radio in Indochina was Philips (a Dutch brand), but since the French placed a yearly quota on import licenses and a 125 percent ad valorem tariff on extra-imperial trade for non-French goods, radio purchases were expensive and sales were a poor business. DeWald, "Taking to the Waves."
7. DeCoux put radio direction under Jacques Le Bourgeois. See "L'amiral Decoux et Quatre Ans de Radio," August 1, 1944, *Radio Indochine*, National Archives of Cambodia.
8. *Prakas* from 1939 and 1941, National Archives of Cambodia.
9. The journal *Radio Indochine* complained about the technical difficulties of covering some Cambodian topics due to distance and technical capacity. They also had trouble staffing for Vietnamese and Khmer cultures; in 1945, they attempted to incorporate Cambodians into a planned advisory group to improve the radio, though there is no evidence of this advisory group ever materialized. See "Futurs problemes de l'organisation de la radiodiffusion en Indochine," February 1, 1945, *Radio Indochine*, National Archives of Cambodia.
10. Chandler, *The Tragedy of Cambodian History*.
11. In 1946, they invested in a "mobile recording studio-bus" hoping that "radio reporting will take on an importance it has rarely had since the invention of radio." See Jacques Sallebert, "Radio Saigon, the Voice of France in the Pacific," February 22, 1946, no. 70, *Radio 46*, National Archives of Cambodia.

12. Donald Heath to Washington, "Topic: Radio as a Vehicle for USIE Purposes in Indochina," July 22, 1950, Ingrid Muan Papers.

13. Mitterrand, *Norodom Sihanouk, King and Filmmaker*.

14. Steinberg, *Cambodia: Its People, Its Society, Its Culture*. This text, from 1957, is a part of the "Country Survey Series of the Human Relations Area Files," a nonprofit research outfit affiliated with Yale created "to provide an interpretative, integrated description of selected societies in Europe, the Middle East, Africa, South and Southeast Asia and the Far East." Steinberg's descriptions are often rather superficial and his data collection method is unclear; however, the book contains a survey of the media available in Cambodia at different points of the 1950s.

15. Steinberg, *Cambodia: Its People, Its Society, Its Culture*.

16. Steinberg, *Cambodia: Its People, Its Society, Its Culture*.

17. Ingawanij, "Itinerant Cinematic Practices."

18. Chandler, *The Tragedy of Cambodian History*, 189.

19. The USIS was active in many parts of the Third World, and media were a crucial component of the wider Cold War. In Eastern Europe, for example, the USIS was deeply involved in the establishment and management of Radio Free Europe, which was said to be a voice of the anticommunist opposition. For background on Radio Free Europe, see Granville, "Radio Free Europe." The USIS funded mobile cinema, particularly public health films, in locales as diverse as Nigeria and Thailand, as discussed in related scholarship by Brian Larkin and May Adadol Ingawanij. For more, see Larkin, *Signal and Noise*; Ingawanij, "Itinerant Cinematic Practices." Sometimes American influence was packaged into secretive CIA activity. The anticommunist and pro-capitalism and democracy cause, for example, led the American CIA-backed agency the Asia Foundation to fund the production of anticommunist films in Korea. For more, see Lee, "Creating an Anti-Communist Motion Picture Producers' Network in Asia." The development of media for politics was not limited to US activities, either; elsewhere in Southeast Asia, colonial powers were trying to control the same audiovisual channels. In colonial Singapore and Malaya during a similar period (1948–1961), a number of British governmental institutions invested heavily in British anticommunist propaganda filmmaking. See Aitken, "British Governmental Institutions."

20. For more on film activities in South Vietnam, see Rouse, "South Vietnam's Film Legacy."

21. The text reads: "the time now seems ripe to press for opportunities to increase US collaboration into the cultural and particularly the radio field. The latter medium is probably the most important now available for acquainting the Vietnamese with our purposes and challenging the Communist lies. So far, we are chiefly represented

on the radio by French interposition. Moreover, French propaganda here has largely fumbled its opportunities. On the basis of the American interests at stake, we need to see effective propaganda use made of the radio stations. An American with radio program and technical ability is needed to give continuous guidance and encouragement to the stations of the local authorities, and to take an effective interest in helping them acquire needed replacement parts and new equipment. Such a man would keep watch over the appeal of the programs and the technical quality of the transmission. He would also help to sustain the courage of the station managers." See Donald Heath to Washington, "Topic: Radio as a Vehicle for USIE Purposes in Indochina," July 22, 1950, Ingrid Muan Papers.

22. RG469 Records of Foreign Assistance Agencies 1948–61 Mission to Cambodia, Office of the Director, Jules Suby 1952–56, Box 14, March, 1956, "1956 Report on Mass Communications in Cambodia," Ingrid Muan Papers.

23. USIS telegram November 14, 1950, Ingrid Muan Papers.

24. The text reads: "The objection arises whenever Cambodia's individuality is submerged and its entity as a distinct kingdom with its own history, language and culture is lost sight of." USIS Telegram from Saigon 133 to Department of State, September 7, 1950, Ingrid Muan Papers.

25. Chandler, *The Tragedy of Cambodian History*, 189.

26. Osborne, *Sihanouk: Prince of Light, Prince of Darkness*.

27. Of these radios, 285 came from the ICA (an American aid organization) and 1,000 receivers from the Colombo plan. The Colombo plan was an Australian initiative to stop communism in Asia. In March 1955 the DEA enlisted E. S. Heffer, a radio engineer for Amalgamated Wireless Australasia, to conduct a six-week technical survey of the capacity of Indo-China and Thailand to use and maintain portable radio receivers, and they determined that they would distribute 1,000 sets in Indochina with South Vietnam as the highest priority. At the request of the South Vietnamese Minister for Defense, Australia used Colombo Plan funds to supply military units with petrol-driven generators for use in wireless transmission. Based on the notes from the US Foreign Service and USIS, some of these sets were clearly also distributed in Cambodia by the USIS on behalf of Colombo powers. See Oakman, *Facing Asia: A History of the Colombo Plan*.

28. A USIS Phnom Penh note from November 1956 states that monks particularly "appreciate[d] the prestige of listening and then playing the 'oracle' to the populace." Ingrid Muan Papers.

29. A number of documents in the Ingrid Muan Papers report ways the USIS trained technicians and repaired earlier equipment. RG469 Records of Foreign Assistance Agencies 1948–61 Mission to Cambodia, Office of the Director, Suby Jules 1952–56, Box 14, March 1956, "1956 Report on Mass Communications in Cambodia." In

addition, two United States Operation Mission (USOM) reports from 1955 and 1956 describe a lack of technical capacity in the Cambodian Ministry of Information to use the products they had supplied earlier in the decade: USOM/Phnom Penh, Subject: "The Report of the Program Support Division," August 19, 1955, Ingrid Muan Papers; RG469 Records of Foreign Assistance Agencies 1948–61 Mission to Cambodia, Office of the Director, Suby Jules 1952–56, Box 14, March 1956, "1956 Report on Mass Communications in Cambodia," Ingrid Muan Papers.

30. USOM/Phnom Penh, Subject: "The Report of the Program Support Division."
31. The USOS published a Khmer-English magazine in 1957 that reported the start of Voice of America in Cambodia. Ingrid Muan Papers.
32. This is a photocopy of a report held in Ingrid Muan's papers. General Records of the Department of State 551.51h. 1950–1963 Central Decimal File Box 2156, "Education Exchange Report and Joint USIS Message," May 28, 1958; August 12, 1955, "Dept of State to AmEmbassy Phnom Penh, Cablegram from Pres Eisenhower to King Norodom Suramarit to be delivered August 15th"; August 15, 1955, Telegram #219 "McClintock to Secretary of State, Norodom Sumarit to President Eisenhower," Ingrid Muan Papers.
33. Telegram #199 McCintock to Secretary of State, "Matters related to USIA," August 15, 1955, Ingrid Muan Papers.
34. "Project requirements for 1956," August 19, 1955, Ingrid Muan Papers.
35. RG 306 Records of the US Information Agency Office of Research/ Field Research Reports 1953–1993, Box 15, Cambodia 250/67/06/01–07, Dispatch 60 USIS Phnom Penh to USIA Washington DC, Subject: "VOA Listeners' Response," May 3, 1957, Ingrid Muan Papers.
36. Walling of USOM PP to ICA Washington National Museum Cambodia, February 1956, Ingrid Muan Papers.
37. Telegram from Wilder to Secretary of State of Information, August 14, 1957, Ingrid Muan Papers.
38. For another perspective on USIS mobile cinema in Cambodia, see Muan, "Playing with Powers." This article was published posthumously.
39. Though villagers may not have had a choice whether or not they would go to see a USIS film when a cinecar or cineboat showed up in their town.
40. Walling of USOM PP to ICA Washington, February 1956, Ingrid Muan Papers.
41. Documents on these trainings in Ingrid Muan Papers. See also Muan's dissertation, "Citing Angkor: The 'Cambodian Arts' in the Age of Restoration, 1918–2000," which has an image of a training course on the "operation, repair, and maintenance of film projectors sponsored by US aid for the Cinecar project 1957" on page 229.



42. 1956 Foreign Service Dispatch, Subject: "Film Showing by USIS Boat in Battambang," USIS/Phnom Penh, November 6, 1956, Ingrid Muan Papers.
43. USIS Phnom Penh note from November 1956, Ingrid Muan Papers.
44. I/S I/R USIS Phnom Penh from October 1956, Ingrid Muan Papers.
45. "Report from Cultural Centers," December 1956. They note that there was a total audience of 17,420 in Battambang alone. Ingrid Muan Papers.
46. RG 469 Records of the US Foreign Assistance Agencies 1948–61 Mission to Cambodia, Office of the Director, Subject Files 1952–58, Box 7–17 1957, Updated Battambang file, 1957, Ingrid Muan Papers.
47. As Brian Larkin notes, this style of USIS films (particularly those on public health) can be distinguished from other kinds of cinema because they are fundamentally noncommercial and therefore create a different subjective relation between film and viewer than films traditionally sold in cinemas. Larkin, *Signal and Noise*.
48. John M Anspacher, Country Public Affairs Officer, Records of US Foreign Assistance Agencies, 1948–61, Office of Far Eastern Operations, Cambodia Subject Files 1955–61 Boxes 14–32 1957–59 250/75/34–35/07–01, Photo (film) Box 14, January 3, 1957, Despatch 36 USIS PP to USIA Washington, Hilites December 1956, Ingrid Muan Papers.
49. 1956 Foreign Service Dispatch, USIS/Phnom Penh, November 6, 1956, Ingrid Muan Papers.
50. Memo from September 22, 1957, Ingrid Muan Papers.
51. Steinberg, *Cambodia: Its People, Its Society, Its Culture*.
52. Steinberg, *Cambodia: Its People, Its Society, Its Culture*.
53. Steinberg, *Cambodia: Its People, Its Society, Its Culture*.
54. Ebihara was the first American anthropologist to conduct ethnographic research in Cambodia and the last for three decades.
55. Ebihara, *Svay: A Khmer Village in Cambodia*.
56. Steinberg, *Cambodia: Its People, Its Society, Its Culture*.
57. There is a point of contention between Ebihara and Steinberg about the role of the pagoda in disseminating radio broadcasts. May Ebihara explains that Steinberg emphasized the pagoda as a key point in the relay of information and in opinion formation. She rebutted: "This may well be true in some regions and for isolated villages . . . but this was not the case in Svay. While several monks at the local temples are impressively intelligent and well-informed, they do not appear to be significant sources of secular news and information for the community. Neither

do the Svay villagers make a point of congregating at the temples to read books and papers or listen to the radio as Steinberg suggests." Steinberg says, "The more important pagods and the quarters of senior bonzes usually have radio sets. The receivers are likely to be powerful and far-ranging because the bonzes like to listen to the Buddhist programs that are broadcast by stations in Burma and Thailand." Given these differing observations, there were likely a range of uses of radio within any given pagoda depending on the politics and Buddhist sect of the temple.

58. Steinberg, *Cambodia: Its People, Its Society, Its Culture*.

59. Rust, *Eisenhower and Cambodia*; Crane, "Red-Handed: Pinning the Blame for Dap Chhuon on the CIA."

60. Rust, *Eisenhower and Cambodia*.

61. "Communist Media Developments—IRI/PI Briefing Notes," November 4, 1957, Ingrid Muan Papers.

62. Steinberg, *Cambodia: Its People, Its Society, Its Culture*.

63. "Communist Media Developments—IRI/PI Briefing Notes."

64. Radio Free Asia, "China-Cambodia Relations: A History Part One."

65. "Allocation de M Chau Seng Ministre de l'information à l'occasion de la cérémonie d'inauguration de la Station Royale de Radiodiffusion Khmère de Stung Meanchey," May 6, 1960, National Archives of Cambodia.

66. "Allocation de M Chau Seng Ministre de l'information."

67. "Allocation de M Chau Seng Ministre de l'information"; the earlier transmission strength comes from Steinberg, *Cambodia: Its People, Its Society, Its Culture*.

68. "Allocutions de LL EE Pho Proeung Haut Representant de SAR le Prince Norodom Sihanouk, Chef de l'Etat, et Chen Shu-Liang, Haut Representant de S. Exc M Chou-en-Lai, Premier Ministre du Conseil des Affaires d'Etat à l'occasion de la cérémonie de remise de la 2eme tranche des travaux de construction de la Station Royale de Radiodiffusion Nationale Khmère," June 21, 1962, National Archives of Cambodia.

69. Airgram G-278 Trimble, AmEmbassy PP to Sec of State, 1961, Ingrid Muan Papers.

70. Leos, "Economic Ties with U.S. Cut in 1963."

71. Chandler, *The Tragedy of Cambodian History*.

72. "Lese Majeste: The Khmer-Serei Radio," November 24, 1964, M-675-64, Ingrid Muan Papers.

73. For more on the 1965 dissolution of ties, see Leos, "Economic Ties with U.S. Cut in 1963"; Bong, "Cambodia's Disastrous Dependence on China."
74. USIS notes from June 11, 1957, Ingrid Muan Papers.
75. *Réalités*, January 12, 1967, National Archives of Cambodia.
76. *Réalités*, January 27, 1967, National Archives of Cambodia.
77. *Réalités*, January 27, 1967. The frequencies are "195 meters" and "405 meters in middle waves." National Archives of Cambodia.
78. *Réalités*, February 10, 1967, National Archives of Cambodia.
79. *Réalités*, February 24, 1967, National Archives of Cambodia.
80. *Réalités*, November 17, 1967. National Archives of Cambodia.
81. One story was *Chnum Aun 16* (roughly *Dear of Year 16*), which is disseminated and listened to on YouTube today. This story depicts Nimul, a sixteen-year-old who lives in the outskirts of Battambang, who is tempted by the entrapments of "modern civilization," such as new cars, modern clothes, foreign films, rock and roll music, and dating wealthy young men. She gets overwhelmed by this "foreign attitude" and leaves her hometown to date a wealthy man who ends up trying to rape her. She realizes that she was being a "cheap person" instead of a traditional woman with values and marries her original boyfriend from her hometown. They have a child and he joins the military. Interspersed throughout the story is music from Sinn Sissamouth, the most famous musician from Battambang. Near the end of the story—as Nimul grapples with her own internal conflict—monk chants are powerfully collaged over Khmer rock and roll.
82. Muan and Daravuth, "A Survey of Film in Cambodia."
83. Program from the 1st Southeast Asian Biennial Film Festival and Photo Exhibition, Phnom Penh, March 29, 1997–April 5, 1997, National Archives of Cambodia.
84. "In the Service of Khmer Cinema," Som Sam Al interview and feature, *Réalités*, November 11, 1966, National Archives of Cambodia.
85. Muan and Daravuth, "A Survey of Film in Cambodia." Also in "Kon: The Cinema of Cambodia," 2010, Box 813, National Archives of Cambodia.
86. "In the Service of Khmer Cinema."
87. "In the Service of Khmer Cinema."
88. For example, Sihanouk's film *Twilight* oscillates between these two themes in visual imagery.
89. There were around thirty cinemas in the Sangkum Reastr Niyum period in Phnom Penh. From "Kon: The Cinema of Cambodia," 2010, Box 813, National Archives of Cambodia.

90. From an interview with Mao Ayuth. Lay Sovan, a businessman from Takeo, remembers that “in the countryside, when people went to watch movies at the pagoda, they always brought a mat to spread out on the ground and watched until midnight.” “Kon: The Cinema of Cambodia.”

91. “Kon: The Cinema of Cambodia.”

92. “Kon: The Cinema of Cambodia.”

93. “Kon: The Cinema of Cambodia.” Also interview with Loak Chayy in Battambang, one of the painters for cinema signs.

94. Many of the soundtracks have remained when films have gone missing. “Kon: The Cinema of Cambodia.”

95. Muan and Daravuth, “A Survey of Film in Cambodia.”

96. Interview with Ly Bun Yim in *Golden Slumbers*, film by Davy Chou.

97. Interview with Yvon Hem in *Golden Slumbers*. See also “Kon: The Cinema of Cambodia.”

98. Austin, “Gender and the Nation in Popular Cambodian Heritage Cinema.”

99. “Kon: The Cinema of Cambodia.”

100. Buchsbaum, “A Closer Look at Third Cinema.”

101. Even Sihanouk’s films were feature films made primarily for entertainment and pleasure, though they (of course) sold a particularly pleasant and unidimensional portrait of Cambodia.

102. Muan and Daravuth, “A Survey of Film in Cambodia.”

103. “Films soviétiques,” *Réalités*, April 8, 1966, National Archives of Cambodia.

104. *Réalités*, October 28, 1966, National Archives of Cambodia.

105. On their return they brought with them Prince Sihanouk for schooling, who is now King of Cambodia. “Cineastes tchécoslovaques,” *Réalités*, November 25, 1966, National Archives of Cambodia.

106. “Gala de films roumains,” *Réalités*, November 25, 1966, National Archives of Cambodia.

107. *Golden Slumbers* film.

108. Muan and Daravuth, “A Survey of Film in Cambodia.” Also noted in the film *Golden Slumbers* and in “Kon: The Cinema of Cambodia.”

109. *Réalités*, May 17, 1966, National Archives of Cambodia.

110. “Films étrangers,” *Réalités*, October 13, 1967, National Archives of Cambodia.

**INTERLUDE: WARTIME MEDIA**

1. "Antigovernment Radio transmitter Operating in Phnom Penh," January 23, 1975, from the FBIS archive. The text reads, "An antigovernment Red Khmer radio transmitter is operating secretly somewhere inside the Cambodian capital . . . giving orders to Red Khmer units fighting on the outskirts of the capital."
2. "Corruption of Present SRV Regime Revealed," Phnom Penh Domestic Service in Cambodian, 2300 GMT, July 30, 1978. Sample text: "The present Vietnamese regime of the Le Duan-Pham Van Dong clique is not in the least revolutionary or socialist. Its true nature is corrupt, rotten, and antirevolutionary. . . . While the husbands hold the power, the wives use that power to control and own the state and people's property, disposing of it as they wish. . . . They have become utterly rotten and have systematically practiced deceit." FBIS archive.
3. Swan, "Voice of America, a Radio Heard in Secret."
4. Swan, "Voice of America, a Radio Heard in Secret."
5. This scholarship includes Becker, *When the War Was Over*; Chandler, *Brother Number One*; Hinton, *Why Did They Kill?*; and Kiernan, *The Pol Pot Regime*.
6. Beverly, *Testimonio: On the Politics of Truth*; Sarkar and Walker, "Introduction: Moving Testimonies."
7. Chhim, "Baksbat (Broken Courage)," 9.
8. Radstone, "Trauma Studies."
9. Radstone, "Trauma Studies."
10. Kleinman and Kleinman, "The Appeal of Experience."
11. Caswell, *Archiving the Unspeakable*.
12. Boyle, "Trauma, Memory, Documentary."
13. Caswell, *Archiving the Unspeakable*.
14. Gottesman, *Cambodia after the Khmer Rouge*.

**CHAPTER 2**

1. Vuth, "Knowledge Sharing and Learning Together."
2. For more sources on the PRK period, see Deth, "The People's Republic of Kampuchea 1979–1989"; Gottesman, *Cambodia after the Khmer Rouge*; Slocomb, *The People's Republic of Kampuchea, 1979–1989*.
3. I focus on radio and film because these were by far the most common forms of media during this period. As during the Sangkum Reastr Niyum period, there

was some TV use in Cambodia but it was not very common, nor was it regularly used as a personal device. The Phnom Penh-based TV station did broadcast again in 1983 and Russians gave the Ministry of Information some black and white TVs. Bou Vannarith said that 90 percent of Cambodians didn't have TV or electricity in the 1980s—plus the TV played only two hours in the evening. He said that “they just had the news and it was short . . . most people did not have money for buying televisions, and they didn't have electricity.” By 1990, there were also three regional television stations, in Battambang, Kampong Cham, and Sihanoukville.

4. Star and Strauss, “Layers of Silence, Arenas of Voice.”

5. Jackson, “Rethinking Repair.”

6. In this phrasing, I am inspired by Hecht's related concept of technopolitics, which she defines as “the hybrid forms of power embedded in technological artifacts, systems and practices” or “the strategic practice of designing or using technology to enact political goals.” Hecht, *Entangled Geographies*.

7. The FBIS is an online archive of CIA-recorded and translated radio programs from Cambodia from the Cold War.

8. He also told me, “We moved to this building in 2003 for broadcasting too. When we moved here, we constructed a new studio next to this building.”

9. “FBIS Monitoring Note on Phnom Penh Domestic Radio,” 1979, FBIS archive.

10. “Government Leaders, SRV Experts Attend Opening of Radio Course,” BK281042 Phnom Penh Domestic Service in Cambodian, 1100 GMT, September 23, 1979, FBIS archive. My emphasis.

11. Broadcasts and song programs increase in number in the first half of the 1980s. Figures from “Situation of the Implementation of the Phnom Penh Radio and Activities of the Phnom Penh Newspapers from 1979–1983” show that the number of broadcasts grew from zero to 1,590 between 1979 and 1983, and the number of song programs from 0 to 500 in the same period. *Statistics of Economics and Culture of Phnom Penh 1979–1983* (translated from Khmer). No textual contextualization provided. National Archives of Cambodia.

12. “Phnom Penh Radio to Begin English, French, Thai Services on 20 July,” BK190508, July 19, 1979, translated into English and published in Daily Report, Asia & Pacific, Kampuchea, FBIS archive.

13. “Phnom Penh Radio Director General Greets Foreign Listeners,” BK211008, July 20, 1979, translated into English and published in Daily Report, Asia & Pacific, Kampuchea, July 23, 1979, FBIS archive.

14. “Government Leaders, SRV Experts Attend Opening of Radio Course,” my emphasis.

15. "Government Leaders, SRV Experts Attend Opening of Radio Course."
16. "Government Leaders, SRV Experts Attend Opening of Radio Course."
17. Phnom Penh Domestic Service in Cambodian, 1230 GMT, April 12, 1981, BK, FBIS archive.
18. "Vietnamese Technicians Help Set up Radio Station in Takhmau," BK141252, October 3, 1979, translated into English and published in Daily Report Asia & Pacific, October 26, 1979, FBIS archive.
19. "Battambang Radio Station," Phnom Penh Domestic Service in Cambodian, January 20, 1981, FBIS archive; "Provincial Radio Operation Part of Prey Veng Development," BK291241 Phnom Penh Domestic Service in Cambodian, 1200 GMT, February 26, 1980, BK, FBIS archive.
20. Figures from "Situation of the Implementation of the Phnom Penh Radio and Activities of the Phnom Penh Newspapers from 1979–1983," in *Statistics of Economics and Culture of Phnom Penh 1979–1983*, National Archives of Cambodia.
21. "Khmer Rouge Radio Transmitter in Yunnan," 1981, FBIS archive.
22. "Briefs," Bangkok SU Anakhot in Thai, July 17–23, 1982, p. 33, BK, FBIS archive.
23. "Cambodia: Khmer Rouge Radio Transmission Cut," BK2108051496 Hong Kong AFP in English, 0447 GMT, August 21, 1996, FBIS archive.
24. "AFP: KPNLF Radio Station Begins Broadcast," BK260813 Hong Kong AFP in English, October 26, 1982, FBIS archive.
25. "Sihnaouk-Son Sann to Operate Joint Radio Station," BK140316 Bangkok Post in English, November 14, 1983, FBIS archive; "Coalition Partners to Pen Radio Station 16 Dec.," BK120130 Bangkok Post in English, December 12, 1983, p. 3, FBIS archive.
26. "Mobile Resistance Radio to Extend Range," BK180200 Bangkok *The Nation Review* in English, January 18, 1984, FBIS archive.
27. "Coalition Partners to Pen Radio Station 16 Dec.," BK120130 Bangkok Post in English, December 12, 1983, p. 3, FBIS archive; "AFP Cites CGDK New Radio Station," BK231131 Hong Kong AFP in English, 0937, January 24, 1984, FBIS archive.
28. "Mobile Resistance Radio to Extend Range," BK180200 Bangkok *The Nation Review* in English, January 18, 1984, FBIS archive.
29. "AFP Cites CGDK New Radio Station," BK231131 Hong Kong AFP in English, 0937 January 24, 1984, FBIS archive.
30. Marston, "Cambodian News Media in the UNTAC Period."
31. "Preparing for the Cambodian New Year Celebration with Responsibility and Inspiration," 1984, which was part of my "Listening from the Archives" program,

is one example. John Marston argues that “in the 1980s some quite moving songs were recorded, songs that genuinely resonated with the public’s memories of the suffering during the Pol Pot period. These were broadcast by radio arts teams at a time when memories of the DK regime were still fresh and when there was still energy and excitement about reviving radio in the country. The quality of radio arts declined as the surviving pre-1975 equipment deteriorated and as artists left for greener pastures—some of them going to the camps on the border.” Marston, “Cambodian News Media in the UNTAC Period.”

32. See also Reddick and Taing, “After the Khmer Rouge.”

33. “VOK Comments on PRK Radio’s Appeal Program,” BK040709 Voice of the Khmer in Cambodian, 0500 GMT, April 4, 1987, FBIS archive.

34. Shawcross, *The Quality of Mercy*.

35. See also Gottesman, *Cambodia after the Khmer Rouge*.

36. Marston also mentions in a footnote the common practice of having loudspeakers in villages during the 1980s in “Cambodian News Media in the UNTAC Period.”

37. Loudspeaker networks become more robust in the first half of the 1980s. Figures from “Situation of the Implementation of the Phnom Penh Radio and Activities of the Phnom Penh Newspapers from 1979–1983,” in *Statistics of Economics and Culture of Phnom Penh 1979–1983* (translated from Khmer). No textual contextualization provided. National Archives of Cambodia.

38. “SRV-Aided Radio Station,” FBIS archive.

39. He and his neighbors would also listen to their personal radios together in groups at night at home. He told me that his kids weren’t allowed to listen to the news, only *lkhoan niyeay* (spoken theater). They listened to the radio every weekend as a family when they played *lkhoan niyeay* or *lkhoan ayai* (spoken comedy).

40. “Hun Sen Praises Radio Achievements in Speech,” BK1112130188 Phnom Penh domestic service in Cambodian, 1300 GMT, December 10, 1988, FBIS archive.

41. See “SRV Radio, TV Delegation arrives,” May 31, BK010914 Phnom Penh Domestic Service in Cambodian, 0400 GMT, June 1, 1982, FBIS archive; “Radio Broadcasting Protocol Signed with SRV,” BK2405154990 Phnom Penh SPK in French, 1110 GMT, May 24, 1990, FBIS archive.

42. “Trade, Radio Delegations Leave for Moscow,” BK280835 Phnom Penh SPK in French, 1439 GMT, January 27, 1983, FBIS archive; “Radio Delegation to CSSR,” Phnom Penh Domestic Service in Cambodian, 1100 GMT, March 8, 1984, BK, FBIS archive.

43. “CCSSR Radio Equipment,” Phnom Penh SPK in French, 0429 MT, May 22, 1983, FBIS archive.



44. "Radio, Television Protocol Signed with USSR," BK30736 Phnom Penh Domestic Service in Cambodian, 1100 GMT, March 22, 1984, FBIS archive; "Radio-TV Protocol Signed with USSR 28 Jan.," BK311310 Phnom Penh SPK in French, 1153 GMT, January 31, 1987, FBIS archive; "Soviet Radio-TV Delegation Leaves 28 February," BK0403073790 Phnom Penh SPK in French, 0357 GMT, March 4, 1990, FBIS archive.
45. Some detail found in Baumgärtel, "A Profile of Mao Ayuth."
46. "Pen Sovan Reopening of Phnom Penh Movie Theater," BK031226 SPK in French, 0418 GMT, January 6, 1980, BK, FBIS archive.
47. "SRV-Aideed Radio Station," Phnom Pnh SPK in French, 0404 GMT, February 11, 1982, FBIS archive.
48. "Activities of the Department of Cultural Propaganda," 1979–1983, in *Statistics of Economics and Culture of Phnom Penh 1979–1983*, National Archives of Cambodia.
49. "Kon: The Cinema of Cambodia."
50. Held at the Bophana Center.
51. "The Season of the Palm Flowers" is just one of more than a dozen short films made by Ieu Pannakar and Mao Ayuth during this time held at the Bophana Center. *Kampuchea Rsa Laengvinh* (Rebirth of Kampuchea) (1985), by Ieu Pannakar and Nget Samorn, is a 36-minute documentary about the post–Pol Pot era. The film opens with images of the university and school structures, which are functioning again; the film offers thanks to the help of Vietnamese and Russians. The documentary also shows the restoration of Angkor Wat and the travel of Cambodian students to Moscow in an exchange program. Juxtaposed to these images of recovery are pictures of the Pol Pot–Ieng Sary regime. Films are held at the Bophana Center.
52. According to a brochure for the first Southeast Asian biennial film festival and photo exhibition in 1997, the Cambodian National Assembly allowed filmmakers to resume independent activities in 1988. National Archives of Cambodia.
53. For more, see Baumgärtel, "A Profile of Mao Ayuth."
54. This film is held at the Bophana Center.
55. Now known in English as the Bat Cave, a popular tourist destination for seeing bats at sunset.
56. Translated from Khmer with Nehru Ski.
57. These collectors include Preah Sorya, the subject of the fourth chapter. Other interview participants have told me that Ka Toy was involved in exporting original film reels to Long Beach with Sam Sovandeth, who would then transfer them to cassettes and resell the films. This story is controversial because Sam Sovandeth was arrested in 2010. Sovandeth had a large number of media businesses spanning Long

Beach and Cambodia, and he was an official for a new radio and television network called Southeast Asia Television and Radio in conjunction with a government official named Kao Kim Hourn. He is also the owner of one of the remaining cinemas in Phnom Penh called Lux Cinema. In May 2010 Sovandeth was convicted for stealing \$4.7 million from the television station, and (according to reports) he was in prison in 2018. The unavailability of Sam Sovandeth to talk has come up as a difficult issue for many contemporary classical Khmer film enthusiasts.

58. "Kon: The Cinema of Cambodia."

59. Gottesman, *Cambodia after the Khmer Rouge*.

60. In April 1986, the Council of Ministers issued the new Subdecree 9 and distinguished between criminal offenses that involved "political security" and unauthorized showings of videos "for commercial purposes." The prosecutor on the case tried the two Yens under this new Subdecree and punished them with a fine and confiscation of the videos. The police disagreed, arguing that the "two Yens" had compromised state security, and kept the Yens in custody. The prosecutor rejected their opinion and said that their file had already been sent to the Ministry of Justice and requested the release of the two Yens. The police appealed to the Phnom Penh municipal authorities and the city's Party Committee. The authorities asked that the police and prosecutor resolve the issue on their own. Vietnamese advisors stepped into mediate, but various advisors also disagreed about how to proceed. The case was in a stalemate until August 1986, when it magnified into a "fundamental question of institutional authority" and played out with complicated politics. Heng Samrin, on the Politburo, said, "If we rely on the law, it is not necessary to put these people in jail." Say Pnouthang added, "Only videocassettes that broadcast Sihanouk or Khieu Samphan [Khmer Rouge leadership] are included in cases of political security." The Politburo, however, watched the pornographic videos together, and Heng Samrin revised his opinion. "The Politburo has now determined that the case serves the psychological warfare of the enemy." There are no further meetings on record, and the case seems to have faded away. In Gottesman, *Cambodia after the Khmer Rouge*.

61. Nelson, *Reckoning*.

#### INTERLUDE: PEACE TALKS

1. "Safeguarding Peace: Cambodia's Constitutional Challenge."
2. Heder and Ledgerwood, "Introduction."
3. "Safeguarding Peace: Cambodia's Constitutional Challenge."
4. Heder and Ledgerwood, "Introduction."
5. Heder and Ledgerwood, "Introduction."

6. "Safeguarding Peace: Cambodia's Constitutional Challenge."
7. Heder and Ledgerwood, "Introduction."
8. Heder and Ledgerwood, "Introduction."
9. Heder and Ledgerwood, "Introduction."
10. "Safeguarding Peace: Cambodia's Constitutional Challenge."
11. "Safeguarding Peace: Cambodia's Constitutional Challenge."

### CHAPTER 3

1. While in Wisconsin, I worked closely with Lawrence Ashmun, the head librarian for the Southeast Asian studies collection. He was able to walk me through the catalogue of the 333 radio cassettes, 350 reels, 1,417 digital audio tapes, 12 audio packs, and 2,464 paper documents (including transcripts from the radio and internal UNTAC letters, among other documents) held in their library from the UNTAC era, uniquely held by the University of Wisconsin Library (the original material produced by UNTAC, as received straight from them). Most important to me were the letters, histories of Radio UNTAC, and radio program schedules in the miscellaneous paper files in the collection. I was also able to digitize radio programs (including one called "The History of Radio UNTAC") with the help of Dorothea Salo at RADD (Recovering Analogue and Digital Data) in the Wisconsin Information and Library School.

2. Marston, "Cambodian News Media in the UNTAC Period."

3. Marston, "Cambodian News Media in the UNTAC Period."

4. Although newspapers are not a focus of this project, small, independent, Khmer businesses or independent institutions funded by foreign capital started Cambodian newsletters from Phnom Penh (not just from the Thai border) during the UNTAC period. In 1992 two English-language newspapers—the *Cambodia Times* (financed by a Malaysian business) and the *Phnom Penh Post* (financed by an American business)—began. *Cambodia Times* also had a Khmer-language equivalent. The *Cambodia Times* was "slickly edited" and sometimes partial to the CPP. The third English newspaper—the *Cambodia Daily*—began in 1993. Though the *Cambodia Times* closed in 1997, the *Cambodia Daily* remained in circulation until 2017, and the *Phnom Penh Post* remains the premier English-language newspaper in Cambodia, though it was bought by a Malaysian company with ties to the CPP in 2018. In early 1993, other small, independent, Khmer-language newspapers started appearing. Nonstate media represented a departure from the PRK and harkened back ideas about the old regime and the time before communist media. For example, the *Koh Santepheap* (Island of Peace), a newspaper that ran in the Sihanouk and Lon Nol eras, was restarted in

January 1993 by a reporter for the journal from the 1970s. Its first editor was killed by the Khmer Rouge in 1975.

TV also opened more channels; aside from the one Cambodian national station (TV Kampuchea, which started broadcasting again in very limited hours in 1986), in early 1993, FUNCINPEC opened a second TV station. Shortly afterward, IBC TV—a Thai corporate TV station with income from advertising—began programming. It had a broadcasting radius of 100 kilometers around Phnom Penh and a relay station in Kampong Cham. It played movies from the United States and game shows from Hong Kong, dubbed in Khmer. It became popular very quickly; Thai-speaking Cambodians who had returned from the border areas made up most of the staff. For more, see Heder and Ledgerwood, “Introduction”; Marston, “Cambodian News Media in the UNTAC Period.”

5. Heder and Ledgerwood, “Introduction.”

6. The “Voice of the Khmer People” was forced to stop broadcasting in 1992 because Thailand and other countries financially supporting the station were “under pressure to maintain neutrality with respect to the elections.” Heder and Ledgerwood, “Introduction.”

7. Heder and Ledgerwood, “Introduction.”

8. Heder and Ledgerwood, “Introduction.”

9. Steven Pak is one example of a Cambodian refugee who spent 10 years in California and returned to Cambodia to work on Radio UNTAC. Zhou, *Radio UNTAC of Cambodia*.

10. Jeffrey Heyman, “The History of Radio UNTAC,” translated by Stephen Pak, September 22, 1993, UNTAC Collection.

11. Heyman, “The History of Radio UNTAC.”

12. Discussed in chapter 1.

13. Zhou, *Radio UNTAC of Cambodia*.

14. Heyman, “The History of Radio UNTAC.”

15. Zhou, *Radio UNTAC of Cambodia*.

16. Heyman, “The History of Radio UNTAC.”

17. Lyno Vuth, a prominent contemporary artist, has told me he finds the appropriation of this culturally significant music disrespectful.

18. “UNTAC Radio Winding Up,” *Cambodia Times*, September 27–October 3, 1993, National Archives of Cambodia.

19. “Good Morning Cambodia,” *Cambodia Times*, June 7–13, 1993, National Archives of Cambodia.

20. "UNTAC Radio Winding Up."
21. Heyman, "The History of Radio UNTAC."
22. Zhou, *Radio UNTAC of Cambodia*.
23. Zhou, *Radio UNTAC of Cambodia*.
24. "Grenades in Exchange for Radios," *Cambodia Times*, June 7–13, 1993, National Archives of Cambodia.
25. Zhou, *Radio UNTAC of Cambodia*.
26. There was no distribution in Phnom Penh.
27. Zhou, *Radio UNTAC of Cambodia*.
28. Zhou, *Radio UNTAC of Cambodia*.
29. "Grenades in Exchange for Radios."
30. Heyman, "The History of Radio UNTAC."
31. "UNTAC Radio Winding Up."
32. Heyman, "The History of Radio UNTAC"; Zhou, *Radio UNTAC of Cambodia*; "Good Morning Cambodia."
33. Heyman, "The History of Radio UNTAC."
34. Marston, "Cambodian News Media in the UNTAC Period."
35. Zhou, *Radio UNTAC of Cambodia*.
36. "UNTAC Radio Winding Up."
37. Zhou, *Radio UNTAC of Cambodia*.
38. He continued, "On the first day of the elections, UNTAC radio reported on UNTAC's fines against Prince Norodom Chakkrapong and Khim Bo. Later, it broadcast an interview with a Buddhist monk, in which SOC provincial officials were accused of barring people from offering him food. Moreover, the UNTAC radio also belittled Prince Norodom Chakkrapong and Khim Bo when they paid their fines. During the elections, we also noted that UNTAC radio played FUNCIPNPEC's political songs." Khieu Kanhari "underlined that this occurrence is a lesson to other countries, which like Cambodia accept the UN presence, to pay careful attention to the news service because it can greatly influence an election."
39. "UNTAC Radio Winding Up."
40. The Cambodian ruling party still makes statements about their resentment of the role of UNTAC and the legacy of the Paris Peace Accords. Hun Sen publicly said in March 2018 that Cambodians were responsible for the national reconstruction

and that the foreign histories of the Paris Peace Accords are largely flawed. See Sokhean, "Hun Sen: Peace Brought by Khmers, Not 'Foreign Hands.'"

41. Heder and Ledgerwood, "Introduction."

42. Marston, "Cambodian News Media in the UNTAC Period." UNTAC (specifically, the Information/Education Division) had tried to start a media association, but this group did not gain traction and authority. International journalists, entrenched during the UNTAC period, were able to successfully establish it independently by the end of 1993. It had limited power but had a major success when, in late 1993, the SOC announced the old SOC law on the press was valid. After the association protested, the state negotiated. In March 1994, the CPP announced an FM radio station and a new TV station. Many smaller periodicals closed at the elections and some never reopened. In this same month FUNCINPEC Radio and TV became private. FUNCINPEC radio became the most popular after the closing of Radio UNTAC.

43. Marston, "Cambodian News Media in the UNTAC Period."

44. "Rapid Economic Growth Brings Investors," *Cambodia Times*, September 27–October 3, 1993, National Archives of Cambodia.

45. "Rapid Economic Growth Brings Investors."

46. In Battambang, within a few years after UNTAC, Hab B became a nightclub and Hap Chouen became a restaurant.

47. After 1992, for example, it became more difficult for Ka Toy to do his job. With the projector change, it became harder to find films to play on the film projectors that he had. As VCRs became more available, fewer people came to the cinema. Ka Toy thinks part of the reason people stopped coming to the cinema was because the quality of the films also went down. The LCD projectors made a lot of noise and the color was less clear.

48. 2002 Internet Cambodia Case Study, International Telecommunication Union, National Archives of Cambodia.

49. In 1993, Cambodia was the first country in the world where mobile telephone subscribers surpassed fixed ones. 2002 Internet Cambodia Case Study.

50. 2002 Internet Cambodia Case Study.

51. 2002 Internet Cambodia Case Study.

52. 2002 Internet Cambodia Case Study.

53. 2002 Internet Cambodia Case Study.

54. 2002 Internet Cambodia Case Study

55. 2002 Internet Cambodia Case Study.

56. From interviews with Norbert Klein and Moa Chakrya.
57. Jack, Sovannaroeth, and Dell, "Privacy Is Not a Concept."
58. For instance, the lack of appropriate Burmese language content moderation on Facebook in Myanmar arguably exacerbated the genocide against the Rohingya people.

#### CHAPTER 4

1. One of the most famous was called *A Prison without Walls*, which was about, Chayy explains, "when the Khmer Rouge took power, the life of people during that time, how they treated the people, the cruelty. The play went until liberation day."
2. Simmel, "Two Essays (The Handle, The Ruin)."
3. Stoler, "Imperial Debris."
4. Derrida, *Specters of Marx*.
5. Derrida, in *Specters of Marx*, gives the example of the absence of recognition of the death of workers in a mining accident.
6. Gordon, *Ghostly Matters*.
7. Williams and Orrom, *Preface to Film*; Berlant, "Cruel Optimism."
8. Kittler, *Gramophone, Film, Typewriter*.
9. This is a theme I will discuss in greater detail in the next chapter.
10. See chapter 1 for more on this theme.
11. Sereypagna, "New Khmer Architecture."
12. United Nations Development Program Cambodia Profile 2019, <https://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/KHM>.
13. Beech, "Cambodia Re-Elects Its Leader, a Result Predetermined by One."
14. The *Phnom Penh Post* staff, "Sokha Arrested for Treason, Is Accused of Colluding with US to Topple the Government."
15. Mech and Baliga, "Death of Democracy."
16. For more on Hun Sen's approach to ruling, see Norén-Nilsson, *Cambodia's Second Kingdom*.
17. Reporters without Borders, "Cambodia: The Independent Press in Ruins."
18. Reuters, "Cambodia Daily Shuts with 'Dictatorship' Parting Shot at Prime Minister Hun Sen"; Reporters without Borders, "Cambodia: The Independent Press in Ruins."

19. Vichheika, "RFA Journalists Accused of Treason."
20. Cambodian Center for Independent Media, "Challenges for Independent Media."
21. Radio Free Asia staff, "Cambodia to Monitor, Control Online News."
22. Reuters, "Cambodia Blocks Some Independent News Media Sites."
23. Vong and Hok argue that everyday youth Facebooking in Cambodia had a strong influence on Cambodian politics and government action in the 2013 elections. Though everyday youth Facebooking still plays an important role in Cambodian politics, Vong and Hok's paper was written in the wake of the 2013 election. When I conducted this ethnography, the political realities and Facebook freedoms had changed. Vong and Hok, "Facebooking."
24. Vong and Hok, "Facebooking."
25. Hughes and Eng, "Facebook, Contestation and Poor People's Politics."
26. Beban, Schoenberger, and Lamb, "Pockets of Liberal Media."
27. Beban, Schoenberger, and Lamb, "Pockets of Liberal Media."
28. Gordillo, *Rubble*, 28.
29. Gordillo, *Rubble*.
30. Benjamin, *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*.
31. Gordon, *Ghostly Matters*.
32. See also Johnson, *Ghosts of the New City*.
33. Choulean, *People and Earth*.
34. Schwenkel, "Haunted Infrastructure."
35. The team told me they could not find too much information at institutional archives such as the National Archives. One of their most important sources was Amazing Cambodia, a Facebook page run by Srin Sokmean, which I discuss in chapter 6. I once went to the National Museum to look at the Ingrid Muan papers with them.
36. The tool is called Bosch Laser Measurement.
37. AutoCAD is free for three years for students.
38. Khmer Architecture tours is a private tour company geared toward expats, tourists, and researchers. Limkokwing is a private and expensive Malaysian arts and architecture school in Phnom Penh.



39. In 2019, she married and was hired on an urban heritage project in Phnom Penh.

40. Java Cafe had three locations across Phnom Penh in 2017–2018. Sa Sa Bassac was described by Meta as the only “proper gallery” in Phnom Penh; it closed in 2018.

## CHAPTER 5

1. Hong Saovandy, a government official at the Ministry of Transportation, shares a common opinion: “I prefer the movies that were made at that time to those produced today. I feel that the movies from the 1960s look and feel natural, and the actors really made an effort to impersonate what they were playing.” From “Kon: The Cinema of Cambodia.”

2. “Kon: The Cinema of Cambodia.”

3. One person who has been a forerunner in the preservation of Cambodian heritage film is Davy Chou, whom I don’t explicitly discuss but has been an inspiration for Preah Sorya and other young Cambodian collectors. He is also one of the founders of the Anti-Archive film production company. Davy Chou made *Golden Slumbers* in 2010, the most comprehensive study of the 1960s film period to date and which I reference throughout this chapter.

4. Translation by author.

5. In Khmer he said *kduk kdoul*, translated as a very strong feeling similar to the English word “shocked.”

6. Dubois et al., “Household Survey of Psychiatric Morbidity in Cambodia”; De Jong, Komproe, and Van Ommeren, “Common Mental Disorders in Postconflict Settings.”

7. Shulevitz, “The Science of Suffering.”

8. Um, *From the Land of Shadows*, 7. She works here from Derrida, *Specters of Marx*.

9. Chhim, “Baksbat (Broken Courage).”

10. Chhun, “Walking with the Ghost.”

11. Chhun, “Walking with the Ghost,” 26.

12. Thompson, “Forgetting to Remember, Again.”

13. Uk, *Salvage*.

14. Hinton, *The Justice Façade*.

15. Schlund-Vials, *War, Genocide, and Justice*.

16. Hinton, *The Justice Façade*, 85–86.
17. For more on the embodied aspects of trauma, see Van der Kolk, *The Body Keeps the Score*.
18. Eisenbruch, “From Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder to Cultural Bereavement.”
19. Guillou explains that her research is a necessary corrective to theories of trauma developed in part by groups like the Extraordinary Chambers of the Courts of Cambodia. She says, “The accounts given in many areas of the Tribunal have tended to impose an overall pattern of what social suffering should be and how it should be expressed and relieved, by using the idioms of ‘trauma’ and ‘post-traumatic stress disorder’ as their only models. The ideology underlying the overuse of the psychiatric scheme helps to reinforce the marginalization of small societies such as Cambodia in the globalized world by producing a particular image of them: not only did the Cambodians slaughter each other during an ‘auto-genocide,’ not only did they suffer from mental illness caused by trauma, but they also remained unconcerned and passive after the genocide. This ideological pattern in turn aims to make the proliferation of so-called humanitarian organizations in Cambodia acceptable by spreading the idea that Cambodians cannot help themselves or be treated as responsible citizens.” From Guillou, “An Alternative Memory of the Khmer Rouge Genocide.”
20. Choulean, *People and Earth*.
21. Uk, *Salvage*.
22. Schlund-Vials and Ly recognize some (limited) benefits of applying Western trauma theory to describe the Cambodian experience of painful experience and for textual analysis of Cambodian commemorative art production. In the late 1990s, the medical and popular use of the trauma concept was taken up by literary scholars and then branched out to become a subdiscipline within the humanities called trauma studies, spearheaded by Cathy Caruth. Caruth’s understanding of the repetitive and uncertain nature of traumatic memory informed my theorization of disintegration noise, but is less relevant to the Cambodian experience of surviving the Khmer Rouge, so I decided to eliminate it from the body of this text. For more, see Caruth, *Unclaimed Experience*. To see this type of analysis applied to Southeast Asian experiences of trauma, see Boyle, “Trauma, Memory, Documentary.”
23. Schlund-Vials, *War, Genocide, and Justice*.
24. Ly, *Traces of Trauma*.
25. Elsaesser, “Freud and the Technical Media.”
26. Benjamin, *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*.
27. McLuhan, *Understanding Media*; Kittler, *Gramophone, Film, Typewriter*.

28. Kittler, *Gramophone, Film, Typewriter*, 13.
29. Parikka, "Mapping Noise."
30. Strassler's concept of "refraction" also gives insight into the ways that all mechanical reproduction can both mimic and distort. Strassler, *Refracted Visions*.
31. Parikka, "Mapping Noise." See also Nunes, "Error, Noise, and Potential."
32. Kelly, *Cracked Media*.
33. Krapp, *Noise Channels*.
34. Menkman, "Glitch Studies Manifesto."
35. Steyerl, "In Defense of the Poor Image"; Larkin, *Signal and Noise*.
36. This condition harkens back to Guillo's concept of the "switch on/switch off" of remembering and forgetting. Films flick memory back on for a discrete time, and can be turned off again.
37. Here I am inspired in part by Hirsch, who argues that historical (pre-trauma) photographs allow those suffering from events of collective trauma to move on. Photographs can "absorb the shock, filter and diffuse the impact of trauma, diminish harm." Hirsch, "The Generation of Postmemory."
38. Kong Sam Oeun was an extremely productive and popular actor, who starred in 140 films. His first movie was *Koth Muoy Py Neak* (One Coffin Two People), and he performed more than 200 songs. "Kon: The Cinema of Cambodia."
39. Boeng Keng Lake was once in Phnom Penh but a company purchased it for redevelopment in 2011 and filled in in.
40. As noted in the previous chapter and as I will discuss again in the following chapter, this commemoration practice is not neutral. The period they romanticize was one of deep inequality. What they choose to focus on (the 1960s and early 1970s film culture) was also deeply embedded in imperial and elite politics. Further, as I discuss in greater depth in the next chapter, the group focuses on memories that refer to the trauma of the wars without directly referencing them. The group focuses not on memories from the traumatic event (the Khmer Rouge era and wartime) but instead on the positive cultural outputs from the period before that. The students are able to commemorate lost artists without focusing on violence; they thus decenter what they often perceive to be a simplification of their national history through an international focus on the Khmer Rouge period.
41. See the previous chapter for a longer discussion on this impulse through the case of Rong Kon.
42. Crownshaw, Kilby, and Rowland, *The Future of Memory*.

43. Hedges, *World Cinema and Cultural Memory*.
44. Harvey, "Memory, That Powerful Political Force."

## CHAPTER 6

1. See <https://www.facebook.com/amazingcambo>.
2. There were 96,648 as of August 8, 2022.
3. Chun, "The Enduring Ephemeral"; Chun, *Programmed Visions*.
4. Working from the definition of the "imperial archive" as defined by Richards in *Imperial Archive*.
5. Though many Cambodians increasingly use Khmer script on Facebook, it is common to see a mix of English, Khmer script, and Romanized Khmer on many Cambodian Facebook pages, since often roman scripts are easier to type with and are more globally accessible. Cambodia is also famously known as a large market for audio messages due to difficulty typing in Khmer. See Elliott and Phorn, "Fifty Percent of Facebook Messenger's Total Voice Traffic."
6. Though he does sometimes find some information at the National Archives in Phnom Penh.
7. This magazine ran from 1927 through 1975 and recently restarted.
8. Chun, "The Enduring Ephemeral"; Chun, *Programmed Visions*.
9. Hooper, "Green Computing."
10. She says, "A memory must be held to keep it from moving or fading." Chun, "The Enduring Ephemeral," 164.
11. Weltevrede, Helmond, and Gerlitz, "The Politics of Real-Time."
12. As Derrida has famously claimed, "there is no political power without control of the archive," *Archive Fever*. For another take on archiving in Cambodia, about the photographs of Tuol Sleng victims, see Caswell, *Archiving the Unspeakable*. Caswell has also written with Ricardo Punzalan about the function of the institutional archive for social justice. See Punzalan and Caswell, "Critical Directions."
13. Richards, *Imperial Archive*, 3.
14. This is what Richards calls "entropic disorganization."
15. Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain*.
16. Doreen Lee describes the grassroots archives created by the activist youths of late 1990s Indonesia who were the forefront of the Rerformasi, which toppled the

Suharto government on May 21, 1998. These youth sought to document each action and protest since they knew their perspective—their knowledge—was marginalized. Lee, *Activist Archives*.

17. Irani et al., “Postcolonial Computing.” See also Irani, *Chasing Innovation*.
18. In the past, ICTD practitioners rarely did user research before spending a significant amount of money on building a new product, which then often went unused by expected beneficiaries. However, the field is largely changing and becoming more attuned to questions of politics and participation, and moving away from techno-deterministic approaches.
19. For one emblematic example, Morgan Ames criticizes One Laptop per Child in part for its inefficiency in *The Charisma Machine*.
20. For more on challenges on “global” and “local” design cultures, see Chan, *Networking Peripheries*, and Avle and Lindtner, “Design(ing) ‘Here’ and ‘There.’”
21. Ames, *The Charisma Machine*.
22. Wyche et al., “If God Gives Me the Chance I Will Design My Own Phone.”
23. Ahmed, Mim, and Jackson, “Residual Mobilities.”
24. Jack, Chen, and Jackson, “Infrastructure as Creative Action.”
25. See also Punzalan and Caswell, “Critical Directions.”
26. The mission of Facebook to “bring the world closer together” has been co-opted in Cambodia by the increasingly authoritarian state.
27. Jack, Sovannaroeth, and Dell, “Privacy Is Not a Concept.”
28. Jack, Sovannaroeth, and Dell, “Privacy Is Not a Concept.”
29. Lackaff and Moner, “Local Languages, Global Networks.”
30. Quigley et al., “Issues and Techniques in Translating Scientific Terms.”
31. For more on the challenges of digitizing minority languages in Unicode, see Zaugg, “Digitizing Ethiopic.”
32. Haraway, “Situated Knowledges.”
33. Gillespie, “The Politics of ‘Platforms’”; Gehl, “The Archive and the Processor.”
34. Gillespie, “The Politics of ‘Platforms.’”
35. Couldry and Mejias, “Data Colonialism.”
36. We visited two more classrooms and about the same ratio applies; only three students of the forty or fifty students in class had smartphones with them.

**CONCLUSION**

1. Starr and Strauss, "Layers of Silence, Arenas of Voice."
2. Tufekci, *Twitter and Tear Gas*.
3. For more on affect and politics in Cambodia, see Beban, *Unwritten Rule*.
4. Jackson, "Rethinking Repair."
5. See Sinpeng and Tapsell, *From Grassroots Activism to Disinformation*, for a regional view.
6. Chandran, "Cambodia's Internet Gateway."
7. Some scholars—not without criticism—have termed this transnational political economy of platforms "data colonialism." See Couldry and Mejias, "Data Colonialism."
8. Huang, *Capitalism with Chinese Characteristics*.
9. I have encouraged, in earlier work, proper translation of user interfaces. See, for example, Jack, Sovannaroth, and Dell, "Privacy Is Not a Concept."
10. Ong and Collier, *Global Assemblages*.
11. Irani et al., "Postcolonial Computing"; De Laet and Mol, "The Zimbabwe Bush Pump."
12. Jackson, "Rethinking Repair."



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